

THE Catholic Weekly

retirement living

Magazine



AUSTRALIAN
CATHOLIC
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FUTURE LIVING FUTURE PLANNING

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retirement *living* magazine

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Home Care Specialists are here to help

As you get older, living independently in your own home can become more difficult. The government's My Aged Care home care system can be confusing and it can also be difficult to find the right information for your needs. But it is useful to know that help is only a phone call away – call CCareline on 13 18 19 to talk to a Home Care Specialist today and book a free consultation at home.

CatholicCare is a not-for-profit and the social service agency of the Archdiocese of Sydney. CatholicCare Home Care Specialists are available to help seniors navigate the complex system and find the care they need.

CatholicCare's Home Care Specialists can help provide information when you are just starting to explore the care options available, through to helping you with the application process and booking services so you can start to receive care at home.

After a number of health-related setbacks, Stefania and Ohannes realised that they needed help at home. They found the process for organising home care complicated, especially with English as their second language. This confusion led to them having to wait an extra 18 months for their home care package.

In 2009 Ohannes went into Liverpool Hospital for a heart operation – CatholicCare was assigned to them by the hospital to provide six weeks of post-hospital care for a smooth transition back into his home. "CatholicCare was great, but after the six weeks was up, I had to rely on Stefania to help with my recovery." The care Ohannes needed was greater than anticipated, leaving the couple feeling out of their depth.

During this time Ohannes knew that they needed to move out of their townhouse to a more suitable home.

"The week that we were due to move I had a heart attack, it was then that I realised that we were going to need some help at home," said Ohannes.

"I asked around the village and I was told to call My Aged Care. I contacted them but was given the run around. Every time we talked to them it was like we had to start from the beginning again. I remembered how helpful CatholicCare had been, so I called them to see if they could help us again.

Catherine who is the Home Care



Specialist, came to our house and sorted everything out. Without her, I still don't think we would have any services provided."

Catherine recalls the day she met with Stefania and Ohannes, "Stefania had just had another fall, this time hurting her shoulder, and they were in desperate need of some safety-related adjustments around the home. I asked them about how far they had progressed through the My Aged Care process and they showed me a letter, but they weren't sure what it meant."

Catherine remembered reading the letter, "When I looked at this letter, I realised that it was their approval letter for a Home Care package, but it had expired".

What Stefania and Ohannes didn't

realise was that they only had 56 days to contact My Aged Care, and provide them with the activation code that was printed in their letter, had they done this, they would have access to their home care services straight away. Catherine was devastated to find that the contact period had expired and Stefania and Ohannes would now have to go to the back of the queue and wait up to 18 months, with thousands of others, to receive their home care services.

Catherine comments, "Sadly, this happens more often than you think. CatholicCare help seniors get registered with My Aged Care because it's a complicated system."

"My recommendation to all seniors is not to wait. As soon as you need the slightest bit of assistance at home,

give CatholicCare a call on 13 18 19."

Thankfully for Stefania and Ohannes, CatholicCare was able to provide them with some volunteer and private care services while they were on the waiting list for their Home Care package.

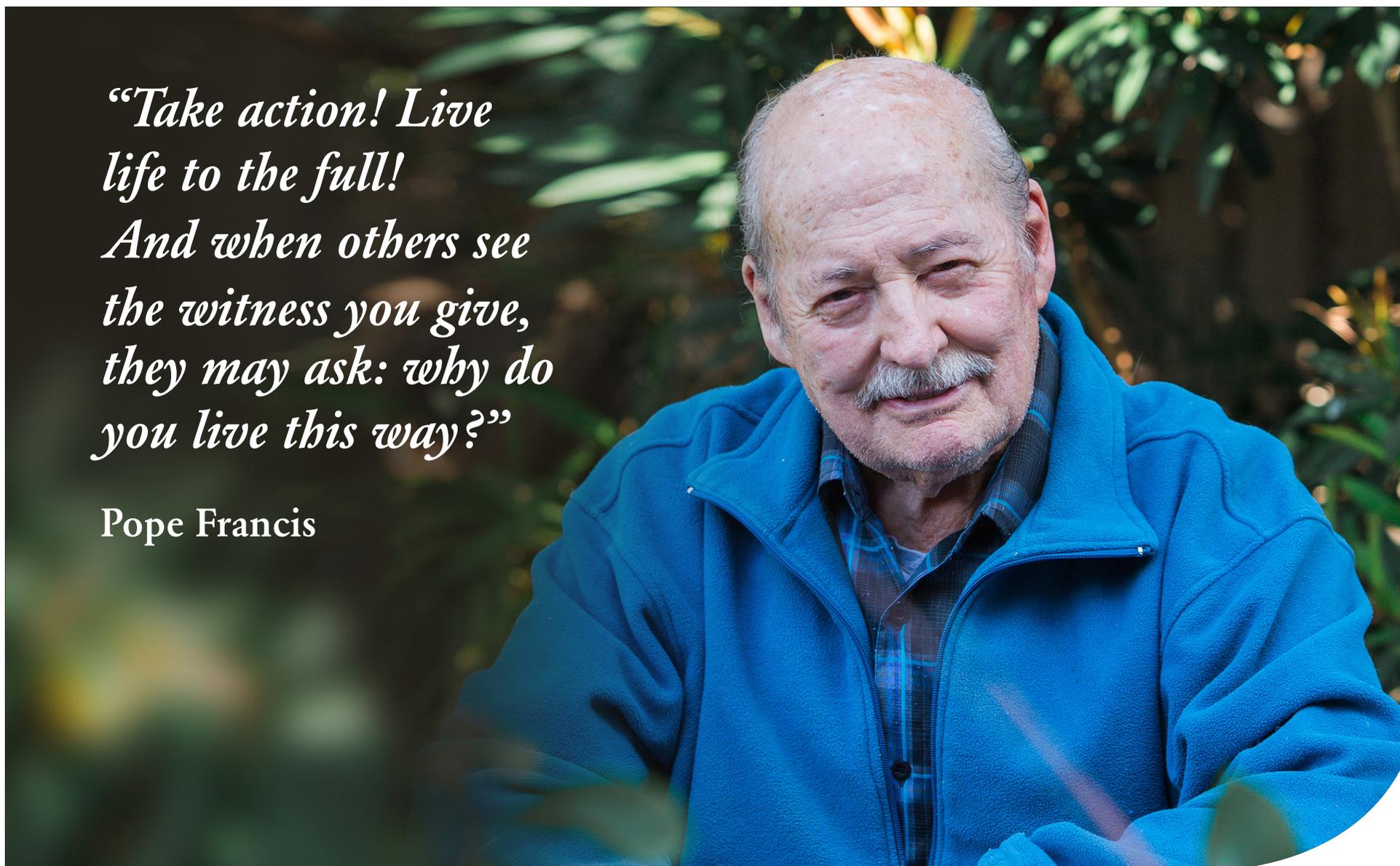
Organise your services

When you're ready to organise home care services we can arrange for a Home Care Specialist to visit your home and help you create a plan that suits your personal needs and budget.

Call CatholicCare's friendly team today on 13 18 19 and a Home Care Specialist will get in touch, or come visit you at home and support you through every step of the process.

*“Take action! Live
life to the full!
And when others see
the witness you give,
they may ask: why do
you live this way?”*

Pope Francis



Home care can be confusing

Help for seniors to understand your home care options

CatholicCare provides in-home care services to seniors throughout Sydney.

Our Home Care Specialists can guide you through the complicated government My Aged Care system. Our volunteers can also assist if you need help at home while you wait for government funded services.

Book a free consultation with our Home Care Specialists by calling CCareline on 13 18 19.

CCareline 13 18 19
CatholicCare.org



Keeping our heads in the game

Earlier this year, the worlds most famous man living with Parkinson's disease retired from the career that has made him a household name. Michael J Fox, diagnosed with the degenerative condition almost thirty years ago, has now retired from acting aged 59.

By Jovina James



That the man dubbed 'the eternal optimist' has kept so active and engaged with his work for the past three decades is remarkable. His books reveal an astonishing buoyancy in his attitude to life. "When life takes something away, something of greater value is always given in return," he writes. When asked how he maintains such optimism in the face of considerable struggle, he says "With gratitude, optimism becomes sustainable". This is a man who knows the importance of keeping his head in the right frame of mind in any situation.

Whether your retirement days are filled with your favourite leisure activity, volunteering activities or quality family time, we all know that the golden days of retirement are usually quite a shift from the routine of the working years. It is unsurprising that for many retirees, their mental and spiritual health are affected even if they have never been an issue before.

Mental health conditions can go undetected for years while impacting on our wellbeing. Up to 1 in 6 people over 65 in Australia experience depression, not to mention the other common mental health afflictions such as anxiety and

addiction. So with these conditions being almost as common as high blood pressure and raised cholesterol, it is important to be aware of the common signs:

- Difficulty sleeping
- Change in appetite or weight
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Not receiving joy from the things you used to

If you are concerned, seeking early intervention is vital. Of course, none of these signs in isolation means that you have a problem! However if you notice something unusual, going to see a doctor is similar to going to a priest for confession: they will not laugh at you, they have heard it all before, and they will be grateful you came to talk about it.

Acknowledging that prevention is better than cure, prioritising our mental health as much as our physical health in our retirement years is essential. The United States National Institute of Ageing offers these important tips as ways of maintaining brain health*:

1. Take Care of Your Physical Health
2. Manage high blood pressure
3. Eat healthy foods
4. Be physically active
5. Keep your mind active
6. Stay connected with social activities
7. Manage stress
8. Reduce risks to cognitive health

For anyone seeking inspiration in your mental health journey, have a look at the 'OBE' campaign from Beyond Blue. In this case, OBE stands for Over Bl—dy 80! It is a great campaign that encourages positive ageing and examines the personal stories of those who have encountered mental health struggles along the way.

We do not all need the spunk and wisdom of Michael J Fox, but a bit of his motivation to keep our minds healthy will go a long way.

* From the website: www.nia.nih.gov



⚡ Mental health conditions can go undetected for years while impacting on our wellbeing.

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- ◆ New Macarthur Memorial Park to open in 2023

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Please call (02) 9649 6423 or visit www.catholiccemeteries.com.au

Peace of mind when you need it most

For over 150 years, Catholic Cemeteries + Crematoria have created and maintained sacred memorial places. As one of the largest cemetery trusts in NSW, Catholic Cemeteries manage four existing cemeteries at Rookwood, North Rocks, Liverpool and Kemps Creek and have approval for a new cemetery in western Sydney.



Catholic Cemeteries are committed to actively engaging with its communities. This is demonstrated by our busy events calendar. Memorial services are held at multiple locations through-out the year, providing community members with an opportunity to remember and reflect. Mother's Day, Father's Day, All Souls' Day and Carols by Candlelight services were among the most popular events.

There are also monthly masses for the *Repose of Souls* and *Grief Support* services offered including face to face, phone and email support for the ongoing support of families and individuals dealing with grief and loss.

Macarthur Memorial Park will be an innovative, sustainable and multid denominational memorial and parkland destination, designed to honour life, culture and community. The NSW Independent Planning Commission recommended the new Crown cemetery for approval in July 2019. It will be the first cemetery built in Sydney, in over 50 years.

The memorial park will be Australia's first technologically integrated and green-star rated cemetery. It will be distinctly landscaped over 113 hectares of green space. The

public space will be open to all, and feature stunning architecturally designed chapels, a world-class sculpture walk, water features, cafe and a vineyard.

Community leaders have welcomed the approved development of the new multi-faith cemetery on the outskirts of Sydney, to meet the needs of a rapidly growing and diverse multi-cultural population. The two local government areas of Campbelltown and Camden alone will have a combined population of more than 500,000.

With Sydney still relying on cemeteries that were built in the mid-nineteenth century, a 2017 government report found that if there is no change to existing cremation and grave occupancy rates, cemetery capacity in metropolitan Sydney would be exhausted by 2051. Unavailability of at-need burial plots can be expected from 2026, across several areas of Sydney.

Once completed, the new memorial park is forecast to add 136,000 burial plots over the next 100 years and will help meet the needs of the 35% of Sydneysiders whose preference is burial, rather than cremation.

CEO of the not-for-profit Cath-

olic Cemeteries + Crematoria, Mr Peter O'Meara said the approval means the trust can now help future generations meet the challenges of declining burial space in a rapid growth area of Sydney.

"We have a strong Catholic population in Sydney's south west and the new cemetery will help us cater for their needs, as well as those from other denominations." Mr O'Meara said.

"This approval ensures the interment practices and beliefs of all religious and cultural groups are respected and provided for. We welcome everyone to these world-class facilities and public recreational spaces".

The NSW Minister for Water, Property and Housing, the Hon. Melinda Pavey also welcomed the approval saying this vital infrastructure was a great step towards addressing the critical problem of diminishing burial space in Sydney.

Catholic Cemeteries + Crematoria will also restore the dilapidated and partly collapsed historic buildings on the site, to their former condition. The memorial park at Varroville will include passive recreation areas, gardens and landscaped walkways accessible to everyone in

the community.

Knowing where to start can be the hardest part.

It is not easy to talk about our final wishes with our family and friends, but it's one of the most important conversations that we can have. From choices for funeral music and flowers through to your final resting place, pre-planning offers the freedom to choose how you want to be remembered.

Choosing your final resting place ahead of time, can provide great comfort in knowing that your final wishes will be carried out, in a way that uniquely reflects you and your life, and that loved ones will not be burdened with difficult decisions during their time of grief. It also makes financial sense to pay for your resting place, at today's prices, avoiding any future price increases.

Planning ahead avoids unnecessary stress, and provides peace of mind, as family and friends will not have to guess "what you would have wanted" and ensures that your wishes are honoured in the way that you have chosen.

*To order your free copy of the *Statement of Wishes* booklet to help you record your choices, please call Catholic Cemeteries on (02) 9649 6423.*

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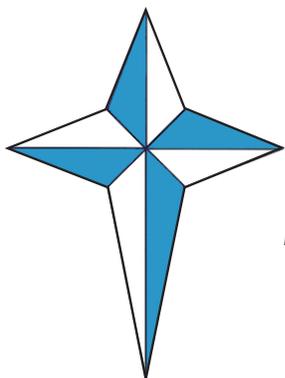
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Trinity Management Services is led by an executive team with long careers directing companies in the health care industry and wider business sectors. Combined, they bring outstanding skills in customer relations and development, property and business development, payroll, technology, finance and clinical care advisory.

With many facilities facing the reality of 'What's next?' and transitional options, we'd love to hear from you to plan a way forward in partnership which respects all involved and navigates the changes in Aged Care.



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We understand aged issues, but not the answers

Aged care is expensive, but for how long can we put off the inevitable investment?



Ageing and death can be difficult issues. Most of us prefer to distract ourselves from these fundamental realities. As a result, however, our political discussion on aged care has been characterised by gingeriness, euphemism and indecision.

We have failed to grapple practically with a concrete political problem.

Since 2002 the government has released four intergenerational reports. Another is due this year. All have identified our ageing population as a core national challenge. None has triggered meaningful reform to address it.

But while the ageing “problem” can be fiendishly complex in some respects, at its core it’s quite straightforward: if we want to treat elders with respect and dignity in their final stages of life, then we need much more money.

Indeed, about \$20bn a year more, according to a discussion paper just released by the Royal Commission on Aged Care Quality and Safety.

This amount is rarely disputed. Although there is some room for debate at the edges, no one credibly disputes that a significant amount of funding is required to fix our ever worsening aged-care crisis.

More than half of aged-care homes operate at a loss. In rural and remote areas, that figure rises to almost three-quarters. Before

COVID-19 struck, 15 per cent of aged-care providers suggested they would close their doors within a year. The pandemic is likely to have made things significantly worse.

The waiting list for homecare packages has 104,000 names on it. Carers in the sector have always been underpaid and jobs are getting much harder to fill.

So the national discussion we need to have is not about whether the money is needed but, rather, the fairest means of raising it. It’s a debate we’ve squibbed to date.

Despite what modern monetary theorists may tell us, there’s no pain-free way to find funding. Any method will raise a squeal from someone. And for the past 20 years every squeal has been met with a hasty retreat.

At the beginning of the year I advanced the idea of tighter means testing so seniors who owned wealth would be required to use it to pay for their care. The reaction Catholic Health Australia received was predictably impassioned. Many agreed with me. Many did not.

That’s completely understandable. Any floating of tighter means testing immediately leaves you open to charges of “coming after grandma’s home”, an idea I don’t relish. But if you wish to reject the option you need to front up honestly with an alternative.

In this respect, the aged-care royal commission has done a valuable service to the

national debate by putting a hard proposal on the table.

To raise the additional billions we need, the royal commission estimates we will need to raise income tax about 2 per cent. For the average income earner that’s near \$1700 a year.

The royal commission anticipates the figure will have to rise steadily as the population ages.

The royal commission suggests that if we do this, we take a Medicare levy-style approach so it’s safe from tinkering by future governments. This makes sense.

Admirably, the royal commission doesn’t shrink from the ethical issues with this approach. It notes that an aged care levy, introduced now, would hit younger taxpayers today disproportionately because they would be forced to pay for their own care as well as the care of their elders. Older Australians, who had never had to pay the levy, would be the winners.

Nonetheless, accepting this reality may be the only way forward. But, to make such a deal more palatable politically, government should take a deep breath and another look at fairer means testing to help mitigate the impact on taxpayers.

User contributions represent 20 per cent of aged-care spending. Taxpayers pick up the rest. What we require users to contribute is based on an arcane tangle of red tape that



Dominican postulant Anna Harper plays Pokeno with patient Harriet Boyle at Rosary Hill Home in Hawthorne, New York. Rosary Hill is the motherhouse of the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne, who staff a nursing home at the site that provides palliative care to people with incurable cancer and are in financial need. Photo: CNS, Gregory A. Shemitz

aligns neither to the person's wealth nor the value of the services they receive.

And we quarantine a potential source of billions in funding: housing wealth. It's only the first \$171,000 of the value of a home that is means tested for personal and nursing care. It's a profligacy we can no longer afford.

There is any number of ways we can make it easy for seniors to draw down against the value of their homes. The pension loans scheme, for example, could be made more

attractive with better rates and easier access.

Of course many seniors don't have significant wealth of any kind and they too deserve dignity and comfort. While the injection of funding from wealthier Australians would help lift standards across the board, significantly more public funding will always be needed.

As the royal commission has made stark, there are no easy options here. To better provide for our parents and grandparents, all of

us must sacrifice a little — whether through a general levy or through greater levels of private contribution.

Either way we need to square up to the challenge and make a call. The alternative is that a fifth intergenerational report comes and goes, and a system we know is failing many elders continues to crumble.

Pat Garcia is Chief Executive of Catholic Health Australia

Calling Calvary Home

A chance conversation 20-odd years ago brought Botany Bay boy Frank Owens across the harbour to Dalton Gardens.

Now 78, the retired telecommunications technical officer says he'd happily make the same move again.

Dalton Gardens is set amid the expansive landscaped grounds of Ryde's historic Dalton estate, which was bestowed more than 100 years ago into the loving care and stewardship of the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary (LCM).

The retirement living precinct was fairly new when Frank visited. It was one of the Sisters, his cousin Sr Melissa Owens, who suggested it could be the new home Frank was looking for.

"I was looking at all sorts of places – the North Shore, The Shire," Frank recalled. "I was telling Melissa about it all. She had moved to the LCM convent at North Adelaide by then but she suggested I go have a look at Dalton Gardens."

And why not. It was a walk away from the amenities and hub of Ryde, close to good transport links, and wasn't very far from anywhere he might want to go. The people seemed friendly and it had lots of space to walk and wander.

They are still among the things Frank likes best about where he lives – along with its history and the connections that anchor him. Connections like Sr Melissa and her mother, Mary, who both lived there for a time; and his best friend Patricia, who moved from her Dalton Gardens villa to the on-site residential care home five years ago when her care needs changed.

Most mornings, Frank still walks the 10 minutes or so to the Top Ryde Shopping Centre to get his day's groceries, go to the Post Office, or do any other shopping he needs. He's up early and is there and back before the shops get too busy. "Especially important these past 12 months," he says of the 2020 pandemic year.

An "analogue man in a digital world", Frank knows every inch of the eight hectares of gardens and walking paths that meander about the grounds and out into neighbouring estates and wider world.

"I've been happy here, it's suited



Retired telecommunications technical officer Frank Owens.

me."

Dalton Gardens Retirement Village is part of the Calvary Ryde Retirement Community. Wealthy landowner and philanthropist Thomas Dalton gifted the estate and the heritage-listed Dalton House to the Sisters in 1890. It was initially used as a hospital and more recently for retirement living.

Over the past few years, Calvary Ryde has undergone a \$60 million redevelopment, including construction of 21 new independent living apartments known as the Dalton Residences.

The apartments have been designed for seniors and offer the lifestyle comforts of Dalton Gardens in a contemporary style. The one, two and three-bedroom layouts offer rooms with a view, practical design elegance, beautiful, light-filled living spaces, and quality finishes.

Enquiries are open now, and people can move in from mid-to-late January.

The redevelopment has also included a new, purpose-built residential care home to replace the former

home. It has 116 single rooms with ensuites, and offers its residents a supported environment that is as close as possible to life at home.

Frank has been watching it all with interest.

"I only ever wanted to move once – that was one of my reasons for coming here," said Frank. "I'm still going along pretty well (but) if the time comes that I do have to move again, it won't need to be far."

He may have slowed a little in more recent years, but Frank still has his health, and his faith, regularly attending on-site services, where two local retired priests pray or celebrate Mass.

Faith and spirituality are important factors for many Calvary Ryde residents, who come from a range of backgrounds, cultures and religious faiths – including Catholics, Buddhists, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, a Seventh Day Adventist, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Baptists, Hindus, and Uniting.

The \$60 million redevelopment at Ryde is a major investment for Calvary, a national Catholic provider of

health, aged and community care services. A not-for-profit organisation founded by the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, Calvary now operates across six states and territories in Australia with 14 public and private hospitals, 17 retirement and aged care communities, and a national network of community care centres.

In November, Calvary celebrated 135 years since six courageous Sisters first arrived in Australia in 1885 to begin their mission of providing care and support to some of the most vulnerable in their community. Before long they were nursing the sick, running a soup kitchen, a night refuge, a school for the blind, a parish school and providing social services to those in need. Within a few short years they would establish their first hospital on our shores, at Lewisham.

You can find out more about Calvary and the Sisters' mission at www.calvarycare.org.au, and about the new Dalton Residences at www.calvarydaltonresidences.org.au

Opening in
Jan

a brighter 2021

in the heart of Ryde



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When is the right time to make the move to retirement living?

Thinking about moving to a retirement community? Are you craving that community, companionship or lock-up-and-leave lifestyle?

As many people know from personal or family experience, it's not uncommon for seniors to delay moving from a longheld family home that no longer suits their needs and has increasingly costly upkeep and maintenance demands.

Yet as all social research shows, reluctance to face the thought of moving from the family home is one of the major reasons elderly Australians report such high levels of loneliness and social isolation, particularly following the loss of a spouse or with the onset of age-related health conditions that make it increasingly difficult to get out and about.

According to other seniors who have, however, taken the "leap" and downsized to an over-55s village, the optimal possible time to make the move is when you are still active and healthy enough to take full advantage of all the facilities, services and social activities on offer and make a wide circle of new friends.

"The best thing by far about a retirement village is the community," comments Fiona Russell, village manager of Ashfield's state-of-the-art Cardinal Freeman retirement village. "Our residents often say their social lives have expanded enormously after moving here. Of course there's no pressure to join in, but there's such a wonderful variety of social activities

and facilities on offer here, most residents find themselves getting far more involved than anticipated."

The social side of life in a retirement village is one of its biggest drawcards, with regular activities and events available for those who want to take part, as well as the broader advantages of living among like-minded people.

Cardinal Freeman resident Ken Bridge fully agrees, saying his basic message to seniors unsure as to the right time to move to a retirement village is, "Don't leave it too late."

Even as a growing network of home care services and providers makes it easier to stay living independently in the family home for longer, the health and social benefits of retirement living continue to win out for many retirees.

"Come in and enjoy the wide range of activities, make new friends, broaden your circle of social contacts and your experiences", Ken advises. "A village like Cardinal Freeman adds an excitement to life. "There are just so many things to do here – walking groups, social clubs, discussion clubs and book clubs. I've found such a wonderful community here, so many generous people who want to share their time and experiences."

For many, retirement villages offer benefits that other living options, like staying at home or downsizing to an apartment, simply can't. There's the lock-up-and-go convenience that the grey nomad craves, the social con-



Ken Bridge enjoying the benefits of over 55s living at Cardinal Freeman

nection and security you might not feel at home, and even the services and support network to grow older with confidence. It's the best of all worlds.

Ken says another major benefit for seniors is that living in a purpose-built village is so easy and comfortable. "The apartments at Cardinal Freeman are very well planned for our generation, everything is at hand, and you don't have to worry about climbing up and down stairs or doing any home or garden maintenance," he says.

"We are also blessed in this village to have a good leadership team who are accessible, available and particularly nice people."

If you've been considering retire-

ment living or thinking about downsizing, now is the chance. Experience the very best of Inner West retirement with first-class facilities and services on offer, an award-winning Clubhouse and a caring and vibrant community of like-minded individuals. Cardinal Freeman is the ideal choice for Over 55s seeking the highest possible standard of retirement living.

With only a handful of brand new apartments ranging from \$945,000 to \$1,090,000, this is your final opportunity to call Cardinal Freeman The Residences home.

To make an appointment to view the stunning apartments and tour Cardinal Freeman's community, please call 1800 72 71 70 and speak to Jill.





Final opportunity to purchase brand new at Cardinal Freeman

Join this fantastic Over 55s Community featuring magnificent gardens, an active social calendar and award-winning Clubhouse. Cardinal Freeman offers unrivaled retirement living for those seeking the highest standard.

Features of the apartments include:

- Close proximity to the cafe and Clubhouse, which features a heated indoor pool/gym, art/craft studio and bar and piano lounge and meeting areas
- Open-plan living flows to large balcony for family get-togethers
- Beautiful kitchen with Miele appliances and stone benchtop
- Ample storage throughout with additional storage in the basement car park
- Private master bedroom with large ensuite
- Spacious second bedroom
- Ducted air-conditioning and ceiling fans
- Beautifully appointed guest bathroom with quality inclusions

Don't miss your opportunity to call Cardinal Freeman home. Only limited apartments remain with prices ranging from \$945,000 – \$1,090,000.*

To make an appointment call 1800 72 71 70 and speak to Jill.

*Prices correct at 7/12/20. Subject to change.



A bonus for your retirement

Receive a \$20K rebate[^] when you join our community.

Reserve your home at Cardinal Freeman by 31st December 2020 and settle by 31st March 2021 and we'll offer you a \$20,000 rebate.

Choose the home type that's right for you, with a range of options available:

- Independent living units
- Brand new independent living apartments

Take advantage of this limited-time offer and make your retirement a lifestyle choice at Cardinal Freeman.

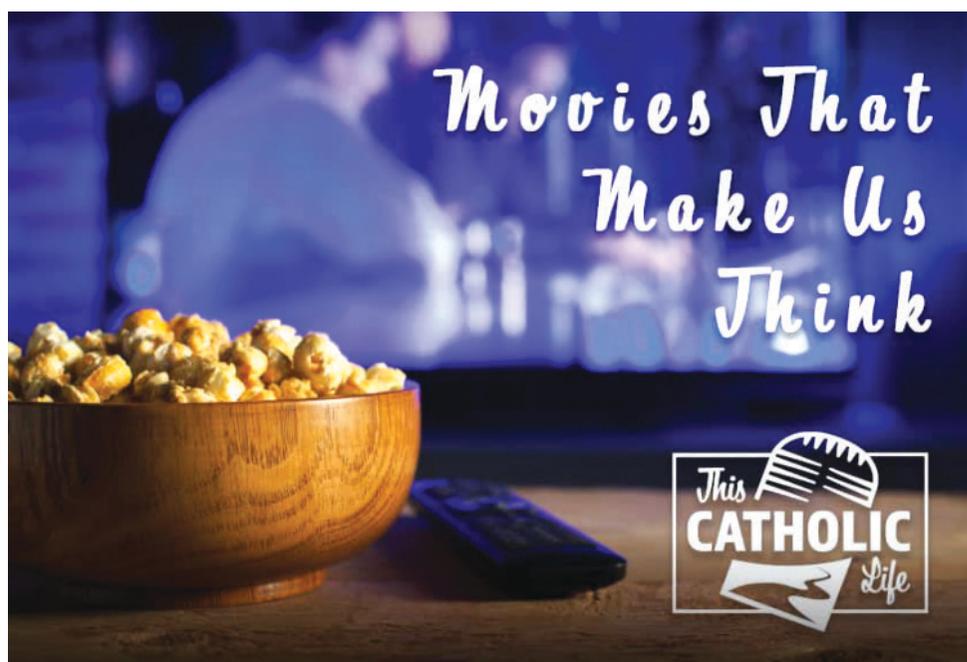
Don't miss your chance to call this wonderful community home – call Jill today on 1800 72 71 70.

[^]Terms and conditions apply. Offer applies to selected homes. Visit <https://www.stockland.com.au/retirementliving/sale-terms> or speak to our team.

Podcasting the net out into the deep

‘ If you have yet to discover the world of podcasts, then please prepare for your life to be revolutionised.

By Jovina James



The Catholic Weekly website promotes ‘This Catholic Life’ podcast. Go to www.thiscatholiclife.com.au

Did you know that you can solve true crime cold-cases while you work in your own garden?

What’s more, you can learn how black holes form while going for your daily walk. And during your grocery shop you can learn about the relationship of John the Baptist to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. All of this for free!

If you have yet to discover the world of podcasts, then please prepare for your life to be revolutionised. Retirement is the perfect opportunity to delve into this user-friendly, safe and undemanding form of technology that does not even require you to remember a password! All you need is your computer or other digital device.

Like a good radio segment that is accessible whenever you want, able to be paused and re-listened to, you will love having your favourite podcast series at your fingertips at your convenience. You can search for almost anything within your selected podcast app (more on the apps below) and you are bound to find a podcast dedicated to that topic; whether it be the sinking of the Titanic or the National Rugby League, someone has made a podcast on your favourite topic.

Some fun facts about podcasts:

- There are currently 1.5million podcasts available worldwide
- Comedy is the most common genre of podcast, followed by news, true crime and sport
- There are nearly forty podcasts dedicated to Shakespeare

Finding podcasts on your smartphone is relatively easy. On an iPhone, look for the purple ‘podcast’ app on your phone or download it from the Appstore.

If you have an android phone, search for the Google Podcasts app. On your computer, you can install Google podcasts, Stitcher or Spotify quite safely. You only need one of these programs – most popular podcasts are available within each of the apps. Once you have your app, you can search your topic of interest and away you go.

If you download podcasts to listen rather than stream them, you do not even need an internet connection to listen to your downloaded episodes.

Here is an extra tip: for your Christmas gift, ask a tech savvy friend or family member to show you how to access podcasts on your computer

or smart device.

Wondering where to start among the 1.5 million available podcasts? National Seniors Australia have their own podcast, as well as a list of top recommended podcasts which includes True Crime, TED Talks, and Gardening Australia.

Some of the most popular and well-produced Catholic podcasts include:

- Word On Fire by Bishop Robert Barron
- The Road to Emmaus from Dr Scott Hahn
- Abiding Together (this is particularly for the ladies looking for connection and sisterhood)

There are also some Australian Catholic podcasts emerging, notably *This Catholic Life* which is Sydney-based. Plenty of priests have embraced the mission to make their own podcasts. What a great opportunity to learn more about your faith in the comfort of your own home.

Now that I have you inspired – go have a look! You will surely enjoy it. And who knows? By this time next year, perhaps you will have decided to start your own podcast.



HERE IS AN EXTRA TIP: FOR YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFT, ASK A TECH SAVVY FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER TO SHOW YOU HOW TO ACCESS PODCASTS ON YOUR COMPUTER OR SMART DEVICE.



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Australia's first Saint is a woman for today

Celebrating 10 years since the canonisation of Saint Mary MacKillop

This year is the 10-year anniversary of the canonisation of Saint Mary of the Cross, Australia's first Saint. At Mary MacKillop Today, we are reflecting on the qualities and actions that set Mary apart, and how her legacy continues to be relevant today.

Mary MacKillop was an ordinary woman with an extraordinary dream and a big heart. Her dream was to give the poorest families and most neglected children access to education and safe shelter by opening schools. This dream became reality in 1866 when, together with Father Tenison Woods, Mary set up the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart (the Josephites). This was the first religious order to be founded by an Australian, and a woman at that.

As a passionate educator, Mary broke through the prejudice of the early 19th century to educate all—regardless of gender, race, faith, or wealth—while ministering to the vulnerable with compassion. She and the Sisters of St Joseph went wherever the need was greatest. They gave up everything to live and teach amongst the people they served.

Today, 10 years on from the recognition of Mary MacKillop's holy work, we continue to find hope in her values, character, and actions as a remarkably strong female leader. Right now, in such uncertain and difficult times, we can look to Mary for what it means to persevere. She herself faced fierce opposition throughout her life from people who sought



to block her ministry.

In the face of trials, Mary persistently stood by her convictions – while also modelling forgiveness, insisting no ill be spoken of those who wronged her. She showed us how to be courageous in serving others and said, “Never see a need without doing something about it.”

Education in Australia is what it is today, thanks to Mary and the Sisters' dedication and determination. Mary believed in the power of education to lift communities out of poverty, famously saying, “I'm a teacher, let's start today!” And like Mary, we here at Mary MacKillop Today, still believe education is the key to improving the lives of vul-

nerable people, both here in Australia and overseas.

Thanks to the generosity of supporters, we see the impact of education for whole communities every day – right here in Australia, with our First Nation Scholarship holders heading off to university, and rural Australians gaining financial inclusion opportunities.

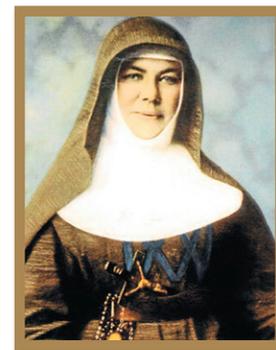
Gifts from kind supporters are also transforming overseas communities in need through education. We see this in the parents learning to support their children's schooling in Timor-Leste, in the volunteers working with people with disabilities in Papua New Guinea, in the women learning the skills to earn a fair income in Peru, and in the young children

living in informal 'squatter' settlements accessing education for the first time in Fiji.

At Mary MacKillop Today, we see the growing legacy of Australia's first Saint written into the hearts and minds of people, not only in Australia but around the world. Mary MacKillop is a role model for all who believe in serving the most vulnerable and neglected.

Our prayer is that we always aspire to her values and emulate her spirit. May the celebration of her Feast Day on the 8th August and the 10-year anniversary of her ascension to Saint on 17th October remind us all to take action and make a difference.

Mary is indeed a wom-



MARY MACKILLOP
today

an for today! By reflecting on her experience, our own lives are enriched. We share this blessing with you to give thanks for the example she brings to all of us, now and into the future.

Saint Mary MacKillop blessing

Living God, animating presence in our world, with gratitude we remember the life of Mary MacKillop, her influence in our world and her legacy in our Josephite spiritual homeland.

Inspire us, to be fully alive in your mission and faithfully kind among your people.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, friend of the poor, and the Spirit, filling us with confidence. Amen

Your support will keep Mary's dream of a better world alive. Thank you!

Mary MacKillop Today is a ministry of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart - empowering communities in Australia and overseas to transform their lives through education, health, financial inclusion, and livelihoods.



MARY MACKILLOP
today

"Take fresh courage."

Saint Mary MacKillop 1877

On the 10th anniversary of Mary's canonisation,
please give generously to continue her legacy

www.marymackilloptoday.org.au

"Mary MacKillop Friend and Educator to the Poor" by Sr Mary Brady OP.

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Catholic Aged Care Sydney



Since the early days of the Church, Christians have been deeply concerned for the wellbeing of seniors and the aged, as part of the seven corporal works of mercy.

By Michael Moore



Initially, in Australia religious congregations with this charism were prominent with their devotion to the care of the aged. They included the Sisters of Charity (arrived in 1838), Little Company of Mary (arrived 1877) and the Little Sisters of the Poor (arrived 1884).

The Catholic Church in Australia continues to be a major service provider in aged care and retirement living. In Australia the Catholic Retirement and Aged Care Sector provides services and care for 25,000 residential aged care clients, 36,500 home care & home support consumers and 7,000 retirement village units.

The current and previous Archbishops of Sydney have been and remain committed to the provision of high quality in home or residential Catholic aged care and retirement living in the Archdiocese by our Parishes, CatholicCare or other specialist Catholic approved providers and retirement village operators.

From the late 1950s six parishes in the Archdiocese of Sydney established Parish Residential Aged Care Facilities "RACFs" and a further seven parishes established standalone self-care Retirement Villages (Mackillop Grange, Mosman, Vaughan Village, Watsons Bay, Xavier Terrace, Lavendar Bay, Clancy Terrace, Greenwich, Monsignor John Peoples' Units, Five Dock, Our Lady of the Way, Sylvania and Foley Gardens, Daceyville).

An Archdiocesan Aged Care Committee was es-

tablished in the early 1990s in response to a growing interest by Parish Priests in the pastoral and clinical care for the aged.

Some Parishes were also interested in the stewardship opportunities presented by developing residential aged care facilities. The Committee was initially Chaired by Bishop Geoffrey Robinson until 2004 and then by Mr Bill d'Apice.

In 2007 the Archdiocese of Sydney incorporated the Trustees of Catholic Aged Care Sydney

The Catholic church in Australia continues to be a major service provider in aged care and retirement living

"TCACS" to act as the approved provider, under the Aged Care Act 1997, for Parish RACFs and to act as the registered operator, under the Retirement Villages Act, 1999 for Parish retirement villages.

Bill d'Apice was the inaugural Chair of TCACS from 2007 to June 2020, when he was succeeded by Michael Digges, the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney Executive Director of Administration & Finance.

TCACS has delegated back to local Parish Priests

and Parishes as far as possible, responsibilities under the Aged Care Act and Retirement Villages Act.

Our Catholic residential aged care facilities have for over a century been highly regarded for the quality of care they provide, the strength of their Catholic ethos and the model of locally based management.

St Mary's Villa at Concord has an outstanding reputation for its care of residents and its contemporary residential aged care facilities, since its original Burton Street facility was officially opened by the then Prime Minister, The Hon R J (Bob) Hawke in 1985.

CatholicCare Sydney has developed strong expertise with Home Care services and has in recent years experienced rapid growth in demand from parishioners and the wider community for those services.

We are most fortunate in Sydney to have excellent Catholic retirement villages and residential aged care facilities operated by Parishes and other Catholic approved providers and Catholic retirement village operators.

The Trustees of TCACS encourage all seniors and their families to make a long term plan, which considers their retirement, downsizing, Home Care services, transition to self-care retirement living and arrangements for higher residential care.

Christmas celebrations at Marian Court Retirement village

The residents at Strathfield's Marian Court Retirement Village didn't let COVID-19 hamper their Christmas celebrations.

By **Debbie Gramsie**

While adhering to social distancing requirements and remaining seated, they gathered for a Christmas party heralded as "the best yet" complete with turkey, pudding and custard.

Tears and champagne flowed as the residents came together to celebrate the festive season after what has been a very difficult year.

Offering independent, self-care units for over 55's, village manager Anthony Watts said the main concern for staff had been ensuring the residents were "medically safe while keeping mentally active".

"It has been particularly hard for us and very trying at times," he said.

"Despite the residents living independently, we really are like one big family, so things like dinners, movie nights, quiz and games nights and even Mass have all had to be cancelled which has had a significant effect on everyone.

"Our number one priority is keeping everyone safe while ensuring they are doing well mentally which has been a challenge so coming together to celebrate Christmas as a family has been a very important event for us all.

"Despite having to stay seated and not sing Christmas carols, everyone was in great spirits and enjoyed being in the company of each other which they have missed for the best part of 2020.

"It was lovely seeing the smiles on every-

body's faces and great for lifting our spirits as we enter the festive season."

Operated by the Catholic Women's League and attached to the Sydney Archdiocese, the village offers independent living complete with library, a hairdresser, chapel with weekly Saturday night Mass, communal lounge with function room, movie nights and barbecue and outdoor entertaining areas.

Long-time resident Anne Byrne said coming together with the residents was a real highlight and "the best Christmas party so far".

She said due to the age of the residents, many were not online and felt very isolated and alone so the event was great for the small community.

"It has been tough on everyone so being able to come together and celebrate meant a lot," she said.

"Maybe that's why this year's party has been the best in memory, it was something we were all very much looking forward to and needed.

"As many of the residents are more mature they aren't using technology so lacking human connections.

"Although the staff here have been wonderful and come up with various ways for us to be connected while not threatening our safety.

"I have lived here for 11 years and couldn't imagine living anywhere else."





Christmas celebrations at the Marian Court Retirement Village brought much joy and happiness to it's residents



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Parish Senior Living Facilities

The Trustees of Catholic Aged Care, Sydney is the registered operator of seven Parish retirement villages and the Commonwealth approved provider of one Parish residential aged care facility, delivering Catholic senior living services within the Sydney region. The residents who live in our facilities benefit from the pastoral connection with other Catholics in the facilities and the local church community, for the duration of life. Contact us for details now.



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