FRANCISCAN SCHOOLS AUSTRALIA

September 2026 Edition eNewsletter franschools.au

Creation Calls

I love spring, the season of creation and September (my birth month)! I feel as though I can breathe out when September finally arrives after winter – not that Queensland has had much of a cold winter season!

Creation calls me as Levi, our dog, and I traverse the bush daily behind our home. I notice that I breathe more deeply, and listen more deeply, to the sounds of the bush. **And I cherish more deeply that God is good.**



With the arrival of flowering bushes, more active lorikeets, the warble of magpies that make me smile every time, the buzzing of native bees, the creek bubbling and sprigs of newness appearing, I intensely observe that all of creation is gift.

I am most grateful for this place – my dwelling place!

I know that I will re-read Laudato si', drawing on the words of the late Pope Francis' so that I might live them sincerely in my life, with my parish and in my work. I am deeply aware of my responsibility to be connected to Mother Sister Earth, my kin, to work together with others to protect our world, our planet and all God's creatures.

I hear the footsteps of Francis of Assisi walking with me, reminding me to be open to awe and wonder. To speak the language of fraternity and beauty, to remind myself and everyone I meet that we are intimately connected and interconnected.



I hear Brooke Prentis, Wakka Wakka woman and friend of FSA, remind me that the Elders say, "Care for Country, and Country will care for you."

Alison Stone
FSA Animator

What beauty and gift we enjoy in Australia
as glory calls in this Season of Creation.



FSA offers Franciscan Formation

Twilights, Spirituality Days, Workshops & Retreats

www.franschools.au/spirituality/formation/

FSA accompanies each community to design a spiritual formation experience for staff that is unique and genuinely reflects your school context.

Scan or CLICK HERE

Book for 2027 staff formation experiences by October 31 for 25% discount

The Franciscan Paradox: Encountering Beauty in the Midst of Brokenness.

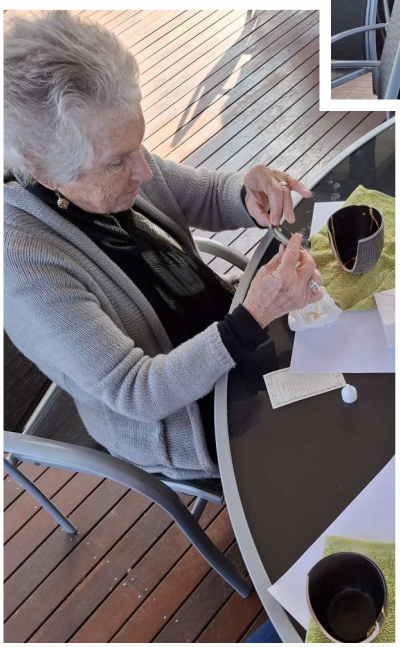
In August **FSA** facilitated a retreat that focussed on aspects of life which are part of the experience of us all, suffering and brokenness.

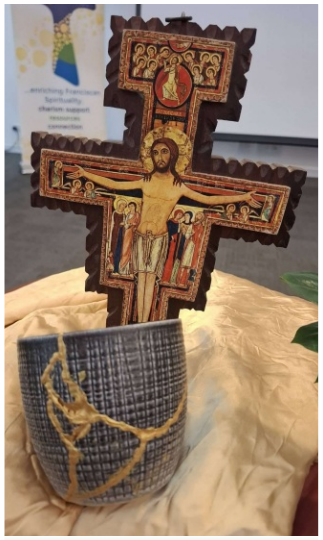
Fr Paul Rout OFM guided retreatants in an exploration of how meaning and beauty can be found with the knowledge that God fills all our human cracks with love and grace.

It was a beautiful day of contemplation and reflection.



















FSA was in Toowoomba last month where Hearts came together on Country at the **Queensland First Nations Education Conference**

Noel Pearson championed evidence-based, learning reform to help close the gap in student outcomes, ACU Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Kelly Humphrey used a basket weaving metaphor to share research and theory on educational leadership and Brooke Prentis explored deep and meaningful ways to weave First Nations spirituality and Catholic identity together to enrich faith, learning and community.

FSA in Schools





On the Feast of St. Clare of Assisi, **FSA** was delighted to be with the staff of **St Bonaventure's College**, Flagstaff to facilitate their staff twilight.

Focusing on St Clare - the Lady, the Saint, the Inspiration - we were able to begin to draw from her life, significant values that hold true today.

Storytelling, both our own and that of Francis and of Clare, were key elements of our time together.

May we walk in the light of Clare who walked in the footsteps of Christ.



Happy 70th to **Mt Alvernia College!**

FSA was honoured to be with friar Stephen Bliss ofm, some of the MFIC sisters and the whole College community in St Stephen's Cathedral, Brisbane on August 11. We celebrated this wonderful milestone with Eucharist.

It was an incredible celebration of courage, faith and belief, humbly begun by just four sisters, that Catholic education for young women was needed in Brisbane.







SOPHIA
HOLY WISDOM

"Make me an instrument of your peace."
— ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

LECTURE

FAITH • JUSTICE • PEACE • A MORE HUMAN WORLD



Sophia College is proud to host their first Sophia Lecture with social activist Martha Hennessy, granddaughter of Dorothy Day, sharing her lived experiences during the lead up to the 40th Anniversary of the Assisi Peace Prayer.

"The world will be saved by beauty, by the wonder of it, by the question of it."
— DOROTHY DAY

DIALOGUE
COMPASSION
JUSTICE
PEACE
TOGETHER

GUEST SPEAKER

Martha Hennessy

Dorothy Day's Granddaughter | Peace Activist

Martha Hennessy will touch on the work of her grandmother, Dorothy Day, but will focus on her own experience of social activism, and link this to the 40th anniversary of the Assisi Peace Prayer – a call that continues to inspire people of faith and goodwill around the world.

THURSDAY
22 OCTOBER 2026

5.30pm Nibbles and refreshments
6.00pm Guest speaker commences
7.00pm Evening concludes

SOPHIA COLLEGE
Hosted at Sophia College

OPEN TO
CATHOLIC EDUCATORS
AND PARISHIONERS

RSVP VIA FORM
BY FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER
https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/c0Vti8Wb49

SOPHIA COLLEGE
PLAINLAND
Wisdom and Love

Small actions for a more just and peaceful world.



Sharing the Schoolyard in the Season of Creation

With spring comes a familiar challenge for many Australian schools: native Masked Lapwings, commonly called plovers, choose ovals and playgrounds as places to nest and raise their chicks. Their warning calls and protective swooping can place busy areas temporarily out of bounds. How might a school respect these feathered neighbours while also caring for its human community?



The EcoMarine Ambassadors at **St Anthony's Catholic College, Deeragun**, are exploring this question with creativity and scientific curiosity. Using repurposed materials, they have designed three "encouragers" intended to guide the birds towards quieter spaces. "The Cricket" rocks in the wind and creates sound with jangling objects. "Edmonds 3000" uses height, shine and movement as visual deterrents. "The Picton" incorporates predator silhouettes and a solar-powered light.

The students are treating their designs as working prototypes. They are observing plover behaviour, gathering evidence, surveying classmates about the birds' effect on playground use and refining their constructions - including strengthening them against the occasional soccer ball. Leaving the prototypes untouched helps preserve the integrity of their investigation.



During the Season of Creation, this project offers a practical expression of a deeply Franciscan way of seeing. **Francis and Clare did not regard the natural world merely as something entrusted to human management, but recognised its creatures as sisters, brothers and kin within one community of creation.**

Through patient observation, respectful action and thoughtful problem-solving, the students of St Anthony's are seeking neither to dominate nor disregard their plover neighbours, but to discover how all might share the schoolyard and flourish together.

Looking for ways to deepen your Franciscan understanding?

We recommend **University of St Francis, Joliet, IL, USA** – for a CERTIFICATE IN FRANCISCAN STUDIES - four-course online certificate program, offered In partnership with the AFCU (Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities).

FSA members have participated and enjoyed the course which is suited to those who wish to feel more at home in the Franciscan lived expression of Gospel spirituality, and the Franciscan intellectual tradition.

Find info HERE...or.... Contact Alison direct

and FSA may be able to negotiate a group tuition fee.



FSA in Schools



FSA was with **St Francis School, Lockleys** recently. What a wonderful, rich and fabulous journey we have been on together.

In the busyness of term 3 the staff were invited to be present to themselves, each other and to their God. We began the day with prayer, a keynote address, and followed up with three peace-themed workshops.

It was a delight to have Fr Dev, new to the parish and to the school community engaged with the staff on this day.





Together, we deepened our understanding that peace begins with prayer, grows through presence, and is lived through actions that reflect the Gospel and that of the school's patron, Francis of Assisi.

Cultivating a culture of love with **San Damiano College** as the community opened and blessed their Stage 3 Francis Building.

Archbishop Shane Mackinlay and Mr Ross Tarlinton OAM, Acting Executive Director of BCE reminded us that encounters between people and creation grow love and learning in our Franciscan schools. Francis even made a special appearance to remind us all of his love of Jesus and all creation.

It was with delight that Catherine and Alison represented **FSA.** We honoured the growth of the community with many familiar Franciscan hearts present at the ceremony.





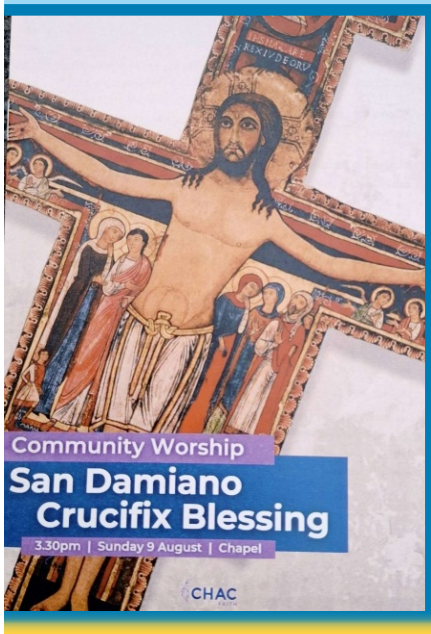




FSA was honoured to be with the Cannon Hill Anglican College community for a beautiful, early evening worship and blessing ceremony of the new San Damiano Crucifux in their St Francis and St Clare Chapel.

God of love and mercy, through the witness of St Francis and St Clare, you continue to call your people to rebuild your Church and proclaim your kingdom.









FSA was with the Missionary Franciscan Sisters (the visionary group who planted the seeds of FSA 20 years ago) to pray and be in community for the morning.

The Sisters came together to acknowledge St Clare of Assisi in her fullness and forcefulness.

Clare shows us that we need courage to unlock what is within us, to spend days powered by the grace we already possess within us.





The Sisters prayed especially for FSA, all staff and communities who continue to live in the fullness and forcefulness of the story of Jesus, Francis, Clare and our own story.

It was beautiful to hear the joy and gratitude that the Sisters have for FSA and how lifegiving it is to their community.

St Clare of Assisi, pray for us
today and every day.

2027 FSA PILGRIMAGE

14 Days - Mon 20 Sept. - Sat 2 Oct 2027*



Franciscan Spiritual Journey - Rome & Assisi

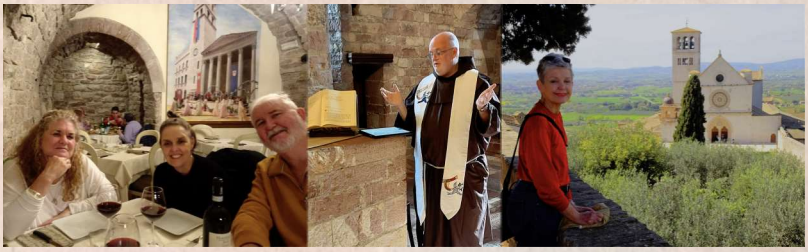
Franciscan Schools Australia invites everyone who is attracted to the evangelical beauty of the Poverello to join us in Rome and Assisi on the 2027 ***Heartbeat and Footsteps*** pilgrimage.



*This transformative experience of spiritual and personal growth invites pilgrims to immerse themselves in the story of Jesus, the Church and the Franciscan tradition. Rich encounters of the early, universal and Franciscan Church unfold in Rome, while in Grecciio and Assisi pilgrims are drawn deeper into the heartbeat of the Franciscan charism. Experience joy, fraternity and goodness on this **FSA Heartbeat and Footsteps** pilgrimage.*

Staff of FSA member schools may apply for financial sponsorship assistance*

*Up to $3000 AUD available to staff who have served in their school community for 12 months or more



Inclusive | Single Room

Land content only

$6,100 AUD*

Add airfare | payment plan

***based on 25 pilgrims**

*** proposed dates**

Total package will include:

- Pre pilgrimage formation experiences x3 (online)
- Franciscan pilgrimage book and prayer kit
- FSA Pilgrim Companion booklet
- 3 qualified, Australian Franciscan pilgrimage leaders – Fr Stephen Bliss OFM, Fr Paul Rout OFM & FSA Animator Alison Stone
- Italian speaking pilgrimage companion
- meals included **most** days; always breakfast
- all entry fees, gratuities, gifts and tips
- accommodation in 3-star religious houses *Casas*
- 5-star coach transfer to sanctuaries & sites
- deep reflection, daily Eucharist, shared learning
- time to enjoy the Italian culture and environs
- continued fraternal connections in Australia

FRANCISCAN SCHOOLS AUSTRALIA

TO EXPRESS YOUR INTEREST IN THIS SPECIAL EVENT

Register