



# The Encourager

Print Post 100003361 Summer 2024 Number 119 Magazine of the Newcastle Cursillo Movement

**Summer issue 2024**

News, events, updates, and sharing!

NOW MAY THE

*God of hope*

FILL YOU WITH ALL

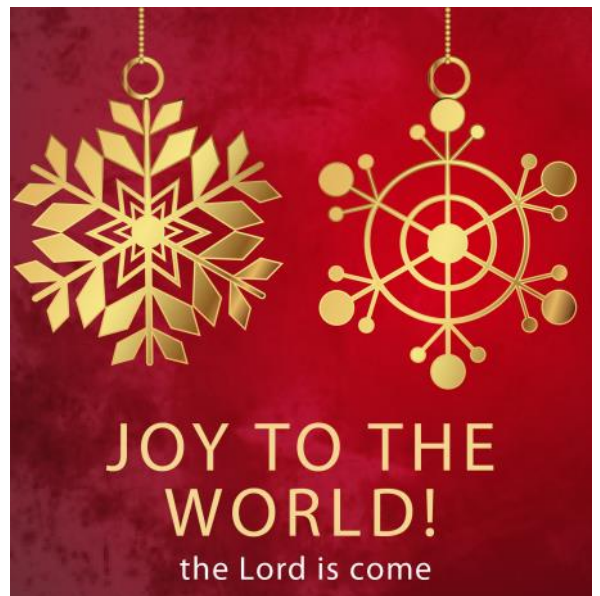
*Joy & peace*

ROMANS 15:13

*Merry Christmas*



See inside for the latest news from the Diocesan Co-LD's, reports & photos from Ultreyas, and more!



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PROCTOR/ COPYRIGHT COORDINATOR	Position Vacant
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## FROM OUR DIOCESAN SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

Fr Mark Cooper

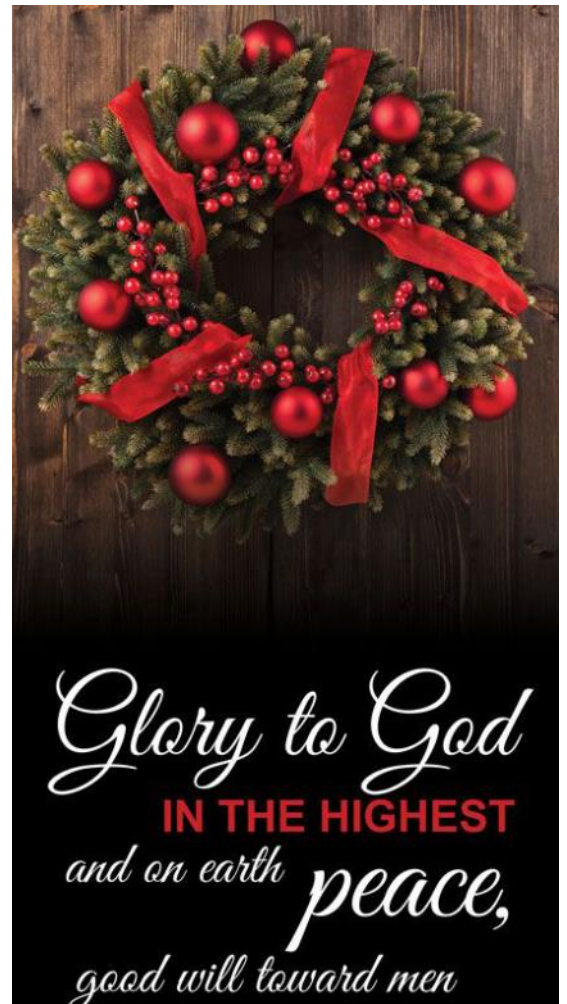
When I lived in the UK, every city I visited usually had some type of tourist experience based on the history of the area. The one in Canterbury told the story of the pilgrims who would come to see the shrine of Thomas Beckett and it used Geoffrey Chaucer's poem "The Canterbury Tales" to tell the story. A feature of the experience were the smells in each room to really help you feel like you were there in the late fourteen hundreds.

As we approach Christmas and prepare for services and celebrations, we will be making everything as beautiful as we can, ignoring the real down-to-earth history and its smells. Smelly BO, musky animals, and manure. This is the environment God chooses to be born into. The exact opposite of what any human king would choose. When the heir to the throne is born, they are surrounded by the best doctors in the most comfortable palace. The Christ Child is born among the animals and laid in a feed trough. Our nativity scenes make it look rustic, beautiful but lack the authentic sights, sounds and smells.

When the human heir to the throne is born the elite nobles are the first to be told, with the information trickling out and down the social layers of society. Jesus' birth is announced to the shepherds on the hillside. Again, our beautiful scene has rustic shepherds on a hill, watching their sheep, visited by angels with the wonderful message. The reality is, these shepherds are the poorest of the poor, not trusted to give evidence in a trial, unwashed, and scared out of their wits at the sight of these angels.

When you start a new job or new project one of the best pieces of advice is "start how you mean to finish". This is exactly what God does here. God wants the full human experience; not a comfortable cushy life. God puts the socially excluded first. God came into our world, smells and all, to know what being human really feels like. This Christmas as we look at all the beautiful nativity scenes, take a moment to imagine all the sights, sounds, and smells.

De Colores,  
**Fr Mark Cooper**





## MONTHLY CURSILLO PRAYER DIARY

Pray everyday for Bishop Peter  
along with our Assistant Bishops Sonia and Charlie

- Day 1 National Lay Director - Lew Hitchick
- Day 2 National Secretary - Leanne Doyle; (National Secretary Elect - Kay Self)
- Day 3 National Treasurer - Margaret Brodie
- Day 4 National Episcopal Advisor - Bishop Ian Palmer
- Day 5 National Spiritual Advisor - Reverend Lee Weissel
- Day 6 National Webmaster - Shirley Tongue
- Day 7 World Cursillo Community
- Day 8 Diocesan Co-Lay Director - Lorraine Phillips
- Day 9 Diocesan Co-Lay Director - **Position vacant**
- Day 10 Diocesan Spiritual Director - Reverend Toni Wein  
Diocesan Spiritual Advisor - Reverend Judy Walsh
- Day 11 Diocesan Secretary - Jane Malloy
- Day 12 Diocesan Treasurer - Marea Niland
- Day 13 Fourth Day/Applications/Promotion - Graeme Jeans
- Day 14 Prayer Coordinator - Reverend Alison Wooden
- Day 15 Servant Community Coordinator - Wendy Seddon
- Day 16 Servant Community Coordinator - **Position vacant**
- Day 17 Diocesan Proctor and Copyright Coordinator - **Position vacant**
- Day 18 'The Encourager' Editor - Susie Foster
- Day 19 Palanca Coordinator - Robyn Timp
- Day 20 Central Coast - Clergy, Servant Community; Deanery Contact - Noeline Darcy
- Day 21 Lake Macquarie - Clergy, Servant Community; Deanery Contact - Brian Taylor
- Day 22 Maitland - Clergy, Servant Community; Deanery Contact - Reverend Wendy Brack
- Day 23 Paterson - Clergy, Servant Community; Deanery Contact - Cheryl Cooper
- Day 24 Manning - Clergy, Servant Community; Deanery Contact - **Position vacant**
- Day 25 Upper Hunter - Clergy, Servant Community; Deanery Contact - Tony Farmer
- Day 26 Newcastle - Clergy, Servant Community; Deanery Contact - Fr Chris Bullock
- Day 27 Lay Director - MW52
- Day 28 Prayers for combined Cursillo men's and women's weekend
- Day 29 Prospective Sponsors and Potential Candidates
- Day 30 Fourth Day Community
- Day 31 Kairos, Torch and Kairos Outside/Inside/Juvenile





## FROM OUR NEW DIOCESAN CO-LAY DIRECTOR

Lorraine Phillips



As we enter the season of Advent and we look forward to celebrate the birth of our Lord, it is probably a good time to take a look back on the past year. It has certainly been a busy year for Cursillo.

Secretariat decided this year to trial a combined weekend for men and women. MW51 was led courageously by Lyn Wickham and her amazing team of men and women. Some changes needed to be made to the 3-day programme with some talks combined, which required some changes to the guidelines and the Clausura was moved to an earlier time to allow everyone to get home in daylight. The weekend was a great success and we will continue with combined weekends in the future.

We also hosted the National Secretariat Meeting this year with delegates from around the country coming together at Wallsend Diggers Club for their meeting. Our Diocesan Ultreya was held in conjunction with this meeting on 26th October. This was followed by a dinner attended by 41 Cursillistas including Bishop Peter and Bishop Sonia. Guest speakers on the night were Bishop Peter and Nettie Sullivan. The event co-ordinators at Diggers were very helpful and did a wonderful job in helping to organise this event.

During the Ultreya 6 members of Secretariat were de-commissioned by Bishop Peter, they were Geoff Wooden, Rev Mark Cooper, Lyn Wickham, Colleen Read, Brian Taylor and Liz O'Sullivan. We thank them for their service to the Cursillo Movement over the last 3 years. Those commissioned were Rev Toni Wein (Spiritual Adviser), Jane Malloy (Secretary), Marea Niland (Treasurer), and Graeme Jeans (Applications). We are still looking for someone to take on the role of Proctor. As we have not been able to find a new Co-Lay Director, it was discussed and voted on, that we continue for the next 6 months with just the one Diocesan Lay Director and this decision to be reviewed in 6 months time.

Please pray for our new and returning secretariat members as they work together to keep the Cursillo Movement relevant and authentic in today's world. Also please consider your giving to the Cursillo Movement through your registration fees, so that we can continue to give the Cursillo experience to more people around the Diocese.

As we move into Advent I pray that you all will have a Blessed and Holy Christmas and that Peace will be felt across the world.

Blessings and De Colores,  
**Lorraine Phillips**



# MW51 CURSILLO WEEKEND REPORT (22–25 AUGUST, 2024)

LYN WICKHAM, LAY DIRECTOR MW51

**THEME:** God's steadfast love

**SCRIPTURE:** *"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, His mercies never come to an end"* Lamentations 3.22

**THEME SONG:** "Freely, freely you have received" *Mission Praise 181*

MW51 held from 22nd August to 25th August, 2024 was the first combined (men and women) Cursillo weekend held in the Newcastle Anglican Diocese. The weekend was held at the Catalina Retreat Centre, Rathmines and generally followed the format of the Three Day Cursillo Weekend used in the Bathurst Diocese. Table communities were separate for men and women and the accommodation areas for men and women were well spaced for privacy.



Three candidates attended the weekend together with fifteen team members.

The integrity of the Cursillo experience was not lost in the new format. Nine talks were delivered by team members; Spiritual Advisors led us through an experiential experience of a "Journey through the Sacraments"; we worked through a bible study and enjoyed times for rest and quiet reflection.

## Team

Team commissioning and training days were held at St Thomas' Anglican Church, Cardiff. All team members contributed significantly to preparation and delivery of the weekend. The team included one LD, two (2) Spiritual Advisors, one Proctor, two (2) Gophers, one muso and one IT person. The Gophers assisted the Proctor when possible. The muso encouraged team members to use songs from Mission Praise which were not necessarily familiar, but beautiful songs. It was a joy to expand our horizons with these songs. Talks given by team members were of a high calibre and flowed well from one talk to the next.



## Candidates

Candidates entered into table discussions and poster making vigorously with their table community team members. Table communities were divided into women's table communities and men's table communities. The two men's table communities came together for discussions and poster making. Each candidate expressed that they had had a positive experience by attending the weekend.

## Format

The Bathurst Diocese format was used and aspects of former Newcastle Diocese formats were included. The benefit of this new format was to combine some talks to avoid repetition of aspects integral to the weekend, to provide more time for rest/ reflection for all attending the weekend and to allow the weekend to finish earlier on the Sunday afternoon. Overall, the weekend was a relaxed time of refreshment in a Christian community.

It was a privilege to lead MW51, to have a supportive and talented team with me. The Cursillo Movement is an important “glue” in our Diocese which we can strengthen through progressively moving forward listening to the ideas expressed by those who have experienced the joy of being a Cursillista.

**LYN WICKHAM, LD MW51**

# Cursillo



# Diary Dates for 2025

Diary Dates for 2025 will be published in the next issue. For updates prior to then, please visit our website.  
Dates and hosts for 2025 Ultreyas to be decided.

## Secretariat Meetings Raymond Terrace @ 6pm

Please note the **NEW** time of 6pm and  
**NEW** location: St. John's, Raymond Terrace!

4 February, 4 March, 1 April, 6 May, 3 June, 1 July, 5 August, 2 September, 7 October,  
4 November, 2 December

## Position Vacant!

### PROCTOR AND COPYRIGHT COORDINATOR

If you have been wondering what you can do to help with the Cursillo Ministry in the Diocese, or God is calling you to get involved, the Cursillo Secretariat requires a new Proctor to replace Brian.

No special skillset is required. If you are interested please contact Lorraine,  
[lorraine.phillips2@bigpond.com](mailto:lorraine.phillips2@bigpond.com) or 0419 277 294.

## Thank You!

A BIG "Thank You" to the members of the Secretariat who have recently been de-commissioned by Bishop Peter after 3 years of service to the Cursillo Movement. All of your hard work and dedication has been greatly appreciated. We will miss you at our meetings and wish you a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year!

Thank you Geoff Wooden, Rev Mark Cooper, Lyn Wickham, Colleen Read, Brian Taylor and Liz O'Sullivan.





# FROM OUR PRAYER CHAIN COORDINATOR

Reverend Alison Wooden



## Prayer

I recently had major surgery, and throughout the whole process I felt calm. Given that I tend towards fear, my only explanation for this calm is the power of prayer; all the prayers that family, friends, and even people that I've never met, prayed for me. 'That peace which passes all understanding.'

People often comment that they're not really 'good' at praying; that they don't feel confident. Prayer is a very personal thing, we don't all need to pray the same way.

I don't feel comfortable in corporate prayer situations. As a young adult we belonged to a charismatic Christian fellowship and there would always be a 'time of prayer' which generally meant that each of us would have a turn to pray (moving around the circle in order). I would generally start to panic "What can I pray?". Then I would think of something to pray about, but, ... someone else would say that! "Oh no! Now what do I pray?" It felt more like a performance than a time with God. Nowadays, if I'm not moved to pray something, I stay silent.

Prayer can be as simple as a conversation with God, touching base with God about our day, our concerns and our joys. We don't need to make it up. There are wonderful Psalms and prayers in the Prayer book. Sometimes people seem reluctant to use the Prayer book, but it is a wonderful resource – familiarise yourself with it.

For some people, the artistic ones amongst us, prayer can be doodling, painting, writing poetry, playing music, creating something, or even doing a jigsaw: finding a vehicle for our thoughts, emotions, etc that carries us beyond ourselves and closer to God. And then, there are hymns and songs of praise. In times of stress, I sing/pray:

O Lord, hear my prayer,  
O Lord, hear my prayer:  
When I call answer me.  
O Lord, hear my prayer,  
O Lord, hear my prayer.  
Come and listen to me.

Rest assured, God will take what you give and use it. After all, as Paul wrote:

*"Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."* Romans 8.26-27

*De Colores, Alison Wooden*



## FROM OUR OUTGOING DIOCESAN CO-LAY DIRECTOR

Geoff Wooden

### Greetings from Geoff

A final message as I stand down from Secretariat. It has been an interesting and bumpy three years.

A year with the most trained Teams in Newcastle Cursillo history. A year with remarkable numbers of candidates, both men and women. Then this year, our first mixed Cursillo, with a mixed team. And next year the plan is for a mixed Cursillo and without Thursday night (start on Friday). A significant number of Cursillistas think Cursillo is just great and leave it alone. But as Bill Nicolle keeps saying, we are part of the Cursillo Movement, not Institution. We will keep evolving, as what we offer is something valuable and special.

At National Secretariat we had one priest as delegate from a Diocese that has let Cursillo close. For most of the same issues we face: ageing, less volunteers, costs, lower attendance (and dare I say, some priestly opposition). They are re-starting and it is a result of a motion passed at their Synod that the Bishop should take steps to support Cursillo's return. The Synod (lay and clergy) had discovered Cursillo was having a greater impact (positive) than anyone had realised. Independent of that, our Bishop Peter described Cursillo as *Palanca to the Diocese*.

Our focus is on authenticity. A lot comes through the Talks and many of the most impactful talks are from people speaking from brokenness or recovery in some form. The actions of the Holy Spirit and the fact of God's love tend to shine through. Part of where I get my observation that a Cursillo Weekend is, for many, a group hug from God.

I just overheard a conversation about parents disowning a girl for getting pregnant outside marriage. I can't help but think of Paul: "*For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Romans 8:38-39). An aspect of our Cursillo message is that **God loves the unloved!**

Has Cursillo run its course? Look at the world and divisions and lack of God's plan visible. **No**

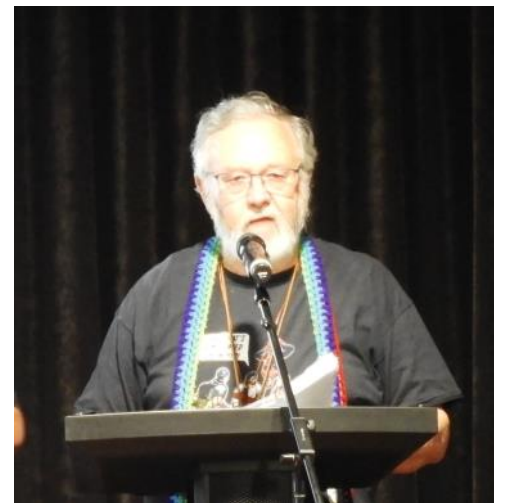
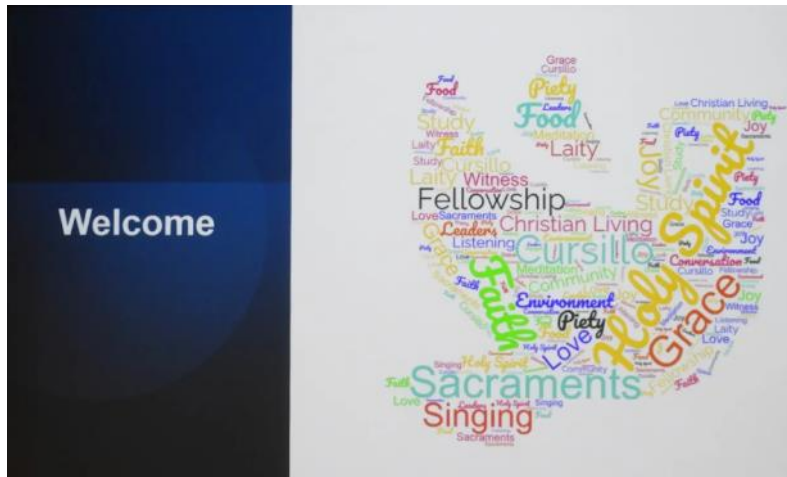
Can we keep going as we are and appeal to a new generation (or three)? **No**

I want to thank the rest of the Secretariat for their devotion and support. I leave you in Lorraine's (Holy Spirit inspired) capable hands.

*De Colores, Geoff*

# DeColores

Some wonderful photos from the National Secretariat Meeting on 26 October, which saw delegates from around the country coming together at the Wallsend Diggers Club for their meeting. Our Diocesan Ultreya was held in conjunction with this and was followed by a dinner attended by 41 Cursillistas including Bishop Peter and Bishop Sonia. Guest speakers on the night were Bishop Peter and Nettie Sullivan.



# New Secretariat Members 2025



**MAREA NILAND**

TREASURER

I made my Cursillo in the northern most Parish of Newcastle Diocese in the Camden Haven at Women's 8, 1992. This also happened to be Bishop Sonia's first Cursillo 3-day weekend, too. Our children at that time, Liz and Josh, were 6 and 4.

Thirty Two years later we now have 6 grandchildren who I love to spend as much time with as possible. Our two Kotara boys keep me hopping each and every Monday. My mum turns 90 next year, who I also spend as much time as possible with, while we still have this dynamo little lady. These days I worship in the Parish of St John's, Raymond Terrace, for 7 years now. I have been on team many times over the past 32 years, being privileged to meet some wonderful people.

Colleen has been your amazing Treasurer for many years, I do hope that with God's help I can serve Cursillo Secretariat for the next 3 years in this capacity to allow Colleen a much needed rest and relaxation time.

With my love, prayers and Hope for 25.

*De Colores!*



**REVEREND  
TONI WEIN**

DIOCESAN SPIRITUAL  
DIRECTOR

I am married to Todd and between us we have 3 grown children. Prior to ordination in 2022 (and then placement within the Glenrock Anglican Parish), I worked in medical administration for over 20 years and undertook a brief role as a chaplain in group homes for the disabled with Samaritans and also with Anglican Care. Leading up to ordination I had the privilege of undertaking a lay leadership role at All Saints Anglican Church (Nelson Bay), and it was during this time I made my Cursillo (W44 – Table of Esther) and had a profound spiritual experience that fueled a deep desire within me to make faith the priority in my life. By the grace of God I've been handing more and more of my life over to Christ and it is my hope and desire that others will come to know the love of God intimately for themselves. During my spare time I enjoy walking, spending time in nature and socialising over good coffee.

I have a heart for discipleship, fellowship, spirituality, pastoral care and social justice (to name a few!), and I am honoured and excited about joining the Secretariat in 2025.

*"We love because He first loved us"*  
1 John 4:19

# Ultreya!

## LAKES AND WYONG ANGLICAN ULTREYA 19 OCTOBER 2024



For this last Ultreya for 2024 Lay leader Noeline Darcy and team prepared a lovely program and hospitality at Lakes, Kanwal.

Graeme Jeans gave his Witness based on his Study witness at MW51 including his reflections on famous Christian authors, Malcolm Muggrage and C S Lewis, and how they helped him deal with his singular life as a serving parishioner.

Revd Rob Barrie gave the Spiritual Director's reply, adding that there's a long list of Study people who have made a difference in their environments, including the Gospel and epistle writers.

Rob told that he did his Cursillo at Sydney Mens' 1 and also John from Wyong! A number of us from Newcastle Cursillo remember travelling to Gilbulla for the Mananita on that occasion.

Denise Callaway played the lovely grand piano and the singing was excellent. The visitor from Lakes enjoyed her experience of Ultreya; surely the tunes stayed in our minds, in humming 'When peace like a river' and 'Shine Jesus, shine' for days after.

After announcements re the coming National Ultreya, Lakes' Rector Rev Tom answered a question about HOPE25 saying that this General Synod response for Australian parishes and communities will be actioned early in 2025 and through Easter. He will put it to his parishioners at a coming Combined Service.

As always, the good news, and the quality of Group Reunion and fellowship over a cuppa were uplifting. Dates and hosts for 2025 Ultreyas to be decided and confirmed by C C parish contacts by 1st March next year.

**HELEN FRASER** for Central Coast Servant Community

PHOTO BY BRUCE FRASER: DENISE, JOHN, JOHN WEST, LISA, NOELINE, GRAEME, ROB, TOM, CATE, JAN CLIFT, BEV, HELEN, JAN.

**DIRECTORY OF DEANERIES,  
DEANERY CONTACTS  
&  
PARISH CONTACTS**

**IMPORTANT!**

*Please notify  
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or the Editor  
if details change.*

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**POSITION OPEN**

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### The Camden Haven

**POSITION OPEN**

### Wingham

**POSITION OPEN**

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# THE ENCOURAGER

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Articles on Ultreyas, events, reflections, poems, meditations, prayers, letters or photos are invited from Deaneries and Cursillistas across the Diocese for publication in The Encourager. These should be a maximum of 300 words, or approximately one page.

The Encourager is also available via email. Please let me know of your preference.

The Editor: [encourager@cursillonewcastle.org.au](mailto:encourager@cursillonewcastle.org.au)



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