CVX-CLC
Christian Life
Community
In Australia

ANNOTATIONS

September 2026

Exploring ‘Ignite the Way’

If there was one theme of this current moment in the Church’s history, it would have to be the rediscovery of synodality. The early Western Church was very communal, as the Eastern Orthodox Churches still are.

Ironically, the Church, which developed the concept of subsidiarity in response to the centralisation of control made possible by faster communication and transport in the nineteenth century, has been rather slow to practice what it preaches. It substantially continued its monarchical self-image well into the modern era while also adopting technologies that allow it to be more centralised than it ever was in the Middle Ages.

Add to this the distressing revelations of inadequate responses to child sexual abuse and a swing towards a re-democratised church governance was inevitable.

CLC around the world is asking, what part do we play?

In Principle 6 of our General Principles, it says

> This sense of the Church impels us to creative and concrete collaboration for the work of advancing the reign of God on earth, and includes a readiness to go and serve where the needs of the Church so demand.

It was against this background that NEXCO put forward a proposal around synodality as the central element of our National Gathering in July. A significant portion of the Gathering was spent on a communal discernment about a potential collaboration with the Jesuit Province on ‘Ignite the Way’ (https://ignitetheway.org/), a program of the Global Jesuits on sharing Discernment in Common with the wider Church.

We started after lunch on Saturday with an overview from Frances Tilly, spent time in personal prayer, shared in small groups and – a first – made use of AI to summarise our individual responses. Our facilitator Robyn Wunder uses the wonderful term 'sedimentation' to describe the practice of allowing time to settle. So, we all slept on what we'd heard and prayed and returned the next morning for a circle sharing of everyone's response to the proposal.

The outcome was a cautious desire to move ahead and explore this collaboration further.

After further discussions I can share that the next step will be forming and training a small team of CLC members to be able to facilitate training sessions where a request is made. The training will take place in April (see below). This is a pilot project; Ignite the Way is very new, and we will be the first ones moving it forward in Australia, and among the first anywhere in the world. Exciting times to labour in the vineyard.

For most members, direct involvement is probably not going to be practical. Nonetheless, this is a collective venture of CLC that we all share ownership of. Those of us not directly involved can support those who are through our prayers. A prayer that you could adopt in support of this work is the Adsumus Sancte Spiritus:

> We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name.
>
> With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts;
>
> Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.
>
> We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.
>
> Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions.
>
> Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.
>
> All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever.
>
> Amen.

Profile of a Facilitator of Ignatian Discernment Processes

Does this sound like you, or someone you know?

We are putting together a team of CLC members who will participate in the pilot Ignite the Way training in April (online). As well as possessing the right qualities, people need to be available to attend three sessions on three consecutive Saturdays from 10am to 3pm AEST. If you are interested or have someone in mind, please contact CLC President Michael Walker at s00059818@alumni.acu.edu.au

Essential qualities:

1. Open to learn and become familiar with the relevant Ignatian tradition and its tools, especially the Rules for Discernment, examen, and the practice of spiritual conversation
2. Listens deeply—to words and what's beneath them, comfortable with silence
3. Humble enough to serve without controlling
4. Holds space for the group's encounter with self, one another, and God
5. Recognises consolation and desolation, and authentic discernment
6. Able to distinguish spiritual conversation from discussion
7. A sense of calling to this new ministry
8. Capacity and desire to work collaboratively
9. Can design and hold appropriate processes and ask open questions
10. Practical availability to be involved in this work of the team

Michael Walker, President

Excerpt from an interview with Archbishop Timothy Costelloe, SBD and Vatican Correspondent Gerard O'Connell published in *America The Jesuit Review* September 15, 2026.

In this exclusive interview with *America*, Archbishop Timothy Costelloe, SBD, president of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, spoke about the challenges facing the church in Australia - and in particular about building structures and changing the culture to eliminate sexual abuse, and it's commitment to being a synodal, missionary church in a country where multiculturalism, social cohesion and improving the situation of its aboriginal peoples are all works in progress.

Synodal Leadership

As archbishop, he leads "a very big diocese geographically speaking." He said, "It takes me seven hours to drive from the center of Perth to the furthest parish in the diocese, and technically, that would only be halfway across the diocese because the diocese goes right to the South Australian border, but there are only kangaroos on the far side of the other city - Kalgoorlie, a big rural centre in Western Australia - and east of that there are some scattered farms." Some 20 percent of Australia's 28 million people are Catholic, and the same Is true of Perth. The archdiocese has some 500,000 Catholics, served by 150 priests in 100 parishes.

Archbishop Costelloe has played a leading role in promoting synodality in the church in Australia, first as president of its plenary council (2023–2024), to which Pope Francis appointed him as one of its presidents. He is now engaged in its implementation as president of the conference and an elected member of the synod council. Questioned about the role of lay people in the church, he said,"The involvement of lay people in the church in Australia has been very significant for a long time, particularly in areas like education, healthcare, and social outreach." As archbishop, he has promoted people in Perth, and in July 2025 appointed Daniel Lynch a married layman as chancellor and CEO of the archdiocese. Moreover, he noted, Melbourne diocese has a laywoman as chancellor and the same is true in Sydney.

He highlighted the fact that "the promotion of laypeople was already happening in the church in Australia before the synod on synodality was given a boost by the plenary council. When I asked about the follow-up to that council, the first one held in Australia since 1937, he said he sent "the final acts" to the Dicastery for Bishops for the Holy See's "recognition" but still today, three years later, that has not yet come. He intends to raise the matter when he goes to Rome in October. I asked archbishop Costelloe what he identifies as the main issues facing the church in his homeland. "One of the main challenges and projects that the whole church in Australia is engaged in is precisely this transformation into a more synodal missionary church. That's what the plenary council called us to do, and it's what the universal synod called us to do," he said. He added, Australians tend to be a very practical sort of people, so we haven't yet created massive structures around this synodal journey but in each diocese the bishops are reading the situation in their own context and responding appropriately. Indeed, "there would be very few dioceses in Australia who since the Plenary Council and the Synod on Synodality haven't had diocesan assemblies or synods or other formal processes in order to try and engage more broadly and deeply the whole people of God."

Working with Pope Leo Archbishop Costelloe said he does not know Leo well. He met him a few times when the latter was prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops "to discuss issues here in Australia," and was then "very encouraged by the fact that he was a very attentive listener to what I had to say." He believes that Leo is on the same track as Francis on the big issues." He's been particularly struck by three things that stand out with Leo so far. **First**, "Leo's emphasis from the beginning on the importance of the unity of the church, communion." Archbishop Costelloe said, "that would be a conviction that I'd share very strongly; that the role of the pope, the role of a bishop in his diocese, the role of a priest in his parish is to be a man who creates communion, who enables communion and maintains unity. **Second**, Leo is very focused on the need to keep calling for peace, even when everybody else seems to be calling for something very different." **The third aspect** is Leo's focus on "synodality." Archbishop Costelloe said "I've been particularly struck by his insistence on what he's called the style of synodality. I interpret 'the style' as meaning a way of conducting our relationships with each other, our engagement with each other, that readiness to listen deeply to others, not so much to judge whether or not they are smart enough to agree with me, but to hear what the Holy Spirit might be wanting to say to me through what that person is saying." **Ann Hoare**

CLC National Gathering, Holy Cross Centre, Templetsowe, Vic July 20-21, 2026

Celebrating 50 Years of CLC in Australia

Perhaps the highlight of this CLC year occurred from 17-19th July when we as a national community celebrated our first National Gathering since Adelaide in 2019. The venue was Holy Cross retreat Centre in Templestowe, Melbourne. Members arrived from all states of Australia while others partook online through local hubs in our major cities. In all about one hundred members took part in the weekend presentations and activities. It was the privilege of VicExCo to host and support this wonderful venture.

The weekend was organised by NEXCO, and our groups were facilitated by Robyn Wunder and Frances Tilley from JISA. Activities during the lovely weekend weather included enjoying times of quiet and Ignatian reflection in the expansive and beautiful Holy Cross gardens. Friday evening, we celebrated warm memories with stories and videos from our CLC past. Saturday was a time for discovering and exercising communal discernment where we practiced spiritual conversation in groups with respectful listening and responding on a particular theme.

The theme was 'Ignite the Way' – presented by Michael Walker as an invitation from the Jesuits International, to Jesuits and all affiliated Christian groups, such as CLC, to actively participate with the 'Ignite the Way' movement to support Pope Francis and Pope Leo's advocacy of Synodality in our churches. Group discernment by those present and online, over Saturday and Sunday, discerned it was indeed a movement of the Holy Spirit to accept this invitation, although the details would need greater future clarification and discernment. This CLC direction or mission for our near future was received with joy, excitement and yet some timidity at the size of this commitment.

The National Gathering was a special time for renewing friendships and making new ones. A time for enjoying meals together with morning and afternoon teas and supper and times for reviewing our Ignatian membership privileges and commitments. Three members celebrated CLC commitment by their public expression of life commitment to God through CLC. This commitment is an inspiration to many of us. The gathering concluded on Sunday with much gratitude shared by all for all that was learned and shared.

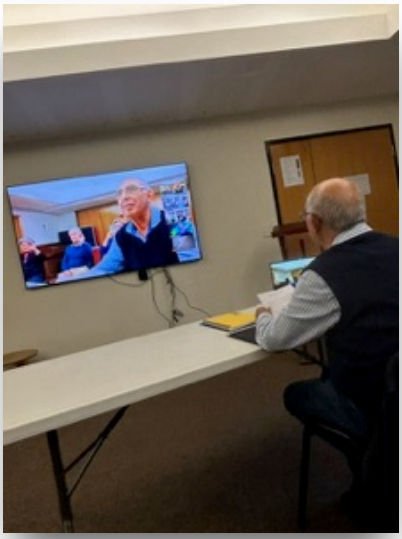
Bill Hallam (Vic EXCO)

James and Teresa O'Brien

A Good Time Had By All

A Blessing on Permanent Commitment

James and Teresa O'Brien, Victoria



Rom Cirillo, West Australia

National Formation Working Group (NFWG)

On 29 August the NFWG conducted the second session for the year in the Series “An ongoing journey to deepen our understanding and living of a CLC way of life”. Earlier this year the NEXCO requested that the NFWG prepare a program of eight sessions for guides over two years. Even though it is primarily planned for Guides, anyone who is interested in joining is most welcome. The sessions are held via Zoom on Saturdays (11am-1pm, Sydney time). The remaining session for this year will be held on 24 October.

The August session was entitled “How The Spiritual Exercises Pathway underlies the CLC Journey”. This session began with reflecting that the Church entrusts to the Christian Life Community the care of the treasure of the CLC charism - an Ignatian way of life centred on discerning God's call, growing in relationship with Christ, and serving others through faith-filled action and community. The remainder of the session focused on the parallels between growth of faith in the Spiritual Exercises and growth in the CLC way of life, with a particular focus on the initial stage where people first enquire about CLC, are introduced to the CLC way of life and explore if it’s something they feel called to.

We were delighted to have 40 people attend this session in August. If you are not a guide, but would like to attend these sessions, contact Kay Hooper at kay.hooper@bigpond.com and you will be sent the Zoom link.

Another recent NFWG activity has been to invite current ‘new enquirers’ from groups around the country to participate in “Exploring a Program for Life” online. This five session program provides an introduction to Ignatian spirituality and to CLC through meetings modelled on the CLC meeting format. We were very pleased to have eleven people express interest and two groups have now commenced meeting. Sarah Davies is leading a group from South Australia, NSW and Queensland and Kerry Cirillo is leading a group from Western Australia. We thank Sarah and Kerry for their generosity in leading these groups.

The NFWG recently farewelled two members who have contributed so much over their two year term, Teresa O’Brien and Chris Power, both from Victoria. We sincerely thank them for their dedication and input. We were delighted to welcome new member Trish Collier from Victoria to the NFWG at our August meeting.

Clare Smyth

Submission Dates for Annotations Material:

December	28 November
March	26 February
June	29 May
September	**28 August**

From the Editor

Please send your articles to:

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Email: aho87668@bigpond.net.au

Articles (up to 350 or 650 words) to be in .doc or .docx format. Please provide photos and images in high resolution jpg format and separate from articles (not pasted into your document). Please provide captions for your photos.

Laudato Si Movement - Season of Creation Reflection

Living Water
Season of Creation 2026

Immersion in Living Water
EZEKIEL 47:9,12

In His Message for the 2026 World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation thus beginning the Ecumenical Season of Creation, Pope Leo XIV invites us once again to "contemplate the gift of life and care for the earth that sustains it, thus concretely giving praise to our Creator."

Action is rooted in contemplation.

Transformation springs from the capacity to see.

To recognize life as a gift.

To look at creation not simply as a collection of resources, but as something received, loved, and entrusted to our care.

This is a beautiful form of praise. And it is also where ecological conversion takes root and continually renews itself. This year, as we follow the theme living water, his words feel especially meaningful. Scripture reminds us to guard our hearts, because from them flows everything we do (cf. Prov 4:23).

So perhaps this Season of Creation begins with a personal question:

What is flowing from my heart into the world?

Is it care or indifference? Hope or discouragement? A desire for justice, peace, and communion?

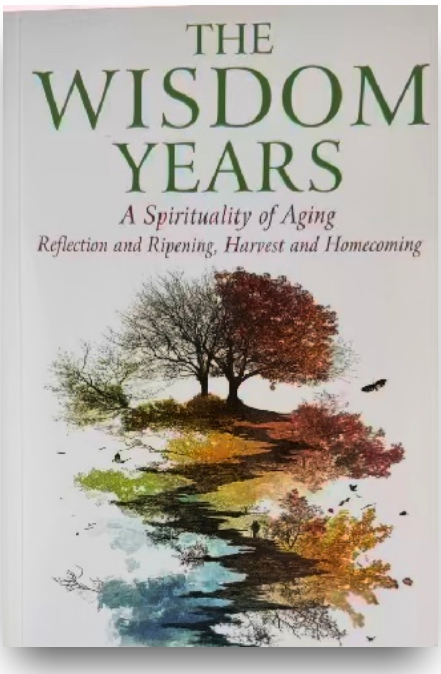
Pope Leo reminds us that ecological conversion begins with us - but it is meant to flow outward, transforming how we live, how we relate to others, and how we care for our common home. Before living water becomes a river that renews the world it first renews us. And when we allow our hearts to be renewed new possibilities begin to open. As Lorna Gold, Executive Director of Laudato Si' Movement, reflects:

"Ecological conversion begins in the heart, but it cannot end there. When we allow God to transform us, that transformation must flow outward. - into how we care for one another, respond to injustice, and protect our common home." This is the journey Pope Leo invites us to embrace: from the desert to the garden, from division to communion and from violence to peace."

And it begins with each of us. What in me needs to be transformed so that new life can flow? **Ann Hoare**

To view the Pope's beautiful prayer ***For the care of water*** - https://youtu.be/5LhsgE7-AJQ
A song to accompany a reflection - Geoff Bullock: *You Lift Me Up,* Your Grace and Your Mercy *(featuring Karen Beckett).* Available on Apple Music and Spotify.

Book Review



It's time to retire, time to downsize, time to slow down and exit stage left. Does this mean becoming invisible, putting on the slippers and settling down in the rocking chair? Or is it perhaps the time to embrace the most fulfilling challenge of all - to mature inwardly into our wisdom years?

This boom explores some of the invitations that await us in these wisdom years: the harder things, like learning the art of slowing down and letting go, increasingly aware of our own mortality, and the joyful surprises, as our perspective changes and we glimpse more clearly the possibilities that the longer view reveals and the unexpected gifts that winter brings. It invites you to discover, and celebrate, your own wisdom years - to look at life from a new perspective, that of human *doing.*

Drawing on the experiences and wisdom learned from many years spent exploring her own spiritual journey, and accompanying others on theirs, Margaret Silf helps you to see afresh the signposts along the path of older age. They are pointers and invitations for us to discover the immense spiritual value of our later years and to recognise, harvest and share the fruits of a life well lived. **Ann Hoare**

NEWS FROM THE WEST

NAIDOC week Mass Sunday July 5 Holy Trinity Church, Embleton was a joyous and meaningful mass concelebrated by Bishop Don Sproxton and the Parish priest, Fr Konrad Gagatek. Bishop Don's sermon reminded us that this year is the 40th anniversary of Saint Pope John Paul II's historic visit to Alice Springs when he spoke words of love, hope and empathy to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. This event encouraged the Aboriginal Catholic Ministries around Australia and here in Perth, who are leading these celebrations in WA. After Mass we interred the Ashes of Chris Harkness at the Church.

Winter Planting days in June and July. We participated in community planting days in Carine Open Space and Gabbiljee Reserve (Bull Creek) this year. A big thank you to those who came and helped take care of these important bushlands within our city.

Reflective Walk

On July 11 a Reflective Walk hosted by John Auer and Br Terry Casey from Ignatian Spirituality WA was held at Wireless Hill, Ardross. On a showery but mostly sunny day, we came to 'Wander and Wonder' on a delightful walk amongst the trees, flowers and creatures of this park. John set us off with words from John O'Donohue's book *Beauty*; 'In order to become attentive to beauty we need to rediscover the art of reverence…to recognise and celebrate beauty is to recognise the ultimate sacredness of experience'. Being in this place was peaceful, calming and helped me feel connected and more at one with both myself, all of nature around me and with my God.

National Gathering

Twenty CLCers from the WA community met for the National Gathering Hub held at Applecross Parish Hall on Saturday July 18. It was an historic event joining with wider CLC across Australia to experience the presentations in Melbourne and join with other Hub groups across the Nation. There was a strong sense of bonding as one community and closer connections were forged. We are grateful to be part of an Australia wide discernment by CLC of an invitation to join a project of the Society of Jesus aimed at sharing discernment in common with the broader church. It is called Ignite the Way.

St Ignatius Feast Day Mass was celebrated on Sunday 2 August at St Thomas the Apostle, Claremont. Eleven members attended, some taking extra effort by travelling some distance to get there. Michael Anderson addressed the congregation and gave some insight into our CLC community life as well as members having the opportunity to meet with parishioners after Mass.

Upcoming events;

The next big event on our calendar in WA is the Annual Spring Retreat September Friday 18 – Sunday 20 being held at St John of God Retreat Centre, 47 Gloucester Crescent Shoalwater.

Our retreat director is Dr Susie Hii who is presenting on The Examen. Bookings are full and we look forward to a nourishing and inspirational time.

Reflective Walk in the Season of Creation

We will celebrate the Season of Creation with a Reflective Walk on Saturday October 3, 9.45am at Lake Gwelup Regional Open Space, Huntriss Road, Gwelup. Bring a chair and food to share.

Christmas lunch

Keep the date of November 29 available for an end of year and Christmas celebratory lunch. Time and venue details available closer to the date.

Helen Baronie

NEWS FOM SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Back Row: John Herd, Petranel Ferrao, Fr Chris Horvat, Paris Huffman, Helen Cantwell, Jeff Cantwell
Front Row: Jeff Baker, Margaret Baker, Chris Hogan, Michaela Cantwell, Louise Howell

It's a significant time of change for our SA CLC Region and it comes with some sadness.

2026 was time for our Regional Assembly. Our EXCO went through the process of sending out requests for nominations for an election of a new SA EXCO. Both Paris and Judy had served for more than 12 years, thus were no longer eligible to be nominated as outlined in the National CLC Constitution.

Petranel was not available to stand as Chairperson and unfortunately, we received no new nominations from our members. We had planned to have our Assembly following the annual retreat at Sevenhill but given no nominations and a small number of members present at the retreat, we decided to have a CLC SA Gathering at St Ignatius Hall some weeks later.

This was attended by 12 members, who gathered to reflect on how SA CLC moves forward in the future. It was acknowledged that our current EXCO has concluded our term of service and we no longer have an elected SA EXCO.

Our session was led in prayer by Fr Chris Horvat SJ, who has been a loyal and committed Jesuit link and friend for our CLC SA over a number of years. Following prayer, reports from the Chairperson, Treasurer and NEXCO representative were shared. With those formalities completed, we were led through a sacred listening conversation. Our gratitude for the many blessings that CLC has gifted us with was a common theme. Despite an expressed sadness that what we have known was finishing, there was a sense of trust that God is present and has plans for the future.

We will be managed by NEXCO, but hope to at least plan a gathering in SA annually for all CLC members and friends to join Mass at St Ignatius, possibly followed by a dinner at Sfizio's. At this stage it is most likely that it will be held around the time of our usual end of year gathering in late November/early December.

Judy-Anne Foster

NEWS FROM VICTORIA

Anglesea Weekend, Friday 6 November – Sunday 8 November

Hopefully many of you have already entered that weekend into your calendar. ExCo members are considering discernment as the theme. We welcome any other suggestions and help with organising and hosting the weekend from anyone and any group. Please get in touch with VicExCo at vicexco@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing many of you at our final gathering for the year.

A Journey of Grace: Cultivating Hope and Community in Korean CLC

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” (Matthew 18:20)

In June 24, the members of Korean CLC gathered for our regular meeting, then moved to a nearbyrestaurant to share meaningful conversations about our lives and our journey as a community.

For several years, three dedicated members faithfully kept this gathering alive. Over time, God gently guided new members to us, one by one, and our community has now grown to seven. We are deeply grateful for the grace that has accompanied us throughout this journey.

We continue to hold close the promise of the Gospel, which has sustained us with patience and hope, reminding us that God is always present even in the smallest of gatherings.

During this recent meeting, we reaffirmed our commitment to remember the graces we received through the Spiritual Exercises whenever our faith feels shaken, and to continue supporting one another as spiritual companions along the way. It was a truly grace filled and uplifting time for all of us.

From left to right: Yongsook Kim, Jihyo (Joanna) Kim, Hyeongeun Kim, Sohyun Chung, Sojung Yang, Yeonjeong Kim, and Yoonbin Park.

Request for prayers

Susie would appreciate prayers for her sister, Rosaline Hii, who is waiting for treatment at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, for cancer that has spread to her bones and radiotherapy for a tumour at the base of her skull.

Message from Mary Wade

You have been updated several times in the past year about Ballarat CLC member, Mary Wade. Her husband, Richard has been critically unwell. To add to the difficult times, Mary's daughter, Ciara, delivered a stillborn baby, Jia. At the end of this newsletter, we share a letter from Mary with the latest update. Mary's words are inspirational because, despite the challenges of the past year, Mary's faith has grown stronger, and she has grown more resilient as she encourages others she meets who are also battling. We invite you to take time to read Mary's sharing of faith, hope and gratitude in the midst of challenges, included at Mary's request and with her permission.

Susie Hii

My dear CLC, who understand and love so much,

Thank you for your prayers for Richard and our family. I believe that God blesses Richard and us with strength and with many small and big moments of joy.

Richard is able to breathe without the ventilator for two hours a day now. And he can talk while still on the ventilator for one to two hours a day. His swallow is also getting stronger. His muscles are getting stronger. The last couple of weeks have seen wonderful signs of recovery. He can't move his arms and legs yet, but his upper arm muscles are getting stronger. The leg muscles will take longer, as the long nerves take longer to regenerate. It is like Spring and seeing the tiny signs of new growth on the branches of the trees - that's how I think of the myelin sheaths regrowing around the nerves.

Richard has been here at the Austin, Melbourne for two months now. He is likely to be here a few more months, but he's getting better, literally every day. The days are very active and busy with several teams involved in his care. To have the incredible benefits of this health service does make me aware of so very very many in the world who don't have this. And we are so grateful.

I'm living with Ciara and Beau about half an hour from the Austin, and it's good. Having had time together off work to grieve for their daughter, Jia, and walking every day, they are healing. Ciara is able to take more time off and wants to continue to be with Richard. She has found that very healing. Our daughter, Máire is hoping to come soon to Victoria from the Blue Mountains where she lives. We'll all be able to meet Saoirse (means Freedom in Gaelic), who is two months old now. Richard and I feel filled with gratitude for our own family. We're so aware of the love we have for each other.

Just so much to be grateful for, especially the sense of community everywhere. The staff who include us in their team; the camaraderie in this four-bed ward between patients and families, as we all face some common challenges; and sometimes such a connection with strangers - often being in lifts with others there are smiles or laughter, wishing each other good nights or good days. Small bids for connection. It's so uplifting in times of stress - I see more clearly and feel deeply how we are meant to connect and live closely together - just in small daily connections. It's so encouraging - the community of strangers, who give to each other. Our common humanity. It raises the spirit. It is noticing the Spirit among us. I have so many wonderful stories to share.

So I'm grateful as ever for having been given my faith. And for all that CLC has given me over so many years. Especially noticing all the small and big joys and beauty. And seeing God in all of it. And for knowing more clearly the reality of prayers. I have seen and felt the concrete reality - I don't know how to put it better. There have been so many consolations in the last eight months. And I know my faith has grown. And the faith within each of our family. And I know faith and trust can exist alongside fear and suffering. I have felt the power of encouragement and remember so clearly the simple words of Andy Hamilton to us, "Encourage, encourage, encourage". I have endeavoured since that day to live my life taking every opportunity to encourage others, especially strangers. And I notice as the recipient of so much encouragement over these months how it lifts me. And the other simple words that have helped me often since I first heard them from Susie Hii when she presented on Journeying through Life - "Always move towards the Light." I think it has helped me look actively for the light more. And the comfort and support and love of my two CLC groups in Ballarat - they feel like family in their closeness.

This has been a time of great consolation and of knowing the close presence of Jesus, the strength of the Spirit in me, when my own strength is low, and the power and glory of God. I'm especially grateful for the sense of Jesus being there with Richard always, not leaving his side.

Thank God Richard is recovering! Your prayers and ours answered. Our hope, our strength, our gratitude and comfort grow. And carries us in the harder moments. Richard is able to see beautiful sunrises from his bed.

With love and gratitude from Mary Wade