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**VOICE**  
ARCHDIOCESE OF CANBERRA AND GOULBURN

# Chronic housing shortage gets financial boost

BY VERONIKA COX

CATHOLIC organisations have welcomed the news that the ACT will receive \$50 million from the federal government to boost social housing.

The funding, which will be delivered within two weeks, is the ACT's share of a \$2 billion social housing spend announced by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese last weekend.

The money can be used for new social housing, spot purchasing or renovations to make affordable homes liveable – but it must be spent, or committed to be spent over the next two years.

Marymead CatholicCare CEO Anne Kirwan said the government's response to the housing crisis and terrible under-supply of housing properties for people with low incomes was a fantastic first step.

"The sector has been calling for years, and it is great to see the government step up," she said.

"The money will deliver more homes for people on low incomes in the ACT and NSW, which will begin to help those who have been on the waiting list for years."



Above: Mary MacKillop House volunteers work in the kitchen. Right: Marymead CatholicCare CEO Anne Kirwan

Ms Kirwan said she hoped the organisation would partner with the Commonwealth to do more in the space.

"Need is absolutely increasing," she explained.

"In the ACT, there are over 3000 individuals on the waiting list, with an average wait of over two years and over four years for a family."

Ms Kirwan said the increased cost of living pressure was not

only having an impact on low-income families.

"More and more working families are struggling to make ends meet and are seeking the support of charities like Marymead CatholicCare and St Vincent de Paul to meet living costs," she said.

"We encourage the Commonwealth to pass the Housing Australia Future Fund to do more to address the chronic undersup-

ply of housing in this wealthy country."

MacKillop House Executive Director Service Delivery, Erin MacArthur said the funding offered a great opportunity to collaborate to meet the needs of women (with or without children) experiencing homelessness through increased housing and support services.

MacKillop House currently offers self-contained shared living

arrangements for up to 20-25 single women and six independent townhouses for women with children.

"Support for the services continues to grow with a commitment from the ACT Government to provide ongoing funding, which has allowed for a dedicated House Manager, Case Manager and onsite support staff seven days a week," she said.

"As a lead Specialised Community Housing provider, we believe that access to safe and secure housing is the right of every Australian and that many of our social challenges can be addressed through the provision of appropriate, affordable housing."



## Finding God in nature; Miriam-Rose explains



Archbishop  
Christopher Prowse

As we bid farewell to the High Liturgical Season of Easter to Corpus Christi, I would like to summarise this time with a beautiful image that came to me recently by listening to the celebrated Catholic Australian Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann. You may recall that Miriam-Rose was the Senior Australian of the year 2021. She was recently in Rome for the Aboriginal week and briefly encountered Pope Francis before he entered the hospital.



Catholic Australian Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann.

In an interview on Vatican radio, she stated that her people "found God in nature."

Regarding the movement from Easter to Corpus Christi (the Eucharist), she said, "We don't need a calendar

to tell us when it is Easter. We know it is around Easter time when the Blue Water lilies appear." Recall that Miriam-Rose comes from Daly River, south of Darwin, and these are the indigenous people of the area.

She describes to the children she teaches that Easter is when the beautiful petals and fragrances of the Blue-water Lilies appear on their rivers, lakes and ponds.

She then said that this

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## CALVARY PUBLIC HOSPITAL

QUEENSLAND LNP senator Matt Canavan introduced a bill to force the ACT government to hold an inquiry into its compulsory takeover of Calvary Public Hospital Bruce.

The federal Greens combined on Thursday with the Coalition to refer Senator Canavan's private Senators' Bill to the Senate's legal and constitutional affairs legislative committee.

While the committee will scrutinise the bill, Senator Canavan expects submissions and perhaps a hearing to look into the takeover with reporting not expected before June 30, 2024.

He said the inquiry alone could not stop the acquisition but could shine a light on it.

Senator Pocock, who supports a territory-level inquiry, abstained on the vote.

Emma Davidson, the ACT Greens Minister for Mental Health, said referring the private member's Bill to the committee doesn't equate to supporting the Bill.

Archbishop Prowse has contacted Rachel Stephen-Smith's office to arrange a time to discuss the removal of the blessed sacrament from the Public Hospital's Catholic chapel. It is expected that Calvary Health Care will contact the ACT government to discuss the relocation of religious iconography. It is hoped that the existing chapel will become a multi-faith space.

## Finding God in nature; Miriam-Rose explains

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beautiful flower, which reminds them of the Easter Jesus, eventually fades and the fragrance disappears. Although seemingly dead, it is still very much alive. She then stated that at this time they can open up the seed pods of the water lily and eat the seeds. The seeds are very nourishing and very good to eat. This is where, she said, Easter and the Eucharist meet...it is the same water lily, but it is taking on different forms just like the Easter Jesus, who then takes on the form of the Eucharist.

This is surely a beautiful summary, seeing our deepest theological truths in nature. It comes from a kind of mystic Aboriginal leader of our own people. What a beautiful image!

• This is an extract from Archbishop Prowse's homily from Sunday Mass St Christopher's Cathedral 18th June 2023 Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A). The complete homily can be viewed via [www.cgatholic.org.au](http://www.cgatholic.org.au)

## LOCAL NEWS

### Carroll College, staff and students miraculous life-saving work



Carroll College, Broulee student Tom Hayes with Sydney Swans captain, Luke Parker (Source: <https://www.facebook.com/sydneyswans>)

A fortnight ago 17-year old Tom Haynes from Narooma went into cardiac arrest while at school. The incredible students and staff members at Carroll College, Broulee used a defibrillator which saved his life.

Tom and his family are passionate Sydney Swans members and he is the captain of the Narooma Lions, Under 17's side. Swans captain, Luke Parker went and visited Tom at the hospital ahead of his surgery.

"There's plenty of 'Bloods' spirit in Tom and his family and we wish him all the best with his recovery," said Luke.

# Calvary Auxiliary signs off after raising millions

BY VERONIKA COX

AFTER raising an incredible \$2.6 million for equipment and patient care, the Calvary Public Hospital Bruce Auxiliary is winding up at the end of June.

The farewell ceremony was held only one day before the ACT Government announced its controversial plan to forcibly acquire the hospital from Calvary Ministries.

"I am glad we had come to this decision earlier in the year, so we were able to do it on our own timeline and in a thoughtful way," Auxiliary public officer Margaret Knock said.

"From members I have spoken with, there is a lot of anger and sadness about the government's process. They haven't followed their own procedures and that has put an extra sting on it."

Mrs Knock said she was concerned the culture of Calvary would change after the acquisition.

"You can fix people's illnesses, but there is a whole other dimension of caring. It is not just the physical. It is the mental and the spiritual – it all goes together. I don't think the government understands about holistic care," she said.

"I don't think they will be able to maintain the excellent level of care at Calvary, and that is sad for patients and staff. People choose to work at Calvary because of its ethos."

The Auxiliary has been deeply embedded in the Calvary culture for 44 years.

Regional CEO for Calvary's ACT hospitals and services, Ross Hawkins, paid tribute to Auxiliary members past and present for



Auxiliary founding members (l-r) Pauline Hurley, Christine Faulks, Bev Jungwirth, Josie Collier

their outstanding legacy.

"The Auxiliary has been with us since day one, when the hospital opened in 1979, and has been an important part of the fabric of our hospital team over these many years," he said.

"We can't thank members enough for their tireless efforts. It has been an enormous commitment of time, interest and energy in supporting Calvary Public Hospital Bruce and our patients through their volunteering and fundraising efforts."

Margaret's president, President Russell Knock, said the Auxiliary members are a group of supportive, like-minded people who gave of their time and talents willingly to raise money for the hospital.

"The money was used for equipment that benefited patients and staff," he said.

"Many people have worked hard towards the achievements of the Auxiliary and I am honoured



Auxiliary members watch as Greg Robertson and Russell Knock plant a rose

to have had the privilege to have been able to make a small contribution to the work during my time as a member."

Mrs Knock said while it was hard to be closing down, there were silver linings.

"It's the end of an era – but I think we need to look at the positives and the fact that we have raised \$2.6 million for the

hospital," she said.

"We've been able to purchase items for the hospital because we know hospital budgets are stretched and medical equipment is very expensive."

The auxiliary will officially wrap up on June 30, three days before the ACT Government's planned takeover date.

## Postcards from Spain (Part 2)

Archdiocesan priest Fr Paul Nulley is studying full-time for a Licentiate in Biblical Theology in Pamplona, Spain. We pick up from last week as Fr Nulley describes life in Pamplona.

BY FR PAUL NULLEY

I have also been able to continue a small pastoral ministry here: I celebrate Mass for pilgrims making the Camino each Sunday in an encomienda of the Order of Malta. Another great blessing has been the opportunity to do some travel around Spain. This has helped me learn more about Spanish history, culture and spirituality. I feel this time is a great grace and will provide a very strong foundation and context for my studies.

At times it is hard to be away from home: my family, former-parishioners, colleagues and friends. I know the need of priests in the Archdiocese and at

times I wish I could be helping out. I've followed the news and very disappointing decision about Calvary, often wishing I could do more from here.

Initially when Archbishop Christopher asked if I would be interested in learning Spanish, I was a little surprised. He explained that there was a pastoral need for it in the Archdiocese and that Spanish is the most spoken language in the Church. Before leaving for Spain, I said Mass several times for the Spanish speaking community. This has helped ground the purpose of my study because I already know some of the peo-



ple I am preparing to serve. But as I have come to see, there are many dimensions to this enriching experience that, I hope, will help me to better serve all in the Archdiocese when I return.



• The complete article can be read at [www.catholicvoice.org.au](http://www.catholicvoice.org.au)