

## Mothers' Union Newsletter

April 2020

### Dear MU members and friends,

March has been a difficult month for all of us and it is with some relief, that we move onto April. However, there is nothing in the endless stream of media that suggests this will be a better month. Many of us are afraid for the future, if not for ourselves, then for our family and friends. Some of us might worry about running out of food or receiving medical treatment. Despite the rush on toilet paper and tinned tomatoes, we do have enough food to feed us all! If you do need help, please ring or email one of the people who are available to help you. Elizabeth Woods is our MU pastoral care person. With this newsletter, I am sending an updated MU contacts list. Thank you to Celia Gant who has helped update it. MU is a great organisation for supporting its members. We are all here to help, even if you just need someone to listen to your worries, needs or good news. Many of our members live on their own, cut off from their grandchildren, family and friends. If you could spare 10 minutes to send a newsy email or have a short telephone conversation with them, I am sure this would be appreciated. Please remember to hold in your prayers Margaret & Bill Noblett both recovering from recent surgery and also Marg. Tingate who had surgery last week.  
Love and peace, Irene

### Be Not Afraid

Last year in St. Paul's Cathedral, I had the privilege of watching artist Lynne Gray, writing (technical term for painting) this Icon entitled *Jesus appears to the Holy Women*. The prototype (original) Icon was written by Taddeo Gaddi in Italy in the 14<sup>th</sup>. century. Traditionally Icons like this are painted on wood with egg tempera (colour pigments mixed with egg white) and gold. This Icon is a representation of the gospel for Easter Sunday (Matt.28:1-10) *Jesus said to them "do not be afraid..."* In the garden of resurrection, stylised according to the Italian tradition of the time, we can see three women, one obviously Mary Magdalene and two others kneeling before Jesus who stretches out his hand in blessing. This Icon holds an eternal moment in which Jesus reassures these women and gives them hope and courage for the future. Surely a message for today? (If you want to enlarge this image just click on it and drag the edges outward).



Recently I have seen a number of internet church services and in two of them the following information was given ... "Do not be afraid" (or variations of this) is the most frequently used phrase in the Bible!" This is a quote from the Archbishop of Canterbury's 2020 Lenten book... *Say Yes to Life*. Another preacher said she believed that there were 365 verses in the Bible which repeated this injunction...although she hadn't checked. Well, I did do a quick Google search and found one 365 list and several shorter ones. The image below is of 33 Biblical quotations which, now that you have so much more time, you might like to read for yourself.

**33 VERSES ABOUT FEAR AND ANXIETY**

Isaiah 41:10  
 Psalm 56:3  
 Philippians 4:6-7  
**John 14:27**  
 2 Timothy 1:7  
 1 John 4:18  
 Psalm 94:19  
 Isaiah 43:1  
 Proverbs 12:25  
 Psalm 23:4  
**Joshua 1:9**  
 Matthew 6:34  
**1 PETER 5:6-7**  
 Isaiah 35:1  
 Luke 12:22-26  
 Psalm 27:1

Psalm 55:22  
 Mark 6:50  
 Deuteronomy 31:6  
 ISAIAH 41:13-14  
**PSALM 46:1**  
 Psalm 118:6-7  
 Proverbs 29:25  
 Mark 4:39-40  
 Psalm 34:7  
 1 Peter 3:14  
 Psalm 34:4  
**DEUTERONOMY 3:22**  
 Revelation 1:17  
 Mark 5:36  
 Romans 8:38-39  
 Zephaniah 3:17  
 Psalm 91:1-16

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Our theme for Mothers' Union this year is *Building Hope and Confidence through Faith*. It may be several months before we meet as a group. However, our speaker for the April MU meeting was to come from St. Kilda Mums an organisation which supports mothers and their children.

I have asked Jenny Brown to be our guest "speaker" and to share her knowledge of this community-based organisation. It is an organisation which aligns well with Mothers' Union priorities of supporting mothers and their families.

Here is what Jenny has written ...

***St Kilda Mums – From little things, big things grow***

*St Kilda Mums was started in 2009 by a small group of mothers who met at the St Kilda Maternal and Child Health Care Centre (the typical Mothers' Group formed for first time mothers). The Health Centre nurse took clothes and other baby items to needy mothers in her area. This Mothers' Group, led by Jessie McPherson, now CEO, volunteered to collect, sort, launder and pack the donated items for rehoming to families in need. They only wanted to rehome items they would be comfortable to receive for their own children. What started in a garage now occupies a huge warehouse in Clayton and has offshoots in Ballarat (Eureka Mums) and Geelong (Geelong Mums). A visit to the warehouse is a real eye-opener, so well organized and buzzing with activity.*

*In 2019, 20, 500 babies and children were supported, with nearly 60,000 items rehomed worth well over \$7 million. Donations are not made directly to families, rather requested by, collected and distributed by nearly 2000 Maternal and Child Health Nurses, Social Workers and Agencies. Over 3000 volunteers, individuals, senior school students and corporates support the work. Many volunteers have special skills: checking cots, car seats and prams, sorting toys and books, cleaning and mending and carefully packing items ready for distribution. Their website states, "We take pride in ensuring all items rehomed meet current Victorian safety standards and are in great condition. We give the items to people who are facing a variety of challenges and we want them to feel uplifted when they receive something from us. We see it as giving a gift, packed with love to provide practical support and show that people care about them." They have three main services:*

- *First 1000 Days Service through Maternal and Child Health nurses and Social workers)*
- *Regional Service, "Every Baby Every Town", provides support throughout the state*
- *Start Safe, which provides emergency material help (e.g. cots, prams, nappies, linen, car-seats) to Maternity Hospitals, which are then given to families who have received no pre-natal support.*

*They also have a website < [www.stkildamums.org](http://www.stkildamums.org) > which you might like to check out to read about their programs. Due to Covid19 they are not currently taking donations. (Jenny Brown)*