



TO BE ON EARTH THE HEART OF GOD

KIT

OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART PARISH

St John the Apostle - Kippax ACT

St Thomas Aquinas - Charnwood ACT

SEPTEMBER 2026



Time for Reflection

Bless the Lord

We are always asking God to bless us but have you ever thought of blessing God?

Blessing God is a profound shift from seeking personal favour to offering praise, gratitude, and adoration for who He is. The psalmist in Psalm 103 says;

“Bless the Lord, my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name.”
– Psalm 103:1



There is something deeply beautiful about the phrase, “and all that is within me.” It is not a polite or partial prayer. It is a prayer of totality. The psalmist is not asking only the lips to praise God, or the mind to think holy thoughts. He is calling every part of himself into blessing.

“All that is within me” means the whole inner world:
the memories we carry,
the hopes we barely dare to name,
the wounds that still ache,
the questions without answers,
the joy, the grief, the longing, the fear, the love.

It is easy to praise God with only the surface of our lives while keeping hidden parts of ourselves locked away. Yet this verse invites a deeper honesty. God does not ask for polished spirituality. God desires the whole person. The tired parts. The confused parts. The hopeful parts. Even the parts still struggling to trust.

To bless the Lord with “all that is within me” is to allow the heart, soul, body, imagination, and spirit to come into harmony. It is the moment when our inner divisions begin to heal. Nothing is excluded. Nothing is left outside the prayer.

There is also a quiet challenge in these words. So much within us can become consumed by anxiety, resentment, distraction, or self-criticism. The psalm gently asks: what if every inner movement could slowly become a blessing instead of a burden? What if gratitude could reach even the hidden chambers of the heart?

This verse reminds us that prayer is not merely something we say. Prayer is something we become. A life turned toward God. A heart awakening to presence. A soul gathering all its scattered pieces and saying, “Come, all that is within me – bless his holy name.”

And perhaps that is where healing begins: when every part of us is invited into the light, and every part learns again how to bless.

Bless the Lord with your life.



Butterfly song

My name is Pongawilly
and I live in Gardenland.
The music of the bees and birds
interwoven with strands of silence
and the sougning of the wind
delights my daily journeying
through shrub and tree and blossom.
My colours red and black and white
intermingle with the flowers
of this glorious garden-world;
my life is bearing witness to
the Maker of all things, for
He can hear and understand
the least of His creation as
in silence we pay homage and give praise!

Eamonn Murtagh



EDITOR'S NOTES

Spring has arrived, heralded by the abundant flowering of our beautiful wattle. The Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) is Australia's national floral emblem—a symbol that comes directly from our land. Wattle Day is celebrated on 1 September, marking the beginning of spring.



One of the significant celebrations in September was the Sacrament of Confirmation, celebrated on Friday 18 September.

Congratulations to the forty-one children from our parish and from St John the Apostle and St Thomas Aquinas Primary Schools who received the sacrament. It was a reverent and Spirit-filled liturgy, and we continue to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide and strengthen these young people throughout their lives.



This month we also said farewell to two much-loved parishioners, Philomena Murtagh and Brian Mahony. We give thanks for their lives and for the gift they have been to our parish community. May they now rest in peace and share in the eternal joy of heaven.



As the school term comes to an end, our children and teachers will enjoy a two-week break from 26 September to 13 October. We wish them a happy, relaxing and refreshing holiday.



Looking ahead to October

On Saturday 17 October, we will walk together as pilgrims between St John the Apostle and St Thomas Aquinas Churches. Our inaugural pilgrimage walk was held last year as part of the Jubilee Year:

Pilgrims of Hope. This year, we have the opportunity once again to walk, pray and build community together as one parish.



On Wednesday 21 October we will celebrate the 119th death anniversary of Fr. Jules Chevalier msc.

- mass at St Thomas Aquinas - 9:30am
- Lunch at St John the Apostle - 12:00-2:00pm - RSVP 14 October at belconenwest@cg.org.au



*Blessings
Marian*

In Memoriam

Peg McGrath



The following **life Lesson** sayings of Peg appeared at the back of her funeral order of service booklet.

Family always comes first.

Love is shown in the little things.

No sense in worrying. All we can do is pray and leave the rest up to God.

Remember everything is done by and with God, and in God's time.

Always put lipstick, and a pair of earrings on in the morning.

Make everyone feel welcome - a house becomes a home when everyone feels they belong.

First things first, boil the kettle - a cup of tea can solve almost anything.

Never let anyone leave your home hungry or thirsty.

A made bed, folded washing and a warm meal are all acts of love.

Leave people feeling better than when they arrived, always walk them to the door.



Philomena Murtagh



The yeast in the dough

Dedicated to my dear mother Philomena

She is the yeast in the dough,
the presence of God's kingdom,
a woman of love
with a knack for healing,
for helping others to grow.

In a group of many,
it only takes one such soul
to spread the preserve
of affection.

Then, before you know it,
the prevailing mood changes
from a no man's land
melancholy
to one charged by the Spirit,
a mountaintop of joy,
the redemption
of life's possibilities.

Shane Murtagh

BAPTISMS



*Isobel, Kenzie, Millie Bloomfield
children of Djali and Chloe*

*Morgan Jacka
daughter of Damian and Bronte*

*Ada Rumble
daughter of Mark and Megan*

*Jordan Kelly
daughter of Joshua and Emily*

*Guadalupe Bailie
daughter of Scott and Ana*

*Patrick Ferris
son of Mark and Louise*

*Jayden Pinn
son of Jayesh and Mareesa*

RECENTLY DECEASED



Philomena Murtagh
15/11/1933 - 30/08/2026



Brian Mahony
12/10/1934 - 18/09/2026

SACRAMENTS

EUCCHARIST

Saturday - 12 September
5:00pm mass



Confirmation

Friday - 18 September

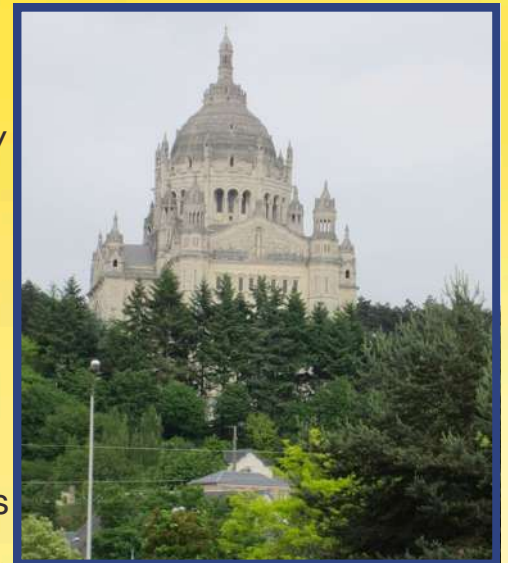


One Step at a Time

During the last session of “Forming Hearts for Prayer” we had a brief discussion about pilgrimage as a form of prayer. Some of the participants identified pilgrimages they had walked. I was initially a bit at a loss. I hadn’t walked any of the great pilgrimages such as Camino de Santiago. One person included in their list the walk from St John’s to St Thomas Aquinas last year when we marked the Jubilee Year: Pilgrims of Hope. After that I lowered my sights and realised I had some small pilgrimages to my name.

On 1 June 2012, while staying in Rouen, France, I decided as I often did on my travels, to go somewhere completely unplanned. That day took me to Lisieux, about an hour by train from Rouen. The journey was one I was drawn to even though I have never had a particular devotion to St Therese.

As the train neared Lisieux, I wondered how I’d find my way around as I had no map, don’t speak French and invariably get lost on these unplanned journeys. There was no need to worry as the dome of the massive white Basilica dominates the town – it’s impossible to miss. There was a blue line on the road to help tourists navigate from the Basilica to St Therese’s home, the Cathedral and to the convent where in the chapel I gained a new respect for this young woman who is now a saint and doctor of the church.



I think, though, the influence of Therese’s family is really the story that opened to me that day. In my diary I wrote: “There was a simple faith in this family. Her sisters lived on to their 80s and 90s, so they would have known of all the work to get her recognised as a saint – I wonder how they felt as they themselves had invested so much love in this youngest child?”

My experience is that pilgrimage is taken ‘one step at a time’. Even when the goal is fuzzy, it’s a chance to grow in faith.





ST THERESE OF LISIEUX

CARMELITE CONVENT IN LISIEUX

The parish is planning another pilgrimage on 17 October, 'one step at a time' to strengthen unity as a parish. To mark October, a special month of Mary, we can also take a journey with the novena to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart adapted from one Sr Merle Salazar prepared as a nine-day pilgrimage. It's a great way to prepare for the Feast of Fr. Jules Chevalier msc, the founder of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart which falls on 21 October.

Elizabeth McDonald

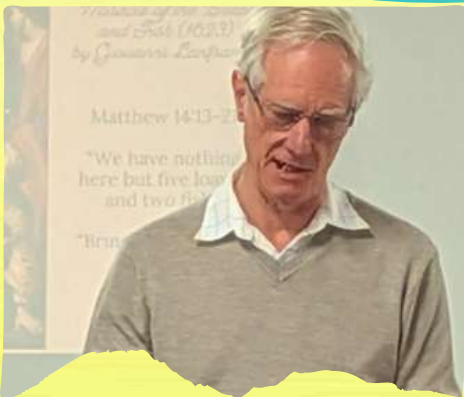
Called to Serve Prayer & Reflection

Come: We are Gathered



DEACON HOA MSC

**ALL OF THE FAITHFUL ARE CALLED TO
FULL AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN
THE LITURGY**



Matt: 14:13-27

**MIRACLE OF THE BREAD
AND FISH**

On Saturday evening, 5 September, a group of 35 liturgical ministers came together for a formation evening,

The evening consisted of prayer, reflection and a shared meal which resonated with symbolism of the Passover meal. It served as a tangible connection to history and heritage, reminding everyone of the shared journey and the bonds that unite.

How are we serving
others, our friends,
our family, our work
colleagues?

Refletion

What we receive at mass is not
meant to be kept to ourselves.

We are sent to go out and
proclaim the Good News by how
we live our lives.

If we don't, then mass becomes
an island, good in itself
but disconnected from the rest
of the week, and our lives.



LUKE 24:28-35

Emmaus

"they recognised him in the breaking
of the bread"



EXODUS 12: 1-14

Preparedness for the Journey

*We are called to JOIN:
We are joined
to Christ*



**Fr. Tru asks -
can our community
become a sanctuary for
those who are thirsty?**

FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY 8 SEPTEMBER

There are many feast days in the Church's liturgical calendar, but only three earthly birthdays are celebrated as liturgical feasts: the birth of Jesus at Christmas, the birth of St John the Baptist on 24 June, and the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary on 8 September.

There is something beautiful about the Church remembering these three births. Each marks the arrival of a person whose life would become intimately woven into God's plan of salvation.

The date of Mary's birth is significant. The Feast of the Nativity of Mary is celebrated exactly nine months after the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception on 8 December. This reflects the traditional understanding that Mary was preserved from original sin from the very beginning of her life, from the moment of her conception.

Mary's birth, therefore, is celebrated not simply as the arrival of another child into the world, but as the coming of one who would become the mother of the Saviour.

The liturgy of this feast is filled with images of joy, hope and light. Mary has often been described as the dawn that comes before the rising sun. Just as the first light of morning announces that a new day is about to begin, Mary's birth heralds the coming of Christ, the Sun of Justice.

In celebrating Mary's birth, we are also reminded that God often begins great things in quiet and seemingly ordinary ways. A child is born; a life begins; and within that life lies a mystery that will eventually touch the whole world.

Mary, Mother of God, pray for us, that we may welcome Christ more deeply into our hearts and allow his light to shine through our lives.



Photo: Sabina Van Rooy

Life in the Extreme

The world's arid environments, which comprise the planet's desert biome, are so extreme that the plants that survive in them are some of the most highly evolved on the planet. Though plants have their origins in the ancient lakes and oceans of the Earth, innumerable adaptive steps have enabled them to become modified to a life further away from their aquatic beginnings, over time colonising drier and more inhospitable lands. In this season of Creation, we give thanks to the loving kindness of our Creator and it is perhaps an opportune time to dwell on the changes we need to make in order to flourish in our particular environment.

Noah, the patriarch of Genesis, understood our close relationship with other living creatures and built the ark accordingly. After the flood, God sets a rainbow in the sky as a reminder of the Covenant which has been established. Through the Old Testament narrative, a constant theme is the interaction between humanity, the desert, the land of milk and honey and the rivers and streams of the new Covenant. In the New Testament the Gospel stories reveal Jesus' connections to the wind, the waves of the sea, the wells where water is drawn and the trees of a landscape dominated by invaders. In St Paul's epistles we are reminded that during his missionary journeys he was confronted by the storms and dangerous currents of not only the great sea but of humanity's paradoxes.

Let us always be conscious of, and grateful for, the presence of a kind and loving God who watches out for us during our own missionary journeys.

Pam Connor

Acknowledgments to "Kingdom of Plants A Journey Through Their Evolution" and Muriel Spark's "All God's Creatures".

**Marist College,
in partnership with
Concerned Catholics Canberra Goulburn
present a Public Forum to interest all
Catholics and more:
Exploring the Horizons of a
Pope Leo Church**

Wednesday 18 November 2026 - 7.30pm
Marist College Pearce ACT

Key speakers:
Fr. Tony Banks OSA Prior
Provincial Australian Augustinians
Dr. Anne Benjamin Co-author of
Leadership after the Synod.



**A key role of Concerned Catholics Canberra
Goulburn is to provide:
Thought Leadership on
Catholic Reform in Australia**

**Pope Leo is both an exciting leader of the
global Catholic Church and an emerging figure
of trust on the world stage. His encyclical
Magnifica Humanitas frames the challenges
that AI present for humanity and his strong
endorsement of the reforms of the Synod on
Synodality reinforce the vision of a Vatican II
inspired church. But we know relatively little
about the man, his inspirations and the likely
impacts of what is shaping as a very significant
pontificate. So come along to this free public
forum and learn more about the man and how
he may shape the church.**

**Enquiries to Terry Fewtrell, Chair of Concerned
Catholics t.fewtrell@bigpond.com**

MENTAL HEALTH • MINISTRY

**LIFE IS NOT EASY**

“Life is hard.”

These simple words open the classic book *The Road Less Traveled* by M. Scott Peck. At first glance, the statement may seem negative or discouraging. Yet it contains a profound insight into mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Modern culture often places enormous pressure on people to appear constantly happy, successful, productive, and emotionally in control. Social media especially can create the illusion that everyone else is coping perfectly while we alone struggle. As a result, many people suffer not only because life is difficult, but because they believe it should not be difficult.

That gap between expectation and reality can quietly fuel anxiety, frustration, shame, and emotional exhaustion.

Peck suggests that once we accept the truth that life includes hardship, something begins to shift within us. We stop wasting energy resisting reality. Acceptance does not mean giving up or becoming pessimistic. Rather, it means seeing life clearly so we can respond with greater wisdom, resilience, and compassion.

Every human life contains uncertainty, disappointment, grief, conflict, setbacks, and emotional pain. These experiences are not signs that we are failing; they are part of being human. Emotional wellbeing often improves not when we eliminate discomfort, but when we learn how to live meaningfully alongside it.

When we accept that life is difficult, we stop being shocked every time hardship appears. Instead of asking, “Why is this happening to me?” we begin to ask a healthier question: “Difficulty is part of life — how do I walk through this well?”

This shift in perspective can be deeply freeing. It helps us approach ourselves with greater patience and self-kindness. We become less ashamed of our struggles and more able to seek support when needed. We also grow in compassion toward others, recognising that everyone carries burdens we may never fully see.

Ironically, accepting that life is hard can make life feel lighter. We no longer have to pretend that everything is perfect. We can let go of unrealistic expectations and focus instead on courage, connection, meaning, and hope.

Mental health is not about avoiding all struggle. It is about developing the inner strength and support to navigate life's challenges with honesty, resilience, and grace.



October – World Mental Health Month ~ Together, we thrive

**Mental Health Day is observed on
10 October**

When the world feels overwhelming, we don't need to face it alone—together, we thrive.

Research shows that feeling connected can support mental wellbeing by reducing stress, improving emotional balance, and making it easier to cope with challenges.

"Find connection. Find support. Thrive together."



Heart Spirituality

Compassion

Our love of neighbour should be tender hearted and compassionate.

The Samaritan should be our model.

Along the road he meets a wounded man,
half dead, stripped, dying of hunger.

He is stirred at the sight,
and his heart touched with compassion (Lk 10:33).

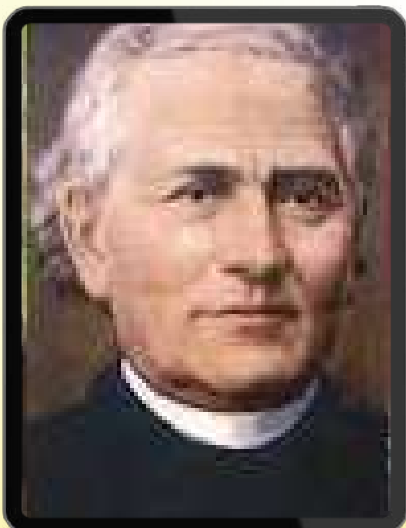
Let us not close our heart to pity,
when along life's road we come across a person
wounded by sorrow, bruised by ingratitude, calumny or sin,
prostrate in the mud of a disorderly life,
or a poor person lacking everything, or a needy family.

Like the Samaritan, let us draw near to these unfortunate people,
and do everything in our power to comfort them.

Do we conduct ourselves in this way?

Do we not on the contrary imitate the hardness of heart
of the men in the gospel towards the wounded man?

Jules Chevalier msc, Méditations II p, 259 . Issoudun 1891.



Jules Chevalier msc

Abbé J. Belleville from the diocese of Bourges France, wrote the following about Jules.

"Oblivion covers the memory of most men, as grass covers their graves. But there are some who, when they die, take their place in history and who can say with the poet: *Non omnis moriar*. Fr. Chevalier is one of these. His name remains attached to a work and to a living posterity in the midst of which he will live on, as the patriarchs in the multitude of their descendants, and the founders of orders in their religious families".

E.J. Cuskelly msc – Jules Chevalier: man with a mission, p. 282

POPE LEO'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR OCTOBER

For Mental Health Ministry.

Let us pray that the mental health ministry be established throughout the Church, helping to overcome the stigma and discrimination of persons with mental illnesses.



Praying for Pope Leo *supporting him in his ministry*

Loving God,
we pray for Pope Leo XIV,
Guide him, strengthen him, and
fill him with your Spirit,
that he may lead your people
with compassion and hope.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The New Things of Our Time

Pope Leo XIII spoke of the “new things” (Rerum Novarum) confronting the world of his time. Today, we face our own profound transformation through digitalisation, artificial intelligence and robotics.

Technology is not, in itself, opposed to humanity. Throughout history, technological development has brought enormous benefits and improved human life.

Yet technology is never neutral: the same tools that can serve humanity can also cause harm when they are not directed towards human dignity and the common good.

What makes our present moment different is the extraordinary speed, reach and power of emerging technologies. They are becoming woven into everyday life, influencing how we make decisions, how we understand ourselves and how we imagine the future. Their long-term effects are difficult to predict.

This calls us to approach technological change with wisdom, responsibility and clear thinking. Appropriate regulation is necessary, but regulation alone is not enough. We must also ask: Who holds this power, and how is it being used?

Increasingly, technological power rests not with governments but with private, often global corporations whose resources and influence can exceed those of many nations. Our challenge is to ensure that this immense power remains directed towards human dignity, justice and the common good.

MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS – ENCYCLICAL OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV

A summary of #4 & #5

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish - SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT



Our Lady of the Sacred Heart parish is committed to safeguarding and upholding the dignity and rights of all our children and vulnerable people.

We seek to empower children, their families and carers, and vulnerable people, to have a say, to be listened to, and to be protected. This approach is at the centre of all of our thinking and action.

PARISH SAFEGUARDING VOLUNTEERS



The role of the Parish Safeguarding Volunteer is to be an additional point of contact in the Parish on matters relating to the safeguarding of children, young and vulnerable people, complementing the roles of the Parish Priest and Parish Secretary. They can provide advice on how complaints can be made, and forward concerns, relating to the protection safeguarding of children, young and vulnerable people within the Parish to the Institute for Professional Standards and Safeguarding Manager.

Carl Madsen, and Marg Hourigan –
belconnenwest.safeguarding@cg.org.au

*We love to celebrate mass with the children and vulnerable people of our parish.
Safeguarding and care is everyone's responsibility.*

CONTRIBUTIONS TO KIT

We are looking for front cover images - please email your photos to
belconnenwest@cg.org.au by 15th of the month

KIT Keeping In Touch

KIT is produced for Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Community from contributions submitted by parishioners. Send submissions to belconnenwest@cg.org.au

Editor Marian England * **Graphic Design:** Kirsty Vera *

Front Cover: Wattle -

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Belconnen West ACT * 25 Blackham Street, HOLT ACT 2615 and
Lhotsky Street, CHARNWOOD ACT 2615

JOIN IN AT OLSH!



BOOK CLUB
4TH SUNDAY OF
THE MONTH

COMMUNITY
CONNECTIONS FOR
PEOPLE LIVING ALONE
3RD SUNDAY OF
THE MONTH



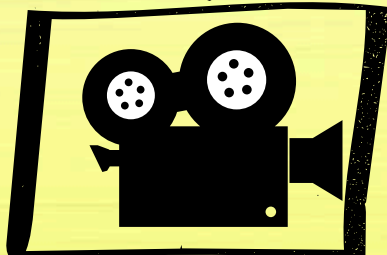
FRIENDSHIP GROUP
LAST WEDNESDAY
OF THE MONTH



MENS GROUP
3RD FRIDAY OF
THE MONTH



MOVIE NIGHT
4TH FRIDAY OF THE MONTH



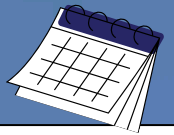
PINS & NEEDLES
3RD MONDAY OF
THE MONTH

WOMEN'S
BREAKFAST
4TH TUESDAY OF
THE MONTH



YCS BELCONNEN
AFTER SUNDAY
MASS 7PM-8PM





1	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass Gethsemane Thursday - Praying with the Blessed Sacrament
2	Friday	First Friday Mass of the Sacred Heart 9:30am - Meditation 5:15pm - MFLibrary
3	Saturday	
4	Sunday	27th Sunday in Ordinary Time
5	Monday	
6	Tuesday	
7	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
8	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass Parish Pastoral Council meeting 7:00pm Mary French Library
9	Friday	Meditation 5:15pm - Mary French Library
10	Saturday	
11	Sunday	28 th Sunday in Ordinary Time
12	Monday	
13	Tuesday	Community Connections For People Living Alone- 2:00pm Coffee Ichi Cafe Klppax
14	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
15	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
16	Friday	Meditation 5:15pm - Mary French Library Men's Group 6:00pm - Parish Centre
17	Saturday	Pilgrimage between St John the Apostle & St Thomas Aquinas churches - 10:00am
18	Sunday	29th Sunday in Ordinary Time Community Connections - Mary French Library 3:30pm
19	Monday	Pins & Needles 7:15pm - Mary French Library
20	Tuesday	
21	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
22	Thursday	
23	Friday	Meditation 5:15pm - Mary French Library
24	Saturday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
25	Sunday	30th Sunday in Ordinary Time
26	Monday	
27	Tuesday	Women's Breakfast 7:30am Neutral Grounds Cafe Belconnen
28	Wednesday	Friendship Group - 10:15am Parish Centre Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
29	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
30	Friday	Meditation 5:15pm - Mary French Library
31	Saturday	