

## CatholicCare History

**1973** - Catholic Family Life Centre established by Bishop Thomas McCabe. Father Rodger Austin DCL STL, was appointed Director.

Original aims were to provide Natural Family Planning services, Pre-Marriage Education courses, court chaplaincy and liaison with other welfare agencies. Pre-Marriage Education courses conducted at Wollongong and Campbelltown. Natural Family Planning Centres established at Wollongong, Campbelltown and Sussex Inlet.

**1979 - February:** Bishop William Murray appointed Community Welfare Worker (Kathleen McCormack) to develop a Welfare Service for the Diocese of Wollongong.

The objectives of the service are:

- To assess the needs of the Catholic community for specialised services
- To set up an information and referral network to meet those needs
- To set up specialised services not otherwise available
- To recruit and train voluntary workers to participate in as many aspects of the Centre's activities as possible
- To co-operate with other Catholic Welfare agencies in the delivery of services.

Activities during this year include Indo-Chinese Refugee Resettlement, Emergency Family Accommodation, the Alternative Care Committee, and preparation of the planning and funding submission for the Wollongong Youth Refuge and recruitment of volunteers.

Survey conducted by a central committee of the Church in the Macarthur region to establish the needs of the local Catholic Community.

**1980 - February:** Bishop Murray established the Community Welfare Services as a permanent part of the Welfare ministry of the Church in the Diocese of Wollongong. Care services provided to families, single parents, children appearing before courts, bereaved people. The Catholic Adoption Agency was at this stage the first contact for adoption counselling.

**April:** First Volunteer training course commenced and Sister M Kennedy R.S.C and Ann Tobin - welfare workers joined the staff.

**July:** Official Opening of the Catholic Family Life Centre at 65 Corrimal Street, Wollongong, leased from Villa Maria.

First Art Show held as a fundraising venture.

**1981** - First Workshop on bereavement organised and presented by Mal McKissock.

**July:** Branch of the Catholic Family Welfare Service was opened in Campbelltown by Father Paul Ryan. The premises in Oxley Street were officially opened on October 31.

Pre - Marriage Education program commenced in Campbelltown and Nowra.

The Catholic Education Office was approached for funding for a School Community Worker.

Fundraising activities included an Art Show and a Fashion parade.

**1982** - February: Catholic Welfare Services commenced in Campbelltown with Father Paul Ryan (Director), Mrs June Williamson (Community Worker), a board of management and 14 volunteers. Funding by grants from Bishop Murray and Art Union. Services provided initially were: information and referral; marriage counselling; community education courses for parish care groups and home help in emergencies.

**March:** Ray Reid seconded from Centacare Sydney to provide Marriage and Family counselling one day per week in Campbelltown and to supervise volunteer counsellors. By February 1983 volunteers had handled 13 cases, 47 interviews and 20 clients; professionals had handled 42

cases, 213 interviews and 87 clients.

The property adjoining the Centre in Corrimal Street (known as the Conference Centre) was purchased by Trustees of the Church as an annex to the Centre.

Parish Caring Communities developed at Gwynneville and Berkeley.

Catholic Education Office provided funding for a School Community Worker to be appointed to two primary schools in the Wollongong area.

Community Education program extended to Nowra.

**1983** - Catholic Development Office provided funds to employ a person to conduct a survey of parish needs.

Pregnancy Support Program commenced, and a close working relationship was established with the Catholic Adoption Agency.

**1984** - Kathleen McCormack appointed Director of Welfare in the Diocese of Wollongong.

Due to demand, an Individual, Marriage and Family counselling program was set up in the Wollongong and Macarthur areas.

**1985** - Advisory Committee set up at the Director's request with the first meeting held in February. First funding from the Attorney General received.

Courses introduced and conducted at Centacare included Stress, Relaxation and Growing in Self Awareness.

Bishop Geoffrey Robinson spoke on Marriage, Divorce and Nullity at West Wollongong Hall.

**1986** - Lease of premises formalised. Staff now numbered twelve, including part-time workers. Administrative restructuring provided for a unified Diocesan Welfare Program under the administration of the Diocesan Director. Name changed to Centacare Catholic Welfare Services. Constitutional changes included the provision that Advisory Committee members from both Macarthur and Wollongong areas be elected. All programs finance and planning to be administered from the Wollongong Office.

**1987** - Family Resource Service program planned for the Macarthur area to serve a perceived need for short term foster care.

Further courses and workshops presented, involving 825 participants through the year.

Centacare was represented on ten community committees and on the managing body of the Family Support Service in Wollongong.

**1988** - Extended school community program commenced in Macarthur. Social worker employed to serve the needs of ten local schools.

A computer was purchased to help cope with the increasing burdens of office and finance administration.

Adult Faith program moved into the parishes with Father Ross Naylor and Sister Judith Hill.

Centacare fundraising committee held its first St Patrick's Day Race Meeting at Kembla Grange, and its eighth annual Art and Craft Show.

**1989 - January:** Psychologist employed in Wollongong to work in six schools as an extension of the school community program. A network was set up to provide consultation and support to all schools in the area.

Eleven day and evening courses were conducted through the Community Education Program.

**1990** - Marriage Education Program reviewed.

School and Community programs addressed the problem of youth homelessness: funding was applied to provide accomodation and support as urged by the Burdekin report.

Another individual, Marriage and Family Counsellor employed to meet needs in both Campbelltown and Wollongong.

Centacare now employs 16 workers, assisted by 11 single volunteers and 14 volunteer couples. Of these, one full-time and two part-time professional marriage counsellors, one school community social worker, three family resource program workers and one administrator are dedicated to the needs of the Macarthur region.

The second St Patrick's Race Day Meeting and tenth annual Art Show were held.  
Centacare 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

**1991** - The Family Skills Training (FAST) Program began in January and was established in the Macarthur Area. The program has several components:

- Parent Playground Program
- Education Program
- Support Group Component
- Problem Solving Group

**1992** - FAST Program was established in Wollongong.

**August:** Newly developed Foster Care Program - Family Placement and Family Network Programs.

Marriage and Family Counselling services were extended to Nowra and Kiama.

**1993** - Community Visitors Scheme commenced in Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

**1994** - Family Services Team came into being early in 1994

Move to Maryfields, Campbelltown.

**1995** - Centapact Program for unemployed commenced.

Highlights of Family Services: Development of Recovery Program in Wollongong

Focus Program in Diocese

December moved from Corrimal Street to McCabe House, Auburn Street Wollongong

**1996** - Highlight of 1996 was the Opening by Bishop William Murray of our new premises McCabe House on 15<sup>th</sup> May.

FAST Program partnered with Wingecarribee Family Support Service to provide counselling workshops to Southern Highlands.

**1997** - Campbelltown Catholic Club \$100,000 donation to School, Student and Family Program in Macarthur Area.

The Marriage & Relationship program expanded its service to the four sectors of the Diocese by providing part-time marriage and relationship educators in the Shoalhaven and Southern Highlands areas.

First Ray Wyre Workshops held in Diocese.

**July:** Official Opening of new Shoalhaven premises at 68 Shoalhaven Street, Nowra on July 30.

**October:** Aged Care Community Care Packages commenced with 20 packages.

**1998** - Community Support Program in Wollongong and Campbelltown commenced.

Second Ray Wyre Workshops held in Diocese.

**1999** - South West Sydney Access Program in Campbelltown commenced.

**2000 - March:** Launch of Compeer Program in conjunction with St Vincent de Paul Society.

**June:** Increase of \$50,000 from Campbelltown Catholic Club to School, Student and Family Program in the Macarthur region.

**August:** Contract from Department of Family and Community Services for Children's Contact Services for 2001 - 2004.

**November:** 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Mass at St Francis Xavier Cathedral celebrated by Bishop Philip Wilson.

**2001** - Federal Magistrate Services Contract for Primary Dispute Resolution.  
Culture of Safety Workshop held.

**2004** - Office of Disability launched.

**2005 - May:** 25<sup>th</sup> Anniverary Art & Craft Exhibiton held. Officially opened by 25 year volunteer Zita Bunn.

**June:** 'Your Time' Carer Counselling and Support Program launched. The project, a collaborative effort between Centacare, Anglicare and Southern Council Group through the Illawarra Carers Respite Centre, will provide counselling and support to carers, on a one-to-one basis.

**2006** - New members of Advisory Council begin their term. Joanne Pollard, Fr David O'Brien, Franca Facci, Robert Mullaney, Mark O'Donoghue.  
Family Relationship Centre opens in Nowra in partnership with Anglicare.

**2007** - Kath McCormack, Director made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the 2007 Australia day Honours List.  
Strategic Plan 2007-2010 commenced.

**2008** - Commencement of 2 new Diocesan/Centacare funded programs: Family Advocacy and Sibling & Family Support.  
Commencement of business from new building at 55 Worrigeer Street, Nowra.  
Centacare 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Race Day fundraising event.

**2009 - May:** Name change to CatholicCare on May 20.  
Worrigeer Street and Nowra Children's House officially opened.  
PSP ceases operating.

**2011 - July:** Respite service commenced.

**2012** - Strategic Plan 2012 - 2015 commenced.