

The Gift of Grandparents and those who have led the way for us



The Sisters of Nazareth Australasian Newsletter

Grandma I've brought my baby to see you. Could we have a sleep over with you,? Mum is too busy to play with me



Sister, have you any words of wisdom for me, after your nearly 70 years as a Sister of Nazareth



13th Edition
May 2018

Welcome to another edition of the Sisters of Nazareth Newsletter!

On May 24 we were delighted to join two of our Novices as they made their profession of vows as Sisters of Nazareth in Camberwell for the Australasian Region. Sister Epifania and Sister Than had spent the previous two years in our International Novitiate in London in preparation for their Profession. Congratulations Sisters!



At recent review of the operations of Nazareth Care in the Region, it was acknowledged that there are many important and positive elements of the work of the Sisters of Nazareth. The report went on to say “The Organisation, Nazareth Care, has an excellent reputation, high levels of occupancy across its Houses and a strong sense of focus on its mission and values. This is largely due to the presence and involvement of the Sisters.” So, we thank God for these vocations and the generosity of these Sisters as they devote their lives to God and the care of those in need.

Also on May 24 Sister Jocelyn – known to many as Sister Kevin – who is in our Christchurch House celebrated her Diamond Jubilee (60 years professed). We congratulate Sister and ask God’s blessing on her at this special time. Sister’s life has been one of great generosity which has spread far and wide as her love for the Lord and His people has touched so many lives. Thank you Sister. Wishing each and all God’s many blessings.

Sr. Margaret O’Keefe - Regional Superior



It’s incredible to think that it is mid May already. It only seems a few weeks ago that the year of 2018 was beginning. So much has occurred both in the broader world and within our Nazareth Care world. Sometimes there seems to be so much change in the world yet, amongst all of this things also seem to be much the same. There was a program on the radio recently discussing how, in times of enormous change, hindsight tell us that things often don’t change all that much. The program concluded that we humans essentially don’t change all that much from generation to generation and culture to culture.

This is reinforced beautifully in the recently published book on Victoire Larmenier’s life by Peter Hughes & Eileen Pickard. In circa 1852 the Sisters received residents initially in a small ‘Brook Green’ home. Among the plethora of initial challenges faced by the Sisters were residents complaining about the food. I am sure that since The Sisters of Nazareth, across the globe in its many guises since, would have had thousands of meetings about food quality since. Reinforcing the radio program’s point I was in Tamworth last week where a couple of residents spoke to me about how we could improve the food, the same meal I was eating and enjoying. We are a weird mob.

What also hasn’t, and doesn’t, change is the positive – a commitment to Victoire’s spirit, commitment to provide care to those in need, a focus on finding ways to improve, a commitment to Values; they too don’t change.

David Cotter - Chief Executive

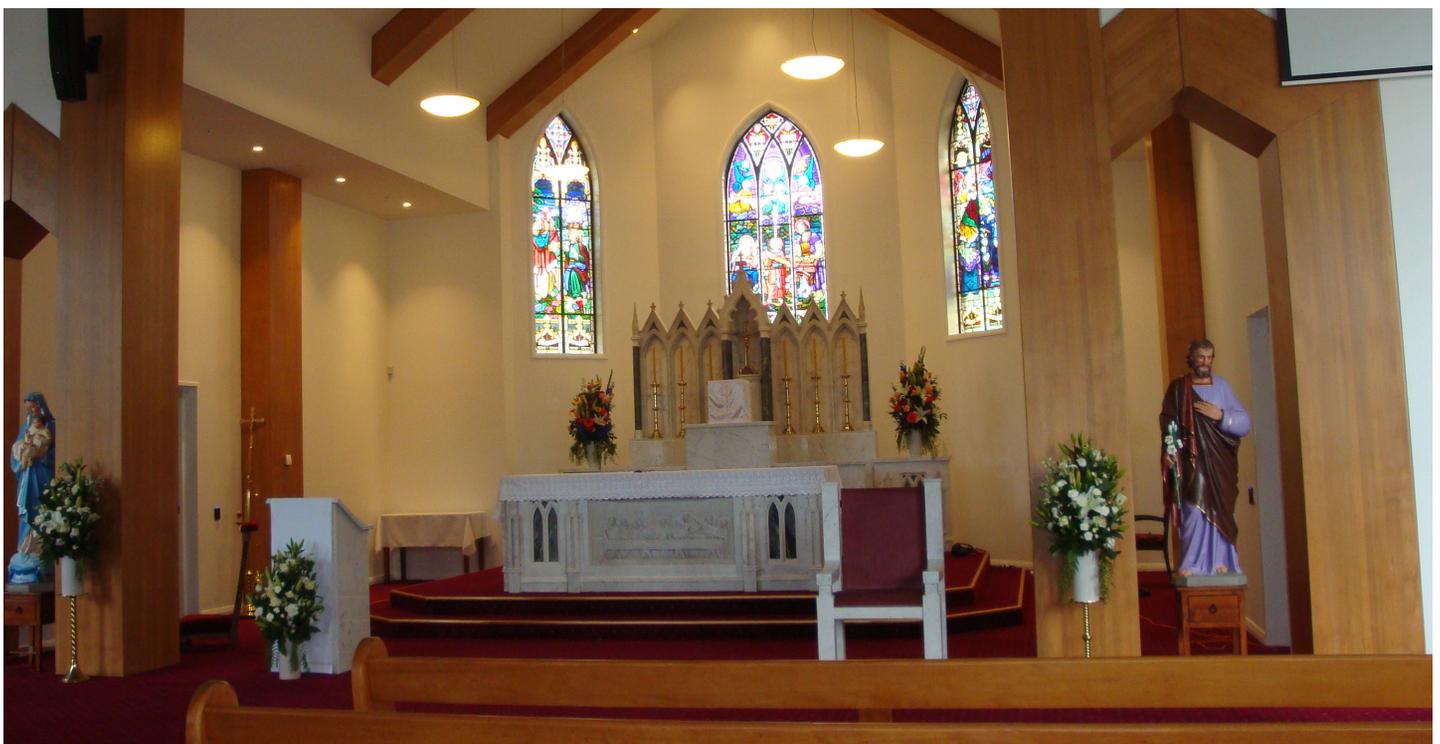
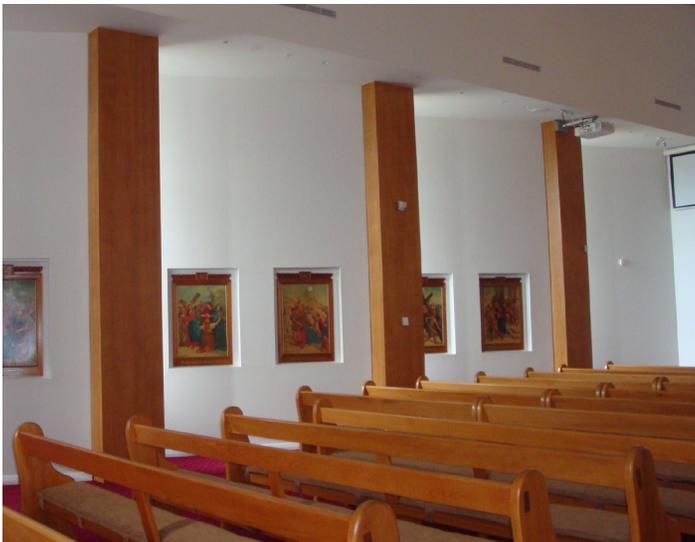
*We give thanks for our beautiful Nazareth Chapel.
The first new Catholic Church in Christchurch since the
earthquake and a jewel in the crown for the Sisters*



Sr Lucia studies the empty paddock and dreams of the future

Yes Nazareth has risen again blending the old with the new. It is a credit to those who oversaw the demolition that these precious items were saved. The Stained Glass windows, the beautiful marble Altar, the marble chair in the Sanctuary, the lectern, the Stations of the Cross which are works of art, the statues, the benches and the doors are from our original building.

The many brass candle Sticks, Sacred Vessels and Vestments were also saved. People who have supported Nazareth since 1905 would have donated these precious items so we thank all those involved. Our friends and benefactors are truly our precious gifts.



Dedication of the Chapel at Nazareth Christchurch



Opening address from Sister Mary Monaghan



The previous chapel built in 1938

On behalf of the Congregation of the Sisters of Nazareth and especially Sister Margaret O'Keefe, our Regional Superior, and the Sisters in the Australasian region, it is my great pleasure and privilege to welcome you all here today for the dedication of our beautiful new chapel.

I would particularly like to welcome Bishop-Elect Paul Martin and Bishop Emeritis Basil Meeking.

It is an honour to have you both present here today.

We welcome Fr Rick Loughnan, Administrator of the Christchurch Diocese, and thank you for being our principal celebrant on this very special occasion. We are also very happy to have Fr Jim Nicholas, who has been our chaplain, and so many Christchurch priests concelebrating.

It is wonderful to see our extended Nazareth family of Sisters, Residents, Residents' families, Villa Residents, Nazareth Care staff, religious from other Congregations, friends and benefactors as well as our architect and contractors. You too are most welcome. We are delighted you are able to be here to celebrate with us.



L/R
Fr Jim Nichols, Fr Rod Milne, Fr Peter Farrant, Fr Kevin Manning, Fr Edwin Colace, Fr Bernard Carney,
Bishop – Elect Paul Martin, and Fr Dan Doyle.

We are particularly happy to welcome Sr Dominica Cooper, our previous Regional Superior. Sister worked long and hard for the redevelopment of this whole site after the earthquake. Sister, you must be so happy to see the culmination of that hard work in today's dedication of the chapel. Thank you for all you did to help bring us to this day.

Mentioning names on an occasion like this can be a challenge for fear of missing out on someone. But I know everyone would agree that we should acknowledge the wonderful commitment and work given by Garry Donnithorne, Deputy Chair of our Regional Board, and Gerard Stribling, our Property and Maintenance Manager not just in this past year but over the last seven years. Thank you both for all the time and hard work you have given to Nazareth. We couldn't have done it all without you.

Special thanks also go to Sr Ana and the Sisters of the Christchurch community and Mirinda Robertson, our General Manager, for all you have done to make today possible. Can you believe that you can finally start to have a normal routine?

Psalms 98 calls us to sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done marvellous things.

What marvellous deeds the Lord has done to enable us to have this wonderful new chapel here in Christchurch. From the beginnings of our Congregation, the chapel has always been the centre and heart of every Nazareth House. Our Foundress, Victoire Larmenier, had a great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and it was to the chapel that she turned in good times and in bad.

And it is not just the Sisters who have this special devotion. Throughout our history and right up to today, residents, staff, relatives and other visitors often pop into the chapel to say a prayer, to have some quiet time. That is why, in our Houses, the chapel is very accessible so that making a visit is easy and simple.

This beautiful chapel is quite unique in our Congregation. I don't think any of our other chapels can claim to have links with three Nazareth House buildings on the same site. The marble altar and tabernacle, the magnificent stained glass windows, the Stations of the Cross, the doors, the statues and the benches were in the chapel that was part of the first Nazareth House and the second Nazareth House.

Unfortunately, that chapel had to be demolished after the earthquake in 2011. That is why we are so happy to have, in our new chapel, these links to and reminders of the history of Nazareth in Christchurch.

So today we do indeed sing to the Lord in thanksgiving for the marvellous deed of our chapel. This building makes our Nazareth complete and, as I said last year at the opening of the aged care facility, who would have thought on that fateful day in February 2011 that we would once again have this whole complex with the chapel as the centre of its life?

May all those who come to pray in this chapel be blessed with the peace of the Lord and may this chapel stand as a beacon of faith not just for those who live within its walls but for the whole of Christchurch.

May God bless each of you for your wonderful support, kindness, interest and friendship. We, the Sisters, thank you for journeying with us as we continue to write the Nazareth history in this great city.

Fr. Rick Loughnan blesses the New Church, assisted by Fr. Christopher Friel



Nazareth's great gathering space

Sister Mary has spoken about how our Chapel is the centre of our Home, and it certainly is. We gather there alone or with others to praise our God, to ask for His help, to give thanks, or to just rest in His presence enjoying His company. How blessed we are.

However when we emerge out into the foyer we smell the most wonderful Coffee aroma encouraging us to drop into "Bon Mere's" restaurant for a cuppa. Many of the families bring their relatives here for Morning Tea, Lunch or Afternoon Tea. It is a wonderful place to gather, no need for a car or taxi so no stress!

Below are the Sisters of the Missions doing just that, and joined by Sisters Lusie and Rosalie.

L/R Sr Margaret Hoban, Sr Margarite Elliot, Sr Lusie CSN, Sr Margaret Purdie, Sr Rosalene Hoban, Sr Rosalie O'Malley, CSN, Sr Beverly Grounds, and Sr Theresa Galvin.



Sr Melissa, Sr Helen, Sr Telesia, Sr Sipona, Sr Hoa kneeling Sr Trang

Ongoing Formation

From the 30th April - 14th May 2018 five Sisters came to Camberwell for Ongoing Formation. It was a wonderful gathering of five young women who are so enthusiastic in giving themselves totally to the Lord. As well as the Sessions covering various aspects of faith and growth development, time was also spent enjoying themselves at Sovereign Hill with the last day ending with a beautiful prepared meal for the Community.

Sr Helen O'Connell CSN



Victoire Larmenier
Sisters of Nazareth Australasia
Foundress of
Sisters of Nazareth
1827 - 1878

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Precious moments

During the early weeks of 2018, I had the opportunity to spend some extended time with my great niece and nephews. Being a religious Sister that does not often happen, so this was a most interesting and special time. It gave me an opportunity to get to know the beauty of these little ones.

The first morning I was greeted with four bright eyes waiting for me as I opened my bedroom door enquiring, "How did you like the Prince's bed?" Mind you it was an interesting experience with a big poster of Spiderman on one wall and an unknown character on the other!



Breakfast over, I was in the middle of washing the dishes when little Miss Princess asked if I could come now? It was time to pray for Grandma. She had the Prayer mat, book and candle out ready. God bless her first grade teacher who set her up with everything and taught her how to pray.

What was so special about this time? It was their simplicity, their openness, their uncomplicated way of dealing with the life issues and the special love they have for their Grandparents. Not less than their parents, just different.



It was school holidays so their mother had given instructions on what was to be done before any IT was used. Little Miss Princess was to tidy her room. When you have a family of dolls and all that goes with them, spread across the bedroom floor and they are all very real people in her little family, it can be a challenge! I was called in to assist! However I was so mesmerized at the serious but gentle and loving process that I just sat and watched as each "baby" was individually cared for with so much love. Mind you it was reported that night that I didn't help I just sat there and watched!! When that was all accomplished it was "please can you play UNO with me". I didn't really know how but I had the idea after about 10 games, mind you I think the rules were changed to suit at times, but it was fun and trying to be a step ahead of little Miss Princess was a challenge.

At lunch we spoke about their Grandparents so I asked them what they thought was special about them? On top of the list were the food treats!

"Sometimes when we are upset granddad will take us out for Hot Chocolate, just by ourselves" .."if we have been very good he might take us to 'Rush Munro's to get some ice cream to share with Grandma". "When we go to his house he lets us have a turn on his Ipad and he has a jelly bean jar to let us pick our own special colour. Mothers usually try to care for their health and teeth but grandparents like to do a little spoiling and then return them to their parents. Now they have time to enjoy them. When their own children were little, they were often too busy earning the much needed money, so why not enjoy these precious little ones now.

"Granddad taught us to ride our bikes and the best part was when we were good enough to have races down the hill. He takes us to sport and sometimes gives us a treat when we get home. He took us to the Aquarium. He makes up great stories for us and they are mostly about helicopters. Grandma used to help me to make pikelets but now she is too sick but I can take my prayer bag and I can pray with her, she knows all the prayers in my book" said Little Miss Princess. What I like best about Grandad and Grandma, they are really kind and give me lots of cuddles.

What was so special about these children, it was their simplicity, their uncomplicated way of looking at things, their gentle loving care of each other, especially the boys to their little Sister.

No wonder Jesus said "Let the little Children come to me". *Sr Rosalie*



Thoughts from the Homily of Father Mark O'Brien O.P.

Father began his Homily by speaking about the importance of love. We can't love, if God hasn't loved us first. The importance of love in the Scripture readings indicate that love is perhaps the key component of any worthwhile relationship. Book of Proverbs chapters 8-9.

God wants us to love in the best way possible and in order to do this we need to be taught. The best Teacher is God. He is our master Teacher. The best Teacher is of course always providing lessons for us to learn about love by engaging assistant teachers; namely our parents, relations, school, Church, and Scripture reading.

Each of the two young ladies here was 'called' to go to God's school, which is another way of speaking of our vocation. Each vocation is unique because each person is unique. The uniqueness of the Sisters' vocation is that a key component of it is their call by God to join the Sisters of Nazareth. For them this is the school par excellence in which they will learn how to love.

In due course they will become graduates of their school of love; that is they will in turn become teachers to others about the 'way of love' according to the Sisters of Nazareth. By becoming lovers and teachers of love as God wants us to be, we also share in God's creative power. We do this of course in a way that is appropriate to us as creatures. We are in the image and likeness of God as creatures, but of course in a creaturely way.

One of the greatest challenges of our modern world is to learn to love as Jesus loves, and one of the most important tasks for religious is to be able to help people do this.

Sister Than and Sister Epifania have come today on this beautiful feast of Our Lady Help of Christians to offer them selves' to God as Sisters of Nazareth.

Fr Tautunu blesses the profession cake, for Sr Tran and Sr Epifania



Sister Epifania pronounces her Vows of Poverty Chastity and obedience



Sister Tran receives her veil

Thoughts from the Homily of Father Mark O'Brien O.P. cont



Fr Tautunu, Sr Margaret, Sr Epifania,
Fr Mark O'Brien, Sr Tran, Fr Casanova, Sr Bernadette



Community Group

Sisters Than Thi Pham and Epifania give thanks.

We are truly grateful to have had the privilege to freely surrender ourselves to God by publicly professing the three vows of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience in the Congregation of the Sisters of Nazareth.

The experience was both humbling and moving, so we cannot explain in our own words as we wonder. "How can I repay the Lord for his goodness to me?."

Psalm 116: 12

Over the last three years these Sisters have spent time learning about this love, how God loves them, how they will live in community and how their Mission will be to take this love out into the wider community, especially to those they will care for.



Celebrants: Fr Condon, Fr Feleti Tautunu,
Fr Mark O'Brien, Fr Casanova



Sr Bernadette, Sr Epifania, Sr Tran,
Sr Margaret

The Wisdom of the Elderly - Sister Melissa

In the words of Joyce Johnson's song "We are Standing on the Shoulders," it is easy to visualise the link between the generations past and those yet to come. Each is a part of the other but is also a part to themselves. It is these links that make us stronger, more courageous and wiser as we continue the journey.

I have had many influential people in my life over the years and I am sure there will be many more in the years to come. The first people I think of are my parents; from whom I first learnt about love, care and kindness but also boundaries, responsibilities and learning right from wrong. I learnt about who I am and to also about belonging. They taught me how to be part of a family and a community, look out for others and to think of others. I also had strong links to my large extended family and have many aunts and uncles, cousins and my grandparents. I never met one of my grandfathers and my Pa died when I was 8 and I still have fond memories of him. I grew up with both of my grandmothers and I knew both of my great grandmothers. I am blessed to still have my Nana with me which I know is very special. They all brought another layer to my life and still offer much love and support.

I grew up looking to my elders for advice and support, learning from and respecting the wisdom of their years. I was used to hearing the stories of '...in my days...' realising there would be some message I was supposed to learn or take away with me. I was used to the sometimes forgetful moments and filling in the blanks knowing that the important piece of information would come.

Since joining the Sisters of Nazareth I have continued to be surrounded by much love, support and wisdom from Sisters from all different generations. I thank God for all the support I have had from the experienced Sisters, who like my parents are teaching me how to be a part of community, how to look out for others and how to think of others. I continue to learn about loving, caring, kindness and bringing God's love to all that we meet. While also learning about Victoire Larmenier and the Early Sisters, the history and mission of the Sisters, and also the vision for the future. I bring the lessons that I have learnt with me and am open to learn more each day. We can't live in the past but neither should we forget about it; rather we can respect it, learn from it and grow from it. As Joyce Johnson's song concludes:

"I am standing on the shoulders of the ones who came before me.
I am honoured by their passion for our liberty.
I will stand a little taller, I will work a little longer.
And my shoulders will be there to hold the ones who follow me."
(Joyce Johnson, Rouse Earth Mama, Love Large Album)

60 Years of loving service given so joyfully to God

Sister Jocelyn Coleman was born on the West Coast of New Zealand and lived all of her early life in Blackball. Her mother died when she was nine years old but her Father cared lovingly for all five children. In 1956 Jocelyn joined the Sisters of Nazareth where she was known as Sister Joseph Kevin. Sister has spent 60 years caring for many residents in various Nazareth Houses in Australia and New Zealand. Sister excelled at her job as caterer and she cooked many wonderful, wholesome meals for us all. How we loved her special treats! Sister also loved to sing and would do so graciously at any request or her own desire.

In later years Sister reverted to her Baptismal name of Sister Jocelyn. Part of her nature was to, easily and very quickly develop a wonderful rapport with people. Her memory for remembering family details about those she met was truly amazing. For years she collected vegetables from the market in Melbourne where the stall holders would be waiting to give extremely generously to her. They all became her 'friends'. Another great love she had was for horse racing. But her greatest love of all was for her God. She has the greatest faith of anyone I know. It has been said "Could any good come out of Blackball?"....



Sr Jocelyn cutting her cake

... Certainly, the gift of our Jocelyn.

Sr Rosalie
10

A difficult time

Moving out of your home and into aged care, leaving a lifetime of memories and possibly a husband, wife or close friend is quite a traumatic event. However when there is time to become mentally and emotionally accepting of what needs to happen, the road is a little less stressful, both for the person concerned and their family.

Having worked in Aged care for 40+ years I have witnessed this situation many times. A person still living at home, would become unwell and needed some time in Hospital only to find that they could not regain their former fitness. This made it necessary to be admitted to an Aged Care Facility. There may not have been time to say goodbye to their home and the many memories it held. It is important at this time, both the person and their family are helped, supported and given time and encouragement to walk through these difficult days. It is good to spend time with them and find out what they think would be helpful. Remember, each person is different.

One lady I cared for, was in just that unhappy state, so I asked her what she thought might help! She thought if she could have one last visit to the house and take something with her. This was done. On looking at the house one would have wondered how she could have possibly lived in it but to her it was her "Home". Taking a picture of St Teresa from the wall she said, "this was a wedding present". She went back to the Facility with her picture and happy. *Sister Rosalie*

My Grandmother

I've always known I've had an amazing grandmother. It wasn't until the possibility of me not having a grandmother at all, did I realise just how amazing she is. 'You never know how important something truly is, until it's gone' is a saying I now know very well to be true.

Through a dramatic decline in health and a major scare to the whole family, my grandmother now resides in a fantastic rest home where she is likely to live out the rest of her days. This is something I adjusted to quickly however only now am I understanding the full impact. The woman I once knew to be at every netball game, every kapahaka performance, at every Sunday Mass, would no longer be standing alongside me. My grandmother has always been a massive part of my life, and I can whole heartedly say she is an incredible woman I look up to and aspire to be. Her strong religious values have shined through in every aspect of her life, her generosity, kind heart, loving soul, and everlasting willingness to give, are attributes I admire.

I found it quite difficult to visit her to begin with, seeing her that way, was not something I wanted to remember her as. However when my mother decided we should go through the stations of the cross with her because she was unable to go to a service herself, I knew this was something I had to do. I can firmly say that the moment completely changed my life and it was then I found out who my grandmother really was, and who she was to others. She is an incredibly wise woman, her ability to relate to people is phenomenal, and most importantly her strength and resilience. In that moment I saw all the hardship she had powered through in her life. I had seen her struggles, somehow always finding a way to make ends meet, always holding her family together. I saw the true beauty of my Grandmother, a beauty that I cannot express through words. I see my mother in her, I hope to see myself in her one day too. She is my Grandmother.

Jessica Te Moananui

My grandmother sharing Easter with the whole family. Her first outing since she was taken to ICU the week before Christmas. Here she is enjoying the sun with her youngest granddaughter in her Easter bunny suit.



Jessica Te Moananui
17years



The Gift of Grandchildren to their Grandparents



Aiden, Jan +Charlie
Hamish the family pet

I offer praise and thanks to God for the gift of grand-children! What a great joy and wonder! When I found out I was to be a "Nanna" in my late forties, I was surprised and amazed. I was still getting over the fact, my three boys were now men!

Twenty six years and ten grand-children later and in my 70's, I feel able to reflect back on the many facets I have experienced over the years. I chose to be "Nanna" to honour my own "Nanna Ethel". We were very close and she had a profound influence on my life. She was always there, in the background, I never heard her say an unkind word about anyone. She taught me to knit, sat with me when I was sick, she secretly paid for my Wedding Dress and bought my first sewing machine. In my 20's, when she lost her only son, my father, grief drew us even closer. She was such a good listener who only gave advice when it was asked for. Mind you, I didn't always heed it, much to my loss!

Reflecting back, I am so glad I could give her the gift of having a great-grandchild who carried the name of her only son, Albert. This name was then perpetuated in my first grand-son. Grand-parents are a very important part of a child's life. But as we live in a global society, many grand-parents have to work hard to maintain contact with their grand-children, through costly interstate and overseas visits, the internet and skype.

As a Nanna, I have been blessed that my grand-children live reasonably close and I have had the time and luxury to sit back and enjoy watching each child grow and unfold, to see their unique talents develop!

Early days where simple pleasures of a swing, a slide in the park, scrunching autumn leaves as you walk, brought wonder to their little lives. This led to Grand-parents Days at Kinder and School, then to Ballet and Choir concerts, Music Recitals, Netball Sessions and Swimming Lessons. All have been part of my Nanna life. The best part being their spiritual lives unfolding, with Baptisms, receiving the Eucharist and Confirmation. Later, the dreaded driving lessons and getting their "hours up" when parents were flat out as well as Debutante Balls, 18th and 21st birthdays.

Some Pearls of Wisdom I have learnt along the way include:

You must remember that you are not the parents! You've had your turn at that. It is wise to give advice only when it is asked for!

You are allowed to spoil your grand-children, but it is your presence and listening ear that they appreciate most!

Don't play football or try to take marks in your 60's, as it is 'dog eats dog' out there! Know it is OK to sit back and watch!

Listen to your grand-children when they give you advice rather than giving it to them!

Sneaking treats to the family pet can get you into all sorts of trouble!

Always pray for your family, leave them in the care of Jesus and get on with finding love, peace and joy in your own life and hold onto the friendships you have made on your life's journey!

Janet Kruger



Sr Clare + sharing with
Sister Melissa about her
many years in South
Africa"

Front Cover

Emma sharing a Hug
from Grandma, Jo Brady

