

# THE COMMON ROOM



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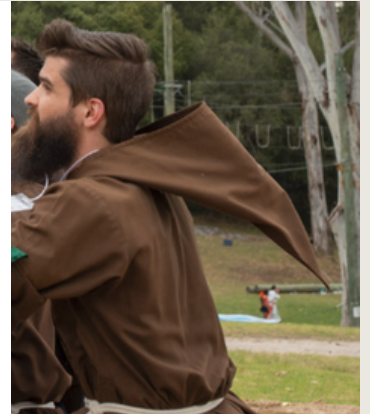
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### Presidential Welcome Letter for May Common Room 2026

May the Lord give you peace.



As our first semester draws to a close, on behalf of the Student Representative Council, I invite you to peruse this May edition of The Common Room. To all students—both those returning and those commencing their studies anew—I extend a warm welcome. This periodic newsletter is an initiative of the SRC, through which we seek to highlight the various undertakings of the year and encourage your engagement in the life of the College.

For many students, our time at this College forms part of our religious or priestly formation. I urge you all to apply yourselves, in this privileged time of your formation, to diligent and honest academic pursuits. The opportunity to devote such significant time to intellectual formation is indeed a gift, and one not likely to be so readily available throughout our forthcoming ministry. Commit yourself, therefore, to earnest and sincere study, that you may more readily be an instrument in the Lord's service, and remain faithful to the Truth.

To all my fellow students, from every walk of life, I likewise encourage you to make full use of the many opportunities the College offers to deepen your faith through academic pursuits. In addition to what is offered in-class, much is gained through the hearty conversations shared in the common room, the lectures and seminars held throughout the semester, and the variety of student engagement events organised by both the College and the SRC.

**In Review:**

Thus far, the semester has included our May Marian Art Competition, the return of the Brotherhood Cup, and the May Rosary and Pizza. I offer my thanks to all who took part in these events, and those whose efforts contributed to its success. Included in this issue are the results of the May Marian Art Competition and the winning submissions. For those who missed out, there is still more to come as the year progresses!

**Looking Ahead:**

In January of this year, His Holiness Pope Leo XIV inaugurated the Special Jubilee Year of St Francis. Looking ahead to the second semester, among other events we plan to hold an expo to commemorate this great saint, seek his intercession, and learn from his example in the Christian life.

Throughout the second semester we are also working at establishing and holding the inaugural series of *The Archbishop's Debate Club, Melbourne*. This initiative seeks to foster rigorous engagement with the Catholic intellectual tradition, in dialogue with contemporary social, cultural, and ethical questions, and encourage participants to articulate positions in harmony with the Church's teaching in a public and charitable manner. We are undertaking this in conjunction with several other Catholic Colleges, with the hope of fostering healthy fraternal engagement across the broader sphere of Catholic academia.

So, once again I invite you all to engage with fully conscious and active participation in the life of the college through this academic year. As always, if you have any suggestions, feedback, or concerns feel free to leave them in writing in the suggestions box in the student common room. I wish you every blessing for your final examinations and look forward to what the Lord has in store for the remainder of the year.

Pax et Bonum,

**Br Isaac-Seraphin OFMCap**

President of the Student Representative Council  
Catholic Theological College

# The Brotherhood Cup 2026



## YTU Reclaims the Brotherhood Cup; No Bread for the Mendicants

The 2026 Brotherhood Cup held at Monash University on Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> May was a success thanks to the organisers for their behind the scene planning. A massive thank you is order to this year's sponsor, Catholic Theological College, for covering the costs of the field and the food for the post-tournament BBQ. There was an abundance of food that the students offered free food to the folks in the vicinity—a chance taken to share the faith. Thank you too to the volunteers on the day, particularly to the first-

aiders and the BBQ chefs. The kickoff was at 10am between the defending champion, the Mendicants (a combination of Dominican and Franciscan Capuchin friars and youths in their ministry), and YTU (Yarra Theological Union). There were three other teams that competed on the day: Salesians, MGL (a combination of the Missionaries of God's Love brothers and Young Men of God), and CYFC (Catholic Youth Football Club). The one-day-tournament began with a round-robin format.





So, all five teams had a chance to play against each other for thirty minutes without a break!

The top two teams after the round-robin games went on to the Finals. YTU topped the standings. They breezed through to the Finals undefeated having only conceded a goal throughout their four matches. The Mendicants placed second on the leaderboard and got the chance to defend their title by reaching the finals with only one loss on their record.

As the sun set and the sky turned gold, the gold medal match began. YTU attacked early on in the game and scored a goal within ten minutes. Alvin Cardoza, the goalkeeper for the Mendicants and awarded Best Goalkeeper of the tournament, proved his mantle with three amazing saves including saving a penalty kick! The saves kept the Mendicants' hopes up. Br Albert of the Mendicants, who scored the most goals in the tournament, had two shots on target only to be saved by the goalkeeper. In the end, YTU proved to be too good as they scored two more goals. The Mendicants' hopes slowly faded as the sun ran its course and disappeared into the horizon. YTU reclaimed the Cup with their best player, Faris Atamuking, awarded MVP of the tournament.

Br Kolbe Garcia OP



# MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS



Auxilium Christianorum, conceived by Don Bosco, painted by Tommaso Andrea Lorenzone, c. 1867

## Excerpts from St Louis de Montfort,

### *True Devotion to Mary*

All our perfection consists in being conformed, united, and consecrated to Jesus Christ; and therefore the most perfect of all devotions is, without any doubt, that which the most perfectly conforms, unites, and consecrates us to Jesus Christ. Now, Mary being the most conformed of all creatures to Jesus Christ, it follows that, of all devotions, that which most consecrates and conforms the soul to our Lord is devotion to His holy Mother, and that the more a soul is consecrated to Mary, the more is it consecrated to Jesus. Hence it comes to pass, that the most perfect consecration to Jesus Christ is nothing else but a perfect and entire consecration of ourselves to the Blessed Virgin, and this is the devotion which I teach; or in other words, a perfect renewal of the vows and promises of holy Baptism.

[True devotion] must be (1) interior, (2) tender, (3) holy, (4) constant, and (5) disinterested.

True devotion to our Lady is interior; that is to say, it comes from the spirit and the heart. It flows from the esteem we have of her, the high idea we have formed of her greatness, and the love which we have for her.

It is tender; that is to say, full of confidence in her, like a child's confidence in his loving mother. This confidence makes the soul have recourse to her in all its bodily or mental necessities, with much simplicity, trust, and

tenderness. It implores the aid of its good Mother, at all times, in all places, and about all things; in its doubts, that it may be enlightened; in its wanderings, that it may be brought into the right path; in its temptations, that it may be supported; in its weaknesses, that it may be strengthened; in its falls, that it may be lifted up; in its discouragements, that it may be cheered; in its scruples, that they may be taken away; in its crosses, toils, and disappointments of life, that it may be consoled under them. In a word, in all its evils of body and mind, the soul's ordinary refuge is in Mary, without fearing to be importunate to her or to displease Jesus Christ.

True devotion to our Lady is holy; that is to say, it leads the soul to avoid sin, and to imitate in the Blessed Virgin particularly her profound humility, her lively faith, her continual prayer, her universal mortification, her divine purity, her ardent charity, her heroic patience, her angelical sweetness, and her divine wisdom. These are the ten principal virtues of the most holy Virgin.

True devotion to our Lady is constant. It confirms the soul in good, and it does not let it easily abandon its spiritual exercises. It makes it courageous in opposing the world in its fashions and maxims, the flesh in its wearinesses and passions, and the devil in his temptations. So that a person truly devout to our Blessed Lady is neither changeable, irritable, scrupulous, nor timid.

It is not that such a person does not fall, or change sometimes in the sensible feeling of devotion, or in the amount of devotion itself. But when he falls, he rises again by stretching out his hand to his good Mother. If he loses the taste and relish of devotion, he does not disturb himself because of that; for the just and faithful client of Mary lives on the faith of Jesus and Mary, and not on sentiments and sensibilities.

Lastly, true devotion to our Blessed Lady is disinterested; that is to say, it inspires the soul not to seek itself but God only, and God in His holy Mother. A true client of Mary does not serve that august Queen from a spirit of lucre and interest, nor for its own good, whether temporal, corporal, or spiritual; but exclusively because she merits to be served, and God alone in her. He does not love Mary precisely because she does him good, or because he hopes in her; but because she is so worthy of love. It is on this account that he loves and serves her as faithfully in his disgusts and drynesses, as in his sweetnesses and sensible fervours. He loves her as much on Calvary, as at the marriage of Cana. Oh! how such a client of our Blessed Lady, who has no self-seeking in his service of her, is agreeable and precious in the eyes of God and of His holy Mother! But in these days how rare is such a sight! It is that it may be less rare that I have taken my pen to put on paper what I have taught, in public and in private, during my missions for many years.

*Tuus totus  
ego sum, et  
omnia mea  
tua sunt,—*

“I am all for Thee,  
and all I have  
belongs to Thee,  
O my sweet  
Jesus, by Mary  
Thy holy Mother.”

# MARIAN COMPETITION WINNER!!!

## LITERARY

### Christopher Carr

#### All Generations Will Call Me Blessed

A Hymn on the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55)

Words: Christopher Carr (2026)

Tune: BLESSED 10.10.10.10

*Allegretto, con gioia* (♩ = 100)

Where, in hills, E - liz - a - beth heard her name,

the child with - in her leapt to greet the King,

and to a girl no chron - i - cle would claim

the Spi - rit gave a song the world would sing.



1.

Where, in hills, Elizabeth heard her name,  
the child within her leapt to greet the King,  
and to a girl no chronicle would claim  
the Spirit gave a song the world would sing.

2.

She did not boast. She turned her face to grace,  
a mirror lifted toward the holy flame;  
and what returned to fill that quiet space  
was glory poured upon her lowly name.

3.

Hannah had sung. Miriam had sung before,  
but this was song the centuries would not lose,  
because the Word she carried opened more  
than any verse her foremothers could choose.

4.

Through Ephesus, through Chartres' weathered stone,  
through rosaries said in cellars dim and small,  
through candles lit when grandmothers alone  
remembered her and would not let her fall —

5.

the same word, blessed, was handed mouth to mouth,  
like bread that multiplies and never ends;  
from polar dark to gardens of the south,  
each tongue declared the favour heaven sends.

6.

The proud have scattered. Hungry mouths are fed.  
The mighty learn their thrones are made of clay.  
A handmaid's quiet word has gone ahead  
and shaped the hinge on which the ages sway.

7.

We add our voice — not first, and not the last,  
one breath inside a chord we did not start;  
the song you sang is neither dimmed nor past,  
but living still in every faithful heart.

8.

Blessed. Blessed. Blessed. The word remains  
until the final knee in glory bends,  
until the last redeemed soul lifts her strains  
and every generation's song ascends.

**Runner-up!****Simon Zakari**

*In my village,  
mothers pray with tired voices.*

*Not the kind you hear in grand cathedrals  
with perfect echoes.  
I mean the kind whispered under weak bulbs,  
while generators cough outside  
and someone's father still has not returned  
home.*

*Back in northern Nigeria,  
we learnt early  
that prayer is sometimes the only door left  
open.*

*My mother loves Mary.*

*Not loudly.  
Not with long sermons.  
Just quietly.*

*She holds her rosary like a farmer holds  
seed,  
believing something good could still grow  
from difficult ground.*

*And honestly,  
I never understood her completely.*

*Until I left home.*

*Now in Australia,  
where the trains arrive on time  
and the nights are strangely calm,  
I still think about women back home  
who sleep without certainty.*

*Women who lock their doors early.  
Women who wait through gunshots.  
Women who bury sons  
and still show up for Mass on Sunday.*

*Maybe that is why Mary matters to me now.*

*Because she also watched suffering closely.  
She held fear in her chest  
and still said yes to God.*

*Sometimes I imagine her walking through my  
hometown,  
stepping carefully on dusty roads,  
listening to mothers cry behind closed  
windows.*

*I think she would understand us.*

*And maybe that is the miracle.*

*Not that faith removes pain.  
But that even inside pain,  
heaven still listens.*

*“All generations will call me blessed.”*

*Even ours.*

*Especially ours*

# The Annual May Rosary



On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May CTC students, lecturers, and staff participated in this year's May Rosary to honour the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was followed by Lunch with Pizza. Thank you to the SRC for organising the event.



## Diocesan Seminarians (Seculars)

The diocesan seminarian. We can be hard to identify. Unlike the white or brown habit of the mendicants, or the brown pants, sandals and white shirt of the MGLs, or the cross worn by the Oblates, the diocesan seminarian is not easily recognisable. You could make a guess by seeing a young man in black trousers, or if you're lucky, the Corpus Christi College jumper.

Diocesan priestly life mostly involves pastoral care of parishes. Unlike religious, diocesan priests are not bound to a fixed communal rule of life. This gives priests a lot of flexibility to carry out their pastoral work and ministry in parish life. Parish life is demanding. It can be chaotic. It also requires you to be adaptable with your rhythm of life depending on the work load, and things to be done, such as hospital visits, or supporting a parish Youth Ministry one evening.

You might ask, "if that is the case, why do these young men live in a seminary, where their life is governed by a timetable?" In our seminary, there are times for praying the Office, doing meditation/mental prayer, and Adoration. There are days for pastoral work. We catch up with our spiritual director, and also our formator.

The goal of the seminary is to prepare us by giving us the tools – as well as good habits – that will sustain a lifetime of ministry. These are habits that every priest needs to personally take ownership of, because there is no timetable telling him to do it: these are things like catching up with your spiritual director, praying the office, and setting time for meditation on the Word.

The idea is that we should get to the point of coming to see the value of prayer, and spiritual direction. In formation we come to understand how to be open and engaged in pastoral encounters, and how our pastoral ministry affects us. So it is all about the deep work of forming a young man to better recognise himself as he is – his strengths, his vulnerabilities, areas to keep working on – so that he will be in a place to continue to know how to grow and pray, and seek support once he begins full-time ministry.

So next time you see a man in a jumper emblazoned with a pelican crest, say hello. Whether you want to discuss the merits of Alpha courses and Aquinas, or muse about soccer or Socrates, he will be up for the chat!

Nicolas Calandra

## Oblates of Mary Immaculate

The charism of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) is a spiritual way of life centred on missionary outreach, especially to the poorest and most abandoned. It was founded by St. Eugene de Mazenod in 1816 in France, with the mission of “bringing the Good News to the poor” and re-evangelising people who had drifted from the Church. First, the OMI charism is missionary. Oblates see themselves as “missionaries of the Church.”

At the heart of the charism is a deep devotion to Mary Immaculate, understood as a model of compassion and obedience to God’s will. For the Oblates, Mary is not only a heavenly patroness but also a practical guide in their mission. She helps Oblates imitate Christ in humility, service, and proclamation of the Gospel. Mother Mary shapes their spirituality, prayer life, and pastoral approach, especially in caring for the wounded and marginalised.

The OMI charism also emphasises a strong apostolic community life. Oblates live together in small missionary communities, supporting one another in prayer, shared responsibility, and fraternal correction. This community spirit is not closed in on itself; it exists to strengthen the mission and to be a visible sign of the Church’s unity and love.

Finally, the OMI charism is marked by simplicity, availability, and a willingness to “go where others do not go.” Oblates are ready to leave behind comfort, security, and even personal preferences to serve in diverse cultures and situations, always with joy and a spirit of humility. In short, the OMI charism invites the Church to live a missionary life focused on the poor, shaped by Mary’s example, and sustained by a close, prayerful community.

Br Hieu Nguyen OMI

## Capuchin Franciscans

The life of a Capuchin rests on three essential pillars: the primacy of prayer and devotion, radical poverty, and the apostolate as an “excess of love.”

### Prayer and Devotion

Prayer in the Capuchin sense is contemplative: the “breathing of love.” It is a constant interior dialogue with God and an adoration in spirit and truth. On the other hand, devotion is understood in the Bonaventurian sense: love and sense of God, and forms the interior foundation of virtue. To safeguard this spirit of prayer and devotion, the Capuchin contemplative solitude, initially practised individually, developed a fraternal expression through daily meditation periods and regular communal retreats.

### Radical Poverty

Poverty is the most distinguishing external characteristic of the Capuchin reform and impregnates all that the Capuchin is, does, and uses. It is manifested in clothing, habit, architecture, minimal possessions, and simple living. Furthermore, poverty is necessary for arriving at contemplation, because it involves that radical stripping away and detachment that draws one into the mystical heights of prayer, ultimately leading to a complete gift of self as a joyful instrument of the Spirit.

### Apostolate

In prayer, a Capuchin breathes in the pure breath of the Holy Spirit—the grace and gift of contemplation, leading to an out-breathing of fervent apostolic activity; an excess of love poured out.

This apostolic activity, particularly evangelical preaching, is carried out in various ways depending on what is needed in the circumstances. For example, service to the poor, to hospitals and the sick, or providing supply to priests in the cities. These duties are conducted in a manner of minority which is content with the last place, and is a gift and a fruit of the contemplative life. A Capuchin feels, in essence, to be an “evangelical missionary” requiring a strong spiritual life to sustain the apostolic mission.

Br Stephen John OFM Cap

(and

<https://www.capuchinfriarsaustralia.org/our-life>)

## Dominicans

The life of a Dominican friar is marked by four pillars. At any point on any given day, a Dominican is found to be either praying, studying, in community, or preaching. As Order of Friars Preachers, the former three pillars are ordered towards the latter: preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in love and truth.

### Preaching

Following in the footsteps of St. Dominic, a Dominican endeavours to proclaim the Word of God to believers and unbelievers, to saints and to sinners alike. The Friar Preacher concerns himself with making the mystery of the Incarnation alive and active, first by himself encountering the Incarnate Lord through prayer and contemplation in silence and study, and then, imitating the Blessed Virgin Mary, bringing Him (as God-bearers) to humanity.

### Prayer

Prayer in the tradition of our Order is perfectly summarised by the following exhortation in our Constitutions: “Let the brothers follow the example of St Dominic who at home and on the road, by day and by night, was devoted to the liturgy of the hours and private prayer, and celebrated the divine mysteries with great devotion.” (LCO 56)

### Study

It is true that one need not be a genius to be a Friar Preacher, but he does need to embrace the significance of study in the Order’s tradition. It was St Dominic’s vision, in continuity with the tradition that preceded him, that religious should be learned. A Friar Preacher carefully engages his mind with “the writings of the holy Fathers and of the illustrious exponents of Christian thought,” especially that of St Thomas Aquinas, so as to be at the frontlines in deepening our understanding of, defending, and propagating the Holy Catholic Faith.

### Community

When St Dominic dispersed the brethren across Europe for further studies and to build new foundations, he sent them two by two just as Jesus sent his apostles in pairs to preach the Gospel. The Rule of St Augustine, which the Order adopts, reminds us that it is for the sake of harmony—being of one mind and heart in God—that the brethren have gathered together in community. Thus, the foundation of the common life is the love of God.

Br Kolbe Garcia OP  
(and, <https://www.op.org.au/ourlife>)