

JANUARY 2013



KARUNA – A compassionate heart

KARUNA

Newsletter of the Janssen Spirituality Centre

From the Director's Desk



First of all, to everyone a wish of blessings and peace for the New Year 2013 upon you and your loved ones. Last year we witnessed still many situations all over the world where violence rages and many innocent children, women and men were killed, wounded or badly affected. We shall continue to join in prayer and efforts, to bring better relations, healing and peace in our world community.

Some events of interest which took place last month:

December 1st, we had the "East –West Meditation Foundation" Meeting at KARITH, Sancta Sophia Meditation Community in Warburton, Victoria. The MISSION statement of this group is: "We work towards World Harmony between peoples of different Cultures and Faith Traditions, building bridges of respect and understanding for the enhancement and enrichment of all." About 16 people met to evaluate the efforts of 2012 and planned for the coming year.

On December 3rd, Fr. Michael Hardie SVD was asked to present information on the (JSC) Janssen Spirituality Centre's program for the Afghanistan Asylum seekers, to the Knox City Multi-cultural Advisory Committee and the Knox Inter-Faith Network. A number of people offered support towards various needs of the young men staying at our place. Jobs (when they get their Visa), and further education in order to qualify for a job.



Melissa, Kate, Fr. Michael

On December 4th, about 25 men and women came to the JSC for an evening exercise on the spirituality of Advent and the preparation for Christmas. This is part of the local outreach to the parishes and churches near Boronia.

On December 8th, JSC invited the Volunteers of our centre for an Afternoon Tea party followed by Mass. Fr. Frank Gerry SVD, the founder and former Director of the Centre, was also present. It was a time to catch up on what had been happening with the Asylum/Refugee home detention program and what were the future plans for the Centre.

On December 10th, the JSC Advisory Committee, together with Fr. Michael and Fr. Nick, met with their immediate superiors, Fr. Tim Norton SVD and Sr. Bernadette Edgecombe SSPS., to give them a report on what new developments and plans were in the offing. It was Sr. Bernadette's last meeting, so an occasion to say 'thank you' for all the work she had put into the centre when Fr. Frank started it. It was during this meeting that we were told that the Government would only be interested in renewing the contract for the refugee detention program, for six more months in 2013.

On December 20th, the last day of the Government home detention contract with the SVD Society, we were informed that the Government would NOT be renewing any contract for the use of our centre in future. No reason was given and some of the young men are still living in our house. Presently we are negotiating for some space and time, so that the program can be closed properly without any people getting hurt, neither the refugees nor the staff who

are taking care of the refugees. The suddenness of the closure came as a shock. From all reports and contacts, we had done a good job and are still very much aware of the great need “out there” for a compassionate approach to these asylum seekers.

For the 25th of December, Christmas decorations and some gifts were prepared for the 4 young refugees living in our house. Frs. Michael and Nick had church services in some of the local churches and then followed this with an SVD Christmas dinner at the Box Hill SVD community. A good time was had by all.

During the month of December the regular schedule for Centring prayer, Lectio Divina and Merton Bridges programs, continued. Some new people attended, and the groups are looking forward to continue in the New Year.



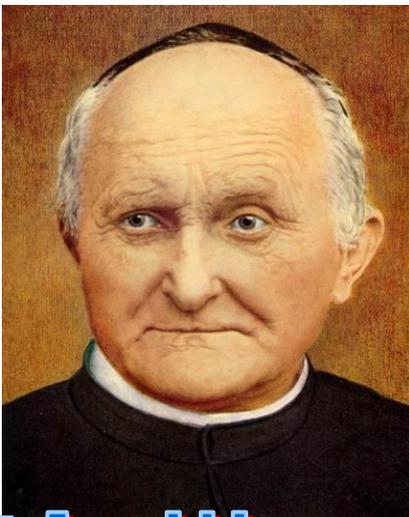
The East-West Meditation Foundation Meeting at KARITH, Warburton, Vic.

Fr. Nick de Groot, Mrs. Frances Cassidy, Fr. Michael Mifsud, Mrs. Gwenda Rait, (hidden) Mrs. Charlotte Hain-Sharlow, and in the back, St. Kathleen Murphy.

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2013

January 1st will be the World day of Peace celebration. We will join with other people and groups to become ever more convinced that Peace is what must grow in the heart first before it can be lived in society. Guns will not bring healing or forgiveness.

On January 15th will be the Feast day of St. Arnold Janssen SVD who was the founder of the three mission societies: the Society of the Divine Word in 1875, the Missionary Sisters of the Holy Spirit in 1889 and the



St. Arnold Janssen SVD

Holy Spirit Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in 1896. Because that day will be in the middle of the week, we shall celebrate the day at JSC on Saturday the 19th with Mass at 11am followed by a light lunch and some more sharing. If you are interested in attending, please let us know by phone (03) 97626625 or email: enquiries@janssencentre.org.

“St. Arnold Janssen Feast Day Celebrations on Saturday the 19th of January starting at 11am at JSC. “

As is the custom for the groups attending the Merton Bridges, since there are five Wednesdays in January, the fifth Wednesday will be a combined dinner on the 30th of January.

Lastly, we will be revising our overall program for this year, now that the Refugee program at JSC will close, and advise you as soon as possible about any new events and available accommodation when they become known to us.