

## Farewell Pope Francis

It was with great sadness that we received the news that Pope Francis died in Rome on Easter Monday 21 April 2025.

Pope Francis was a very special man. He had a great love of all people - as Pope he visited sick people in hospital and people in prisons. He met refugees and people who were poor.

He was a man who saw the face of Jesus in every person who he met. We thank God for the life of Pope Francis and pray that he rests in the peace of Christ.

For more information on Pope Francis see page 18



## Welcome Pope Leo XIV



How exciting it was to wake up on the morning of Friday 9 May to find out we have a new Pope. He is from North America and his name is Robert Francis Provost - his Pope's name is Pope Leo XIV (14th).

Aged 69 years, Pope Leo

XIV was born in the US but has worked for many years in South America in Peru as a missionary - spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ to the poor. His first words as Pope to the people gathered to watch at St Peter's in Rome were "peace be with you".

We ask God to bless Pope Leo XIV we pray that Pope Leo XIV will be a true servant and leader in the Church and bring peace to all people.

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# A message from Chrisso

Hi everyone!

Similarly to the rest of the world we all felt and shared so many emotions of the passing of Pope Francis and the joy of welcoming Pope Leo XIV. What wonderful news it was to wake up to on Friday the 9th of May that we have a new pope! We pray for Pope Leo XIV that he lead with compassion, serve with mercy and unite us in hope.



During Pope Leo XIV's first Mass as Pope he shared in his homily: *"I will sing a new song to the Lord, because he has done marvels, and indeed, not just with me, but with all of us ... as we celebrate this morning, I invite you to recognise the marvels that the Lord has done. The blessings that the Lord continues to pour out upon all of us."*

As I sat watching Mass from Rome online I was filled with such joy as it gave me a moment to reflect on the blessings that I have in my life. My wonderful family, my supporting and loving friends, and the incredible deaf community that I have the privilege of serving.

Most of you know that I was born hearing and lost my hearing later in life. While I arrived to the deaf community a little "late", my journey as a deaf person has been positively impacted by so many wonderful members in our community.

On this note, Ephpheta is delighted to share with you that Kristen Elias has joined our team. Kristen is a lovely hard of hearing woman that I know you will enjoy meeting. Kristen will be working with us part time – her role will be Youth Officer/Office Support. Kristen has fitted in so well with our team and community. I am sure you will all make her feel welcome in the community – the same way you have welcomed each one of our team members. Welcome Kristen!



We are excited that our deaf youth events will be re-established this year. Having a space for deaf youth is so important – we know that for many young deaf people they may be the only deaf or hard of hearing person in their school or family. For this reason, it is so vital for their identity to meet other deaf people with lived in experience and to know that they are not alone. Ephpheta is excited to see this important project grow. Please watch this space for more exciting information!

It is so wonderful to see our team growing to enable us to continue our important work to support and serve our deaf community with the love of God. None of this would be possible without our deaf community's continued dedication, commitment and support.

To the marvels in my life – thank you and bless you always.

Love and blessings,  
Chrisso

# Fr Michael's Reflection

## Who is the Pope?

Right now (as I am writing) there is a lot of interest and excitement about the election of a new pope. Some might have questions:

- Who is the Pope?
- Why is the Pope so important?

The answer can be found in the Bible.



Jesus called 12 men to follow Him. These men came to be called “apostles (disciples)”. One of those men was named Simon. One day, Jesus asked His apostles, “Who do you say I am?” God the Father revealed the truth to Simon, so he said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God”. Then, Jesus changed Simon’s name, saying, **“I tell you, you are Peter (which means “rock”), and on this rock I will build my Church, the gates of Hades (Hell) shall not prevail against (stop) it.”** (Matt 16:18)

Jesus promised that Peter would be a strong support for the Church. The Church is the community of people who have faith in Jesus. Jesus promised that the Church, built on Peter, would stay strong forever, because of Peter, who God strengthens. Jesus gave Peter special authority: **I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.** (Matt 16:19)

The Church is God’s royal household. Jesus is our king and, before He ascended to heaven, He left Peter in charge to look after everything until He comes back. (Yes, Jesus promised He will come again, in glory!) The keys and the power to “bind” (tie) and “loose” (untie), means that Peter has the highest authority in the Church. He is the leader of the apostles.

Peter, and the apostles, gave authority to good and holy men to lead different communities. These men came to be called “bishops” of this place or that place. Peter built up the Church community in Rome (with the help of St Paul), and arranged for another to lead in his place. Peter died, and Linus became the first Bishop of Rome. He continued to lead all the Church in the authority of Peter. Then, there was Cletus and Clement, and so on... These leaders came to be called “popes”, from the Greek word for “father”, because the pope is called to serve as a holy father to the Church on earth.

The Pope is also called the shepherd of the whole flock (the Church). Jesus is the Good Shepherd and gave responsibility to Peter to “feed His lambs”, “look after His sheep”, and “feed his sheep”.

For these reasons, the Pope’s job is very important. We know that Jesus will keep the Church strong through the Pope. Popes can sin, and each will be judged by Jesus for what they have done, but Jesus will not allow any Pope destroy the Church or lead all the faithful away from Jesus. Jesus said to Peter, **“I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren.”** (Lk 22:31-32)

We pray, always, that our Pope be faithful and holy!

God Bless, Fr Michael



# Upcoming Community Events

## Community Day Out – 5th June

Join us as we check out the new Titanic experience - Titanic The Human Story. We will find out about the true story of the famous ship, learn about the myths, stories and real history of the Titanic. We will learn about the events on that fateful day in 1912.

This is not a guided tour - we will arrange for an Auslan interpreter of their audio guides. It will be a great day together.

After the tour together we will have lunch nearby together at your own cost. BYO lunch welcome.

**When and Where:** Thursday 5 June. Meet at 9.30am for a 10am start.

Walsh Bay Arts Precinct Pier 2/3 - 13A Hickson Road, Dawes Point (Sydney)

**Cost:** \$40. *Please pay before the event.* Lunch at your own cost

*If you need financial support for your ticket please contact Ephpheta*

**RSVP:** There are **limited** tickets available for this event.

You **must** RSVP to Chrisso to secure your place 0405 749 488 (SMS) or email [christiane@ephpheta.org.au](mailto:christiane@ephpheta.org.au) before Friday 30 May.



## Community Presentation – 24th July

Ephpheta has organized a presentation by a solicitor on the important topics of:

- Wills
- Powers of Attorneys
- Enduring Guardianships



Our presenter is Paul Evans, Solicitor. He will be giving a **general** presentation to the community.

He can answer general questions but cannot give personal legal advice on the day.

We will have Auslan interpreters. All deaf and hard of hearing people are welcome.

**When and Where:** Thursday 24 July. 10am start.

Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church Hall - 74 Underwood Road, Homebush

**Cost:** Free. Gold coin donation for morning tea

**RSVP:** Chrisso 0405 749 488 (SMS) or email [christiane@ephpheta.org.au](mailto:christiane@ephpheta.org.au).



# Ephpheta Sunday - 3rd August

Everyone is welcome to come and join us to celebrate Ephpheta Sunday!

We look forward to seeing you all on this special day!



**When:** Sunday 3rd August

**Mass:** Starts at 10.30am

Our Lady of the Assumption - 74 Underwood Rd, Homebush.

**Lunch:** Starts at 12.30pm

Canada Bay Club - 8 William Street, Five Dock.

Please join us for a beautiful buffet meal in the Canada Bay Room at Canada Bay Club.

Canada Bay Club is a 10 minute drive from Our Lady of the Assumption in Homebush.

**Cost:** \$40 per person

\$10 per child (12 years old and under)

*Ephpheta is supporting the costs of this event. Please pay before the event*

**RSVP:** Numbers are limited. You must RSVP to Ephpheta Centre **before** Friday 25 July.

Email: [christiane@ephpheta.org.au](mailto:christiane@ephpheta.org.au) or 0405 749 488 (SMS).

- When you RSVP please let us know if you have any special food requirements/allergies.
- If you are deafblind and need extra interpreting support on the day - please let us know **ASAP**.

**How to pay:**

1. Post us a cheque or money order to the Ephpheta Centre
2. Give cash to any Ephpheta staff
3. Pay online into our bank account

**Account Name:** Ephpheta Centre Cheque Account

**BSB:** 062 784

**Account Number:** 1000 01233

**Reference:** ES + your name



*Ephpheta Sunday Celebrations 2024*

# Ephpheta Centre Deaf Community Retreat

Friday 24 October - Sunday 26 October 2025 (3 days, 2 nights)

We are so pleased to announce that we will holding a retreat for the Deaf Community this year.

A retreat is a lovely way for us to learn more about our faith and deepen our relationships with God and each other.

**When:** Friday 24 October, Saturday 25 October, Sunday 26 October 2025

Arrive around 10.30m on Friday. Leave after lunch on Sunday.

**Where:** Benedict XVI Retreat Centre at Grose Vale (near Richmond).

This is a beautiful peaceful centre not far from Richmond and Kurrajong

## Who is this for?

Any member of our deaf and hard of hearing community who would like to learn more about their faith and God. Everyone is welcome.

## What will we do on retreat:

Listen to interpreted presentations, be involved in discussions, chat with each other.

We will have Mass on site each day. Auslan interpreters provided.

Our theme for this year is "Hope".

## Cost:

- **Own Room (1 person per room)**      **\$400 each person for 2 nights**
- **Shared Room (2 people per room)**      **\$250 each person for 2 nights**

Price **includes** two night's accommodation, (Friday night and Saturday night) all meals from morning tea on Friday to lunch on Sunday.

Morning teas, afternoon tea and supper included. Linen and towels provided.

- **Day only (not staying the night) - does not include dinner - \$60 per person per day**

*Ephpheta is supporting the costs of the retreat.*

## Are you interested in coming?

Please contact Chrisso on 0405 749 488 (SMS) ASAP to let us know if you are interested in coming or would like more information.

Places are limited.



# Meet Our New Staff!

## Kristen Elias (Youth Worker/Office Support)



### 1. Where were you born and how long have you lived in Sydney?

I was born in Sydney and have been living here ever since.

### 2. Tell us about your family?

I live with my beautiful parents, my three siblings and our two dogs Woody and Nala. Coming from a Lebanese background, I have many cousins, aunties and uncles who love to get together for a big feast.

### 3. Do you have a hobby? What do you do in your spare time?

I like baking and playing with my dogs. I also like colouring in and going to the gym.

### 4. How do you feel about coming to work at the Ephpheta Centre?

I feel very honoured and excited to be working at the Ephpheta centre. I feel very blessed to be working with such a good team to hopefully bring back the youth group gatherings and events.

### 5. What is the most adventurous thing you have ever done?

I have gone on a few adventures during the past few years, but my biggest one would be going to Rome and London for 3 weeks just after graduating high school in 2022. We got to explore and study there, and we got to meet Cardinal Pell and Pope Francis which was a dream of mine.

### 6. What sporting teams do you follow – NRL, AFL, NBL or A league?

I love watching the NRL!! I support the Melbourne Storms (but the Bulldogs are a close second)

### 7. Do you have a favourite Saint and why?

I really admire St Francis of Assisi for his love for nature and his selfless way of life. His deep care for animals and his message of peace and compassion for caring for the less fortunate continues to inspire me everyday.

I also love the Blessed Virgin Mary because she is the mother of Jesus and through her I feel a deeper connection to Christ. Her purity, humility and kindness reminds me of the virtues I try to live by. I turn to her for guidance and protection in times of need as she embodies a maternal love that is both comforting and nurturing.



# Meet Our Seminarians! Ha and Kieu

It is our pleasure this newsletter to officially introduce you to 2 young men who are currently studying to become priests.

These young men are undertaking their pastoral placement with us – so that when they have become priests and are working in the community, they will have an understanding of our deaf community.

Please make sure that you say hello when you see them at Ephpheta – they are both learning Auslan so need to practice!!



## Ha Tran - Diocese of Bathurst

### 1. Where were you born and how long have you lived in Sydney?

I was born in Nghe An province, one of Vietnam's north-central provinces.

I arrived in Australia in 2018 and have been living in Sydney since 2019.

### 2. Do you have brothers and sisters? What do you love most about your family? Tell us a little bit about your family.

I have five sisters and a fourteen-year-old brother. All my sisters are married and have children, and two of them live in Poland with their families. My parents are in their 60s and healthy.



I learned responsibility and hard work from my dad, while my mom taught me her generous nature and close relationships with others.

Last Christmas, I visited my family, and what I enjoy the most about them is our lunchtime gatherings. In our family, lunch isn't just the most important meal of the day, but also a time for us to share our concerns and perspectives. It's a great way for us to strengthen our family bond and support each other's growth.



### 3. Do you have a favourite Saint and if so why?

My favourite saint is St. Augustine of Hippo for two reasons. Firstly, he loves the truth and searches for it unceasingly. He followed Manicheism as a young man, but when he discovered the Gospel, he abandoned it and became a disciple of Christ. Secondly, he exemplified humility. In his work, *the Confession*, he was not afraid to reveal his sinful youth, but through his weaknesses God's grace was manifested. To me, the Confession is not just a confession by St. Augustine for who he was; rather it confesses God's boundless love for him and all humanity. His humility, therefore, becomes a powerful means of glorifying God.



### 4. Do you have a hobby? What do you do in your spare time?

I love playing tennis and cooking Vietnamese food. When I have free time, I enjoy playing sports like tennis, also cooking, or reading books. These activities keep me active and up-to-date.

### 5. What is the most adventurous thing you have ever done?

I believe making the decision to study for priesthood in Australia is the most adventurous thing I've ever done. Initially, I didn't realise how challenging and adventurous it would be, but the more I think about it, the more I realise it is. It's like the story of God calling Abraham to leave his homeland and journey to a place where God would reveal himself later. This journey requires trusting in God's promises and providence. It's challenging, but it's also full of joy and excitement. I've met many people and experienced God's love in many ways.



### 6. How do you feel about coming to work with the Deaf Community?

It's an honour to be part of this community and get to know so many people here. Since I arrived in Ephpheta, I've been warmly welcomed by everyone. I've not only learned a new language, but I've also discovered how people here care for each other and are excited to see one another. What I love most about the community is the prayer group at Homebush after lunch. It's an hour of excitement where everyone actively participates in learning, asking questions about saints, and offering intentions to God. In general, I feel wonderful to work with the deaf community.

### 7. Anything else you would like to add...

I wish everyone in the community good health and all the blessings. I pray that the love and kindness you share within the community will spread to everyone you meet.

## Kieu Le - Diocese of Bathurst

### 1. Where were you born and how long have you lived in Sydney?

My name is Kieu Van Le. I grew up in Vietnam in a Catholic family, where faith was at the centre of our lives.

I have been living in Australia for seven years, where I have gained new experiences and perspectives.



### 2. Do you have brothers and sisters? What do you love most about your family? Tell us a little bit about your family

I have five sisters and a brother, and I am the youngest in the family. One of my sisters is a nun in the Daughters of Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Hue. My other sister and brother are married and have children.

Growing up in a large family, I was always surrounded by love, support, and faith. My parents are



rice farmers, and their hard work taught me valuable lessons in perseverance and humility. When I was a child, my parents set a great example for me and urged me to go to Mass at 4:30a.m. and serve at the altar. I always considered that to be the most important part of my day, as it brought me closer to God through the Eucharist.

### 3. Do you have a favourite Saint and if so why?

My favourite saint is Saint Anthony of Padua. The first reason I admire Saint Anthony is that he always cared for and helped those around him, especially when they were facing difficulties. He not only lived out and shared love in a real way, but also brought hope to the poor and the sick. The second reason is his patience and strong faith. Even though he went through many challenges in life, Saint Anthony never gave up on his faith. I see him as a great example of perseverance and trust in God. He teaches me how to face difficulties without giving up easily.



**4. Do you have a hobby? What do you do in your spare time?**

I have a deep passion for soccer. Playing the sport not only helps me stay physically fit but also teaches me valuable lessons in teamwork, perseverance, and discipline.

This year, I've been playing for the first-grade team of a club in Sydney every Saturday. These exciting and energetic matches always bring me joy and a sense of connection.



**5. What is the most adventurous thing you have ever done?**

The most dangerous experience I ever had was when I almost drowned while swimming in a river when I was a child. It was a hot day, and I invited some friends to go swimming in the river. Caught up in the fun, I waded too far without realising how deep and how strong the water was. In a flash, I was swept away and started to panic. I struggled helplessly, water filled my mouth, and I felt my strength drain away. Luckily, an older friend noticed me and jumped in to pull me back to shore.

**6. How do you feel about coming to work with the Deaf Community?**

I am very happy and honored to meet, pray and participate in many activities with people in the community.

This is a precious opportunity for me to learn and understand more about a unique culture, where communication is not only limited to words but is expressed through eye contact, gestures and listening with the heart. When I started learning Auslan and praying with the group, I felt a sense of peace and happiness.



What impressed me most was the warmth and sincerity of the community members as well as the people I met. Through them, I received a lot of motivation and inspiration in life. Despite facing many challenges in communicating with the wider world, people still live with joy, optimism and a strong spirit of solidarity.





## DEAF CAFÉ

The Ephpheta Centre runs deaf café for our deaf community - social catch ups at different locations around Sydney.

Here is the list of our next round of mini Deaf Cafes at different locations throughout Sydney.

- **Friday 16 May. 10am**
  - Canterbury Leagues Club
    - 26 Bridge Road, Belmore
- **Friday 20 June. 10am**
  - Dooleys Catholic Club
    - 11-17 Church Street, Lidcombe
- **Friday 18 July. 10am**
  - Wests Ashfield Leagues Club
    - 115 Liverpool Road, Ashfield
- **Friday 15 August. 10am**
  - Penrith RSL Club
    - 8 Tindale Street, Penrith
- **Friday 19 September. 10am**
  - Seven Hills RSL
    - 108 Best Road, Seven Hills

We meet on the  
3rd Friday of  
every month

Please bring money  
to buy your own  
food and drinks from  
the club

We look forward to  
seeing you!

For more information please contact  
Donovan Mulligan - 0408 697 773 (SMS) or email [donovan@ephpheta.org.au](mailto:donovan@ephpheta.org.au)





# AUSLAN PLAY GROUP

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Auslan Play Group is for young families in our deaf community - a social group for mums, dads, grandparents, carers and their children aged 0 - 5 years.

Ephpheta loves supporting new parents and watching them support others as their children grow.

It has been wonderful getting to know the littlest members of our deaf community and watch them grow!

New families are always welcome!

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- Tuesday 10 June
- Saturday 12 July
- Tuesday 12 August
- Saturday 13 September

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Ephpheta will supply morning tea for the mums and dads but PLEASE bring food and drink for your children.

Parents are responsible for their children throughout the event and children CANNOT be left.

If you or your child are sick, please stay home.

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For more information please contact  
Chrisso Quartararo - 0405 749 488 (SMS) or email [christiane@ephpheta.org.au](mailto:christiane@ephpheta.org.au)



## EPHPHETA CRAFT GROUP

All are welcome to get involved in our program of events or bring your own projects to work on.

We start at 10am and finish around 2pm. **Please bring your own lunch.**  
Ephpheta provides morning tea for a gold coin donation.

Program for May - August 2025:

- **Wednesday 28 May**
  - Wrapped with Love knitting
    - BYO knitted squares
  - *Celebrating January - May birthdays!*
- **Wednesday 11 June**
  - Watercolour painting activity with Ali Faqirzada
    - All materials provided - you **MUST** RSVP
- **Wednesday 25 June**
  - BINGO!
- **Wednesday 9 July**
  - Wrapped with Love knitting
    - BYO knitted squares
- **Wednesday 23 July**
  - Button bunch activity with Becky Stoker
    - All materials provided - you **MUST** RSVP
- **Wednesday 13 August**
  - Day Out at 'Wrapped with Love' Warehouse
    - Contact Chrisso for more information
- **Wednesday 27 August**
  - BINGO!

We meet on the  
2nd and 4th Wednesday  
of each month



Homebush Hall  
Behind Our Lady of the  
Assumption Catholic Church  
74 Underwood Road,  
Homebush

For more information please contact Chrisso Quartararo - 0405 749 488 (SMS)



# Out and About in the Deaf Community

## Deaf Youth Group starting again!

We are very excited to soon be relaunching our Ephpheta Centre deaf youth group.

This is for young deaf and hard of hearing people aged 12-17 years.

We know that for many of our young people, they may be the only deaf or hard of hearing person in their school or family.

Our deaf youth group provides an important opportunity to meet other peers with the same lived experience, deaf role modeling and seeing how to live and achieve into deaf adulthood.

Our youth group will have fun activities and lots of opportunities to make new friends.

Watch this space for more exciting news coming soon!



## Deaf Festival 2025

The Deaf Festival is organised by Deaf Connect and the Deaf community. Everyone is welcome to come along. Please **SAVE THE DATE** - it will be a fantastic community day. There will be lots to see and do - performances, workshops, shop with stall holders, fun and activities, meet Deaf led businesses, delicious food and competitions.

Ephpheta will be having a stall again this year we'd love to see our community there!

## Ephpheta Regular Sunday Mass times and places

A reminder about our regular accessible deaf Sunday Mass times and places.

### Our Lady of the Assumption Church:

74 Underwood Road,  
Homebush (10.30am - Deaf Mass).

June: 1, 8, 22, 29

July: 13, 27

August: 3, 10, 24, 31

### St Paul's Catholic Church:

40 Buckleys Road, Winston Hills  
(9.30am - Integrated Mass)

June: 15

July: 20

August: 17



### PLEASE NOTE:

**On Sunday 6 July our regular 10.30am Sunday Mass will be at Saint Mary's Cathedral.**

**On Friday 15 August** we will celebrate the Assumption of Our Lady Mary with Mass at Our Lady of the Assumption. Mass at 6pm.

# Profession into the Secular Franciscan Order

Over the last three years I have been discerning with the Secular Franciscan Order, a lay order (not religious) that consists of single or married people, women and men who desire to live the Gospel of Jesus following in the footsteps of St Francis. They focus on living the Gospel values in their lives.

As part of the Secular Franciscan Order, we are required to attend monthly meetings, praying the prayers of the Church, read and meditate on the Gospels and learn and study about St Francis and Franciscan spirituality.

The Secular Franciscan Order was founded by St Francis of Assisi who also founded the religious brothers and sisters. Together, all of us are one Franciscan family.

There have been many saints who are Secular Franciscans including St Joan of Arc, St Louis and Zelig Martin (the parents of St Therese the little Flower) and St Pope Paul XVI.

On Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February, I was professed into the Secular Franciscan Order at St Fiacre's Church in Leichardt. This is the same Church where my Nanna and Grandfather were married. The profession took place as part of Mass, followed by afternoon tea in the hall. As part of my profession, I had the option of choosing a saint's name. I choose the name St John Vianney who is the patron saint of priests as well as being a Secular Franciscan.

The day was attended by my family, friends, the secular Franciscan community and most importantly, the deaf community who have been a big part of my life.

Thank you to those who came and made the day special for me.

Pax et Bonum (Peace and Goodness)

Brett John Beath O FS



# 1st Friday at Our Lady of the Assumption

Every first Friday of the month, we will be having the Rosary, Mass and Auslan Prayer Group at Our Lady of the Assumption, Homebush.



Every month	Upcoming dates
10:30: The Rosary 11:00: Mass, followed by lunch 1:00: Auslan Prayer Group	Friday 6th June Friday 4th July Friday 1st August

## Auslan Prayer Group

1st Friday - Face to Face at OLA - 1pm

4th Friday - Online on Zoom - 1pm



Auslan Prayer Group is about sharing our faith and our love for God and each other.

We come together in friendship with open hearts and open minds. It is a special place where each person is welcomed and valued.

We will be having stories of Saints and blessed who were deaf who shows us how to love God and each other

### Program for May - August

When?	Where
<b>Friday 23 May</b> St Francis de Sales	Online: Zoom - 1pm
<b>Friday 6 June</b> The Holy Spirit	Face to Face: Our Lady of the Assumption - 1pm
<b>Friday 27 June</b> St Rene Goupil	Online: Zoom - 1pm
<b>Friday 4 July</b> Blessed Benedetta Porro	Face to Face: Our Lady of the Assumption - 1pm
<b>Friday 25 July</b> Blessed Alexander Sauri	Online: Zoom - 1pm
<b>Friday 1 August</b> St Jamie Barbal	Face to Face: Our Lady of the Assumption - 1pm
<b>Friday 22 August</b> Blessed Angela Truszkowka	Online: Zoom - 1pm

If you would like to join, especially online, please contact Brett Beath 0407 064 872.



# Remembering Pope Francis

17 December 1936 - 21 April 2025



*As a young boy*

## Before Pope

Francis was born Jorge Mario Bergoglio on the 17th December 1936. He lived in Flores, an area of Buenos Aires, Argentina to a family with an Italian background. Jorge was the eldest of 5 children to parents Mario and Regina. His father worked as an accountant from Piedmont, a town in northwest of Italy.

His mother was born in Buenos Aires to a family of a Northern Italian background. The family left Italy in 1929 to escape the power of Benito Mussolini.

Jorge went to school and studied for a chemical technician diploma. When he finished his studies, Jorge did many jobs including food laboratory, a bouncer and a janitor. Jorge wanted to become a priest, and he joined the Jesuit community in 1958 after recovering from a severe illness. He was ordained a priest in 1969, then he came Archbishop of Buenos Aires in 1998 and then Cardinal in 2001 by Pope John Paul II.



*As a young priest*



*Washing the feet of prisoners*

## Becoming Pope

Cardinal Jorge became Pope Francis because the previous Pope, Pope Benedict XVI, resigned because of health issues. Francis was elected on 13th March 2013. He chose the name 'Francis', in honour of St Francis of Assisi who was a man of poverty, a man of peace, a man who loves and protects creation. Pope Francis was the first Jesuit and South American

Pope. He was the 266th Pope in the history of the Catholic Church following St Peter, the first Pope.

## His time as Pope

Francis will be remembered for showing mercy to the poor. He visited sick people in hospitals and people in prison, especially washing the feet of ten men and two women. Francis provided lunch for poor people and sat and talked with them and he kissed a man who suffered from facial disfigurement. He also talked with people from other religions. Like Jesus and St Francis, Pope Francis lived a simple life. He lived in the Vatican guest house and not the papal residence. He carried a black briefcase wherever he went. He wore black shoes instead of the traditional red Papal shoes.



*Embracing a man with neurofibromatosis*

## Final Days

In the final days of his life, Francis was in hospital with pneumonia. When he was released from hospital, the doctors told him to rest, but Pope Francis wanted to be with the people. He visited St Peter's Basilica to pray and he met the people. He was in a wheelchair, and he wasn't wearing his Pope's clothes. He made a private visit to a prison in Rome and greeted 70 prisoners who regularly attended catechesis class with the prison Chaplain.



*With people on Easter Sunday - the day before he passed away*

His last appearance was on Easter Sunday when he gave an Easter blessing to the people at the Vatican. His final words were "Brothers and sisters, Happy Easter... thank you for bringing me back to the square" He travelled in the Pope mobile and greeted the people. Then the following morning, at 7:35am Rome time, Easter Monday, 21st April 2025, Pope Francis died from a stroke.

## How can we all continue to live the message of Pope Francis' Life?

Love God; speak kindly to each other and avoid gossip; live simply; protect the planet; see the face of Jesus in each other; choose people over money; stay present; avoid distractions like your phone and other things that take us away from living good and holy lives; be kind to people we don't know or whose lives are different to ours.



*With the Ephpheta Community in Rome 2018*

We thank Pope Francis for his wonderful life of service to the Church and to all people.



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**EPHPHETA WEBSITE NEWS**

Have you seen our website recently?

Our website is now being updated regularly so it is  
always full of current information.

Please keep checking it!

If you have any ideas or feedback for our website  
please contact Chrisso.

**[www.ephpheta.org.au](http://www.ephpheta.org.au)**

Please send your news, stories,  
information and requests to Liz or Chrisso to  
be considered for the next newsletter!



**What does “Ephpheta” mean?**

The name Ephpheta of our Centre came from the  
bible - a story about Jesus meeting a deaf man, he  
says “Ephpheta” which means “Be open”.

We are always open to you all!