



Anglican Diocese  
of Bendigo

# The Spirit

*Celebrating women  
in ministry!*

december 2022

issue 159



**Joy:** Some of the many women who gathered to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the ordination of women to the priesthood including Fiona Goy, Glenda Templer, Sandra Field, Willy Maddock, Tracey Wolsley, Heather Marten, Sharon Valentino, Anne McKenna, Amy Turner, Elizabeth Dyke, Fiona Preston and Heather Blackman

*Celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup>  
anniversary of the  
ordination of women  
to the priesthood*

**T**his issue of *The Spirit* celebrates women in ministry, with a celebration recently held to mark the 30th anniversary of the ordination of women to the priesthood in 1992. You may have noticed *The Spirit* is a different colour - it has been turned purple, the colour for International Women's Day, to highlight women's ministry.

We hope you enjoy reading of the celebrations as well as the reflections from those women who pioneered the pathway to ordination for women today. We give thanks for the women who insistently followed God's call to priestly ministry and celebrate the rich ways women continue to bless God's church and the people they minister to.

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of women's ordination  
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# The Bishop writes...

Dear Friends,

**H**ave you ever had occasion to look back on your life and realise that what initially sounded like bad news was actually good? That what seemed like the worst was actually the best? I have had a number of occasions where it seemed that circumstances, my own desires, and the demands of others were conspiring to cut off and diminish all I had hoped for. Yet, in retrospect I have discovered that the seeds of great good were present within the bad news I had to hear.

I have been reminded when preparing for Christmas services of the way that a range of people were presented with choices as to how they would respond to the unexpected and quite incredible news they were given – that Immanuel (God with us) was born. While this is not a new thought for me, it has been new to realise that for some the first hearing of this surprising news contained a challenge...it could well have sounded like bad news.

This came home to me as I read the gospel for Christmas Morning – the story of the shepherds and the angels (Lk 2:1-20). I suspect that in my familiarity with the story and the generally positive spin we tend to put on Christmassy things I had missed a crucial component: the people involved in the conversation. Well, actually, it was not much of a conversation. Let's just say the people doing the speaking and listening.

Let's start with the listeners because after all they had their night interrupted. The shepherds were likely to be loners who lived with their sheep and therefore smelled like their sheep and did not sit easily in polite company. The physical distance to the nice townsfolk probably bred a sense of social distance and they had a reputation as petty thieves. I do not expect that they took instruction from anyone kindly, and I know for myself I am unlikely to respond kindly to someone demanding that I would go and interact with those from whom I feel distant.

“The beauty of Christmas is that like Mary and the wise travellers the shepherds discovered just how good responding to God's call is”

This makes the angels and their message somewhat of a problem. The angels by their very nature came with a sense of authority and, I suspect, they sounded as if their message to the shepherds was an order and not a request. The angels were messengers from God after all (angel literally means 'messenger'). To be told that a certain child would be found in the local village would probably sound like an instruction to go and seek that baby out.

We move very quickly between the angels' promise to the shepherds that this child will be the bringer of peace to the world and the shepherds' grateful discovery of that Christmas child. However, there was a confrontation hidden in the interaction between God (through the messengers who brought the message) and the shepherds. God was telling an independently minded group to go to an uncomfortable place at a time they did not choose. In this sense God was pointing toward the source of great hope but the shepherds first had to get over the bad news – they had to walk

to the beat of a different drum. They had to follow God's call and be led to Jesus.

The majesty of Christmas is that God is glorified through Jesus born in humility, and that peace rests on those who do not dig in against the confrontation and follow. The beauty of Christmas is that like Mary and the wise travellers the shepherds discovered just how good responding to God's call is.

May this be our story. That as we remember what God has said and done, especially through Immanuel our inherent distance from God will be challenged and we find great joy '...glorifying and praising God for all the things (we) have seen and heard!'

Your servant in Christ,





# Celebrating women in ministry...



**Preside:** Heather Marten celebrates the Eucharist, which wasn't possible prior to women being accepted as priests in the Church

## Bendigo celebrates 30 years of women ordained as priests

Heather Marten

**O**n 19 December 1992, The Reverend Carlie Hannah, Deacon at Charlton parish was ordained priest in St Paul's Cathedral, Bendigo. She would be the first woman ordained priest in this diocese and the only woman priest in the diocese for several years. Carlie returned to Bendigo on 20 November to celebrate with her colleagues: those ordained in this diocese since 1992 and those whom she knew from other parts of the church.

As the preacher, The Revd Willy Maddock reminded us the ordination of women in several dioceses in Australia in 1992 was

the single most important event in the life of the church in 30 years. Many younger clergy do not realise that this has not always been so. Nor do they realise that just over 30 years ago it was impossible. "How quickly history gets forgotten" she said, "with the attendant danger that the lessons learned could all too easily be forgotten and the church go backwards in dealing with half the human race! We really need to remember."

The day itself was a great celebration with several women ordained in this diocese returning for the day. The smiles in the photos say it all!



**Celebrate:** Noella Dallinger, Jane Cleary and Carlie Hannah

# Celebrating women in ministry...

## Thirty years on, the church is richer for women's ordination

Willy Maddock

**I**n 1992, 92 women were ordained as priests around Australia. I was among them.

In the Melbourne Diocese, people are ordained in alphabetical order of surnames. Therefore, it was our privilege to see Elizabeth Alfred ordained first, an absolute and wonderful pioneer in the ministry of women for at least 50 years.

She was for a very long time a deaconess. In fact, she had understood herself as ordained when she was made a deaconess. It was only when the deaconesses asked to become members of synod that they discovered they were not in Holy Orders, a considerable shock to them all. Elizabeth was a woman of great faith, compassion, grace, and dignity. But more than anything she was someone who had learned to wait; someone who did not lose heart, who looked expectantly to the future. We were also delighted when she was able to preside at the 10th anniversary of the ordination as well.

It is almost impossible to describe just what those times were like: the joys, the struggles, the hilarity, the outrage at some of the treatment we received.

Some women now come to ordination believing that there never was a time when this was not possible, much less that it was impossible just over 30 years ago. How quickly history gets forgotten, with the attendant danger that the lessons learned could easily be forgotten and the church go backwards in dealing with half the human race. We need to remember, because from time-to-time in Melbourne some people want to undo the legislation which allows for the ordination of women.

For the first few years, formal objections to our ordination were made during the service. They were rejected each time, but it was an unpleasant process.

“Just as all men are different, so are all women. Diversity makes for richer faith communities that offer more challenges to people of faith”

In the years leading up to the change in legislation, we listened to many objections and arguments against our fitness to hold office. Some were couched in reasonably civil terms, often with the rider that the comments were not meant to be personal. However, if someone is referring to a person's gender it cannot be merely academic, or anything other than personal, and potentially hurtful. We should still keep this in mind when referring to a person's sexuality, race, faith, or skin colour. Such things are not separate from real human beings with names and lives to live. The mishandling of such matters has been lethal for some.

At times, we were subjected to offensive phone calls, curses, hate filled letters and some personal confrontations from opponents. The more highly charged they were, the less possible it was to have a reasonable conversation or debate. Fear seemed to be the common denominator, though some women later were honest enough to say that their anger was really about their own missed calling, or limited lives constrained by society and the church.

I was much helped on the way by reading an historical review of the objections to women's entry into each level of education, into various occupations, and other areas of ministry within the church such as vestries and synods, as well as

objections to women's rights in marriage, inheritance, and ongoing debates about women's worth in terms of pay.

In all the historical debates the arguments used were the very same theological and emotional arguments put forward in the debate about women's ordination.

At one point, I remember we women saying that if the church was going to be logical in its arguments, if we were deemed unfit for ordination, we were in fact unfit for baptism too. Before God, there are no second-class citizens, for we are all one in Christ.

A woman was a witness to the resurrection. Women accompanied and supported Christ and were taught by Christ. Women witnessed the crucifixion and have never been denied the gift of the Spirit. When we think of the Syro-Phonecian woman, we see that Jesus the Christ was also challenged by women, and had his own understanding broadened. In other words, women held all the qualifications for apostleship, a reality lost for a long time in the church's endeavour to make itself acceptable to the broader culture and society.

The times of debate about the ordination of women, were not all doom and gloom. We also received wonderful support from many clergy and laity. We had to



# A reflection by Willy Maddock



**Friends:** Heather Marten and Willy Maddock

rely on other male clergy as of course we could not be part of the House of Clergy or Bishops in Synod. Without their support and positive vote, nothing would have changed.

In the early days, the women also cared for each other. There was a time when I and others knew every woman who was a possible candidate for ordination or was simply involved in public ministry in some way. This network transcended approaches to Scripture, styles of worship, ministry models and places of training. We needed to have each other's backs. This was a wonderful example of collegiality and support and vulnerability. Lifelong friendships were forged. Perhaps the Church in its current divisions could learn from our experience. For the most part we were treated well in the theological colleges by staff. Reactions from other students were more mixed.

When ordination as deacons became possible for women, several were appointed as deacons in charge of parishes: four in Melbourne, but also in other dioceses. Because women were not yet able to be ordained as priests, parishes had to work out different ways of doing the acts of absolution, blessing and consecration. Some parishes had a roster of clergy who graciously assisted. Some received the reserved sacrament

compliments of Australia Post. One container, a large Nescafe coffee jar, would be shipped to King Island. Our female colleagues further north informed us that they said all the words ... but just didn't move their hands. In my case, with the archbishop's knowledge, my Uniting Church of Australia colleagues assisted me – in one case a woman.

In other words, the theology of the sacraments and the understanding of ordained ministry was getting sillier and sillier. I often thought God must have been either enjoying a chuckle at our human foolishness, or at times 'tearing God's hair out' so to say.

What difference have we women made?

We have made it possible for half the human race to see, as normal, new possibilities in what God might ask of us. It's worth noting that in the early days, women were spoken of as "wanting to be ordained" while the men "were responding to God's call".

In some instances, in some matters, such as abuse, we have made sharing the experience of abuse for women easier. I know this has been true in my own ministry. Given just how rife abuse and domestic violence are in the broader community, not just in communities of faith, this can only be a good thing.

Women see the world differently from men, from the lens of our own experience. Women may therefore also approach the interpretation of Scriptures, that denigrate or oppress women, with much more caution. We are much more aware of the power of language to liberate or bind. Some of us, but not necessarily all, may be willing to be more open about our emotions. Having women and men working together at all levels within the church means we can have a more wholistic approach to the challenges faced by the world and the church.

Just as all men are different, so are all women. Diversity makes for richer faith communities that offer more challenges to people of faith. Every woman who has taken up God's calling to ordination will testify that this has changed her life in ways she could not even have dreamt about.

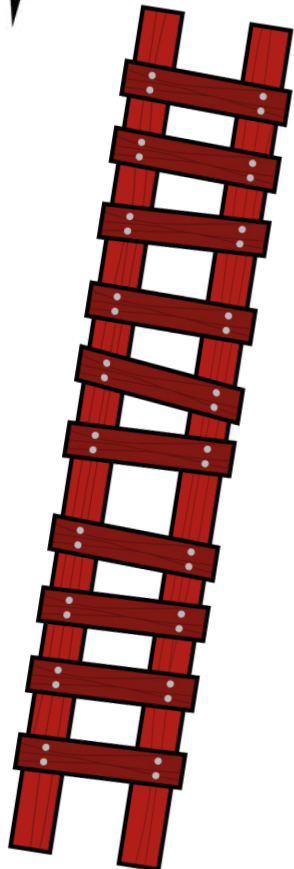
Ordination with its consequent life of service has enriched our lives and hopefully the lives of others. We have had opportunities to be part of people's lives when they have been at their most vulnerable; at their times of greatest joy and sorrow. If we have been faithful to God's call, then we will also have learned something of the real cost of discipleship. We will know, like Peter, what it is to be bound and taken to places we otherwise might not have chosen.

Being ordained, a lifelong and life changing vocation, is a great privilege and joy, but also requires utter commitment and endurance. I pray that each one of you, irrespective of gender, may have your eyes, ears and hearts opened to hear your calling from God and to embrace it wholeheartedly.

*The Revd Willy Maddock was among the first group of women priested in the Diocese of Melbourne on 13 December, 1992. This piece is drawn from sermons preached at St George's Red Hill and St Paul's Cathedral Bendigo in recent weeks.*

*This article first appeared in The Melbourne Anglican. Used with permission.*


# Youth & Families ministry...

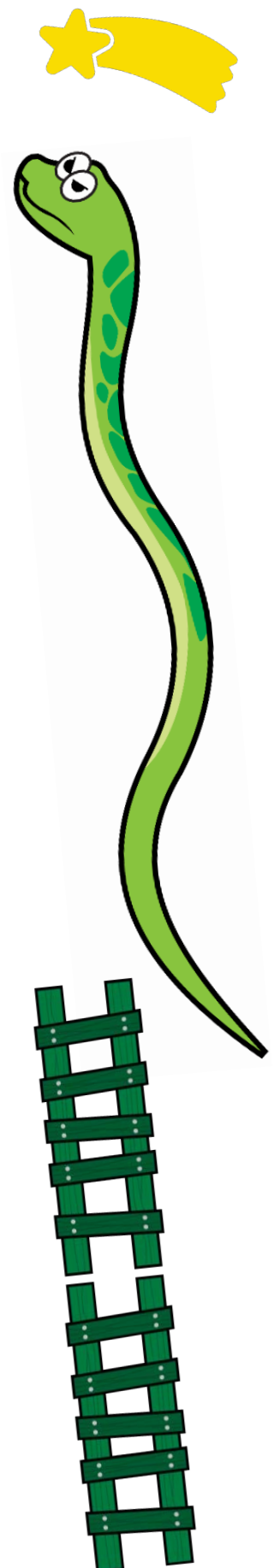


72 	71	70	69 	68 A magi his gift!
66 	65	67 	68 	69 
64 	63 	62 Jesus is born! Luke 2:6-8	61 	60 Joseph is too
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47	46	45	44	43
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22	21	20	19	18
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	7 An Angel Visits Mary Luke 1:26-38	8	9	



# Celebrating women in ministry...

## The Venerable Marjorie McGregor AM (1931-2022)

Peta Sherlock

In our nursing homes and aged care facilities there are hidden saints of the church. Marj McGregor was one. She had lived with dementia in Kyneton for many years but overseen by her two feisty sisters Margaret and Helen who lived in the same facility and made sure Marj was not forgotten. She died on 17 September just short of her 91st birthday. Her funeral was led by the present Rector, the previous Rector and Bishop Kate Prowd who was deaconed alongside Marj in February 1986. Archbishop Kay Goldsworthy sent a greeting from Perth.

I met Marj through the Movement for the Ordination of Women and celebrated when she became one of the first women in Australia to be made deacon by Archbishop David Penman at St Paul's Cathedral Melbourne. He decided first to ordain deaconesses, although most of them believed they already were deacons, including Kay Goldsworthy. Kate Prowd had just graduated from Trinity College and was added to the group as a sign of normal progression for women offering for ordination. Many of these deacons went on to become priests, bishops and the Archbishop of Perth. But Marj remained a deacon, despite pressure even from supporters, because she believed that this was the distinctive Christian ministry. She was called to a vocation of servant leadership.

And she was a shining example. She was no doormat. She truly led, but by the deep authority of serving others. I most remember her smile, not a papery over the cracks kind of smile, but a genuine peace and joy. She was made an Archdeacon in 1988 in a creative move because she embodied the diaconate, she was the epitome of a deacon, an arch-deacon. In 1990 Archdeacon Marjorie came to the place where I was being licensed as School Chaplain to sign my papers and present me to the school. At the very last moment the Diocesan



**Remembering:** Marjorie proudly wearing the McGregor tartan and brooch

Registry sent a man, because the lawyers said, being a woman, Marj was not quite a real archdeacon! For one moment her smile faded as we both saw yet another injustice played out. She insisted on signing the document beside the man's name and I valued that signature. And neither of us believed the lawyers.

She had studied at Ridley College for her Th.L in 1959 and earned a rare Th.Schol in 1972, the equivalent of a Masters degree. She was made a deaconess in 1961 and served at Bentleigh, London, Ringwood, The Hermitage and South Melbourne with many church agencies that eventually came under the umbrella of Anglicare, drawing the poor and marginalised into the centre of the church's attention. As a deacon she led the parish of Northcote,

because there are only a few moments in the week when being a priest actually comes into play. She was appointed Senior Minister for Women and regularly gathered together her female colleagues as we waited over six years for priesting to be possible. She pursued the future of the diaconate both internationally and ecumenically through the organisation Diakonia.

In her last years in the nursing home she continued to say the words of the Prayerbook as her local Rector led Holy communion. She was a jewel. In our nursing homes and aged care facilities there are many hidden jewels of the church. Please search them out and serve them to the end as the beloved children of the living God.



# A love like no other...

A story written with a Wiradjuri Perspective by The Revd Shannon Smith  
Love....Joy....Peace....Hope....

## Love

Baayami (creator God) was passing over the galing bulan (water) of the Murrumbidgee when he spotted a young migay (girl) walking along the muddy munang badha (clay banks). He noticed the migay who looked lost and couldn't help but feel the pain she was feeling. As Baayami (creator God) moved closer to the migay (girl) his heart broke and started to weep from the pain he felt from within her heart.

Girawu (goanna) migay (girl), of an ancient Wiradjuri bural (birthplace). Baayami (creator God) swooped down to the migay (girl) and invited her into the galing bulan (water) saying 'come bambinya' (swim). The young migay (girl) wasn't too sure about entering the murky galing bulan of the Murrumbidgee so she went to the galing bulans (waters) edge and placed her marra (hand) into the cool galing bulan (water). At that moment she could feel the depths of the gayling bulans calling her soul. Baayami (creator God) reached out and called to her 'my beloved buraay' (child). The migay (girl) looked up with her miils (eyes) drawn to the heavens and called out 'babiin (father) babiin (father)'.

The migay (girl) waded out into the galing bulan (water), the further she waded the more at peace she felt. She felt a ngurrbul (love) like no ngurrbul (love) she had felt before, a ngurrbul (love) that no other could take away.

## Peace

As she slowly made her way back to the galing balun (waters) edge she could hear a voice calling 'Medika'. As she looked ahead of her across the muddy munang badha (clay bank) she could see a figure standing there as the yiray (sun) began to fall. It was her gunhi (mother) standing there so proud and tall. But how could it be? Her gunhi (mother) had been called to the dreaming some years before.

In haste Medika continued the climb up the muddy munang badha (clay bank) in desperate need to reach her gunhi (mother). As she reached the top of the bank, she looked around her and her gunhi (mother) was nowhere to be seen. Had her gunhi been there all along looking over her, protecting her? Was it her gunhi (mother) who called Baayami while she was in the depths of the galiyn bulan and in the grips of the waawii? As she sat on the top of the levy bank looking back out across the galiyn balun she remembered her gunhi's words 'Medika my beautiful blossom, my water Lily'.

It was at that moment sitting on the bank that the young migay felt at peace and felt her gunhi's (mothers) durrabarra (spirit) leave. As she got up and made her way back to her badhiins (grandmothers) she couldn't believe the peace that filled her heart. A peace that surpasses all understanding!

## Joy

The migay stayed in the cool galing bulan (water) and took in the serenity of the calm that surrounded her entire being. It seemed like a lifetime the migay was afloat and basking in the delights of the galing bulan (water) that surrounded her, when she heard an unnerving noise. Was it the waawii (bunyip)?

Surely not, 'Baayami, Baayami' she called, but Baayami was nowhere to be found. The migay could feel herself being pulled deeper and deeper beneath the galing bulan (water) the further she felt herself drop her life passed before her. It was at that moment she felt an unknown force raise her from the depth. Could it be Baayami? Had he heard her calls?

Baayami reached out his hand and raised his child from the depths and clutches of the waawii (bunyip). As the migay made her way to the surface she was overcome with joy, her heart leapt with joy as she came to the surface and looked into the yurungs (clouds) with the yiray (sun) shining through. The joy she felt, she wondered how she would ever explain, perhaps it was a joy only she would know, a joy that was meant for her alone.

## Hope

As the young migay, Madika got near her badhiins (grandmothers) dhandha (Camp site) she could see the ngalanys (flames) and the figure of her badhiin (grandmother) sitting there alone. Eventually she reached her badhiin and sat down beside her. Her badhin reached out and put her arms arounds her and asked 'yamandhu marang'? (are you well) to which the young migay replied 'ngawa baladhu marang' (yes, i'm well). "Come sit with me buurraay' (child). As Medika and her badhiin (grandmother) sat silently together, baayami (creator God) looked down upon them from the heavens. 'My wangгаа, my wanggay (my baby, my baby) has gone, were the words baayami heard the badhin say to the migay (girl). Baayami reached out to touch the broken heart of the badhiin (grandmother) and she began to speak the words that baayami (creator God) gave her to speak in hope:

**Yuwi(n)nhu walawin yala barri. Ngurambangga-nhu berri buwagala**  
Our Father, you (who) are in heaven

**Gura -nhu ngi-nya barri nginhiany dhaagun-dha**  
Your word be let here earth on

**Yingian wari murrubira**  
be heaven in

**Nginhi yiadha yalabul wigay ngianhigingunha ngu-ng-gunha-dha**  
This day generous bread us give

**Gariya ngianhigin nangumalngidyal winhanga-y-ali-dya**  
Don't our trespasses remember again

**Yingian ngyanhi wiray wari winhanga-y-ali-nya**  
we not be remembering

**Ngaguwala-bu nanguma-rra ngianhigingunha**  
Theirs also trespassing us

**Giriya ngianhigingunha gaga-mambi-ya**  
Don't let us stray let,

**Gawawabiyala ngianhigingunha mara-muban-dhi**  
Fetch back us good-less from

**Nginhu bala ngurambang walanbamba**  
Yours be kingdom power

**Ngalgaram bu durru-buwulin Ngi-mambi-dya**  
Glory and ever ever so let it be

# Ordination celebrations...



**Ordained:** Ma Thae Bleh Dah Moo, Jacob Kelly, Andy Ellis & Katy Lambert



**All ages talk:** George Hemmings with puppet Katy 2.0



**Laying on of hands:** Clergy and bishops gather to lay hands as the candidates are ordained priest



# 26 November 2022



**Prayers:** Led by the children from their kid's activities



**Support:** Bishop Matt, Katy Lambert and Bishop Ian Lambert



**Together:** The diocesan family and visitors gather outside on the steps of St Paul's Cathedral following the ordination service





Commissioned: Zan Daniels with MU members and daughter Lizzie

## MU welcomes President Zan Daniels

Jenny Rainsford

On 18 November, the Revd Suzannah (Zan) Daniels was commissioned by Bishop Matt to take on the position of President of the Anglican Mothers Union Australia (AMUA) in the Diocese of Bendigo.

Zan brings enthusiasm along with the new skills and ideas of a younger generation! Zan was recently welcomed to AMUA in St Paul's Cathedral by the Dean, Elizabeth Dyke. Zan is photographed with the Dean, former President Jenny Rainsford and some other members including from the Karen MU group. Zan was present at the recent national AMUA Council meeting held in Templestowe in

November at which Dr Robin Ray was elected as the new National President of AMUA. Zan, as a diocesan president, automatically becomes a member of the AMUA National Executive.

AMUA in the Diocese of Bendigo is participating in the 16 Days of Activism which concluded on 10 December. This is part of the focus on Domestic and Family Violence. The Anglican Church of Australia has conducted Australia's first known national research into family violence within faith communities – investigating the prevalence, experience, and impact of family violence for those who identify as Anglicans in Australia.

# The Spirit

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**Photographs** should be sent in digital form to the general email address above. Full size, 'raw' files are necessary. Physical photos are normally not returned.

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March issue: Contributions due by 18 February 2023.

*Photo of Bishop Matt on page 2 credit of Bendigo Advertiser.*

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