

GFS WORLD NEWSLETTER

SERVING
THROUGH

GFS

YOU ARE CALLED
TO SERVE THROUGH

GFS



Nativity Scene from Bolivia

From the World President

It is very hot and dry where I live in Australia, our usual beginning of Summer pattern with each day many hoping for rain to cool our parched earth. It is difficult to think about a northern Christmas with perhaps snow and carol singers in their winter clothes. But many of us prepare for our Christmas dinner on the beach or a barbeque in the evening to escape the usual heat. Whatever way you celebrate the birth of the Christ Child I hope it is a blessed time, a time for meaningful worship, for celebrations with family for peace and love in your hearts. We remember also those who will find Christmas celebrations difficult for many reasons, perhaps illness, the death of a loved one, loneliness. May each of us see those in need around us and through our motto be able to share the joy and love of the true meaning of Christmas.

Thank you to those who have registered for World Council. Our hope and prayer is that you will all be able to obtain a visa to visit our land and to enjoy the 10 days of Council. Many of us are busy with preparations, organising travel, looking at the tasks we set ourselves as a World Team to see what still needs to be completed. As we do have some room still available we have extended our registrations to 31 January 2017 so the application form and information sheet is in this newsletter. Do encourage more members to come.

Lots of exciting things have been happening around the GFS world. I hope you enjoy reading about them in this newsletter.

I wish you a very happy and holy Christmas.

Val

FROM THE WORLD **CHAPLAIN**

SERVING
THROUGH

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We have now entered into the Season of Advent and this season as we all know points us to look ahead with expectation and in preparation like those of the first Christmas to the coming of the birth of Jesus Christ –



Nativity scene from Papua New Guinea

The Saviour of the World.

To those, however, who, from the outset who were closet to this great event at Bethlehem many thousand years ago, there was nothing outwardly which struck them as marvellous. The angles and the angelic choirs were seen and heard some miles away. God came anonymously into our world and most people by passed him. The Shepherds came because they had witnessed a sign. The Scripture is full of descriptions of people asking God for signs and miraculous portents that would confirm their beliefs. We ourselves as Christian believers are all familiar with the sign of the Cross, and this sign, given by the Angels to the Shepherds, is a sign for us too and at every Christmas we as Christian believers must try to make an earnest effort to understand its message in our ever growing Societies

The Son of the Almighty God assuming the form of a helpless infant is surely a sign that is intended to pierce our hearts, a sign to call us to individual conversion, a sign that he, who was rich yet had become poor for our sakes, that he, who was great, had become little. And also, the sad thing is that this sign of the baby in the manger can also be interpreted as a sign of rejection too. "There was no room for him in the inn "He came to his own people, but his own people did not receive him. And to date, how many there are throughout the World who look into their Christmas Cribs and still see nothing.

They fail to recognise in the tiny and helpless figure of the infant lying in the manger the human features of God who created us , who , when we fell from grace did not abandon us but assumed our lowly human nature in order to free us from our sinfulness and to make us become His own children. What we all should remember is that the first Christmas was the only beginning of God's coming – God Emmanuel. It is only when we open our hearts to God's Holy Spirit, pointing the way to us from within our conscious being to see the cribs of the needy, the neglected, the marginalised and etc around us in our Society and reach out our helping.

For the true Christmas joy and our lasting joy is begotten of God's life within us and so as we serve and share one another's burden, we in deed serve God Emmanuel in our fellow brothers and sisters. In deed the World will celebrate and give thanks to God for giving us the precious gift of his own divine Son whoever, someone on this Christmas far or near you will also quietly from the depth of his/her heart will also say thank you to God for you have been a Christ in his/her crib of life this year. We must not travel down the GFS Ministry road and turn our backs on the sings and actions of the Holy Spirit by trying to hold on to our own concepts of God Emmanuel. Rather let us open our minds, lets us be drawn, let our hearts be melted by the consideration of God assuming a tiny, frail human form, and being laid in a manger. May our faith in Christ our Saviour then be reborn this Christmas Day, because it is only through and by faith that he can guarantee the blessings that we hope for, or prove the existence of those things which at present remain hidden from our view. Blessed Merry Christmas and a prosperous Happy New Year – 2017 to you all and also to all your family members. **Fr Isaiah Masida**

Introducing Australia's new Junior Delegate ...

Name: : Abuok Majuk

Age 17 years old

Throughout my life I have had quite a journey moving from Sudan, Egypt then to Australia when I was eight. Life has definitely presented changes for my family. We escaped a country that was at war to find a country that we can call our own. I have a big family and it's great having brother and sisters that you look up to, and for others to look out for you. It's something that I loved about our family through all the journey and the hard time we faced. We did it together. My father worked really hard to make sure that we could get a better life. This meant he would stay back in Sudan for work. That left mum acting as a single mum for around nine years. I believe she did a good job looking after seven kids on her own.

I have lived in Australia for just about nine years. Although English isn't my first or my second language I have definitely adapted and speaking it frequently. Language with relatives may be Dinka or Arabic.

I am currently attending Lowanna Secondary College in Moe in my second last year and after years of thinking of what career I would pursue, I picked nursing it's something, that goes way deep into my heart and makes feel good just knowing that I am taking care of people who need my help. This year as part of my VCAL schooling I have a placement one day a week at the Moe Medical Centre where I work within the nurses clinic. I have had a part time job at KFC over this past year and I have definitely learnt a lot from working there. I have developed many new skills

I have been a member of GFS for about eight years, joining with friends, many from the South Sudanese community settling in Moe. Through GFS I have attended annual camps, visited other Victorian Dioceses for mini camps or activities set around the State council meetings in Melbourne and Ballarat and then accompanied senior leaders to the National Mid-term Conferences in Melbourne and recently Adelaide. A highlight was the opportunity to travel to the Tasmanian Australian Council, where I met so many of the current national GFS leaders and some younger members. This helped show me the many different ways GFS operates across Australia.



GFS WORLD COUNCIL
11-21 JULY 2017
PERTH
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

We are now extending our registrations to
31 January 2017
as we still have accommodation available.

An Information Sheet and new Registration
form follows.

Contact the World President
Val Gribble
gfsworld@bigpond.com



GFS WORLD COUNCIL
11-21 JULY 2017
PERTH, AUSTRALIA
REGISTRATION FORM

Please place a ring around the word where there is a choice

FAMILY NAME: **GIVEN NAME:**

FEMALE **MALE** **PREFERRED NAME FOR NAME TAG:**

TITLE: **ADDRESS:**

.....

MOBILE/CELL PHONE NO: (include country code)

DATE OF BIRTH: **EMAIL ADDRESS:**

Please indicate your role during council –

SENIOR DELEGATE **JUNIOR DELEGATE** **CHAPLAIN** **OBSERVER**

LANGUAGES SPOKEN: **LANGUAGES READ:**

LIST ANY RELEVANT HEALTH OR MOBILITY MATTERS: (e.g. use of stairs, use of a top bunk bed, allergies, mobility aids, other mobility, hearing or visual considerations use of stairs, use of top bunk bed)

.....

LIST ANY DIETARY REQUIREMENTS:

.....

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN GFS IN YOUR COUNTRY? Eg Executive member, Leader of group Please Give a short statement regarding your GFS involvement.

.....

.....

2nd Round Registrations close on 31 January 2017

Cost of Council: \$AUD1400 for those living at Swan Valley Adventure Centre
Deposit of \$AUD400 to be paid by 31 January 2017
Remaining \$AUD1000 to be paid by
31 March 2017

Payment details:

Account Name: GFS World Account

ANZ Bank,

Shop 67, Whitfords City , Cnr Marmion & Whitford Aves

Hillarys WA 6025

BSB 016 494

Account Number 392526836

Swift Number: ANZBAU3M

|

SIGNATURES: Those registering to sign part 1, country leader to sign part 2, Parent/Guardian of applicant under 18 years of age to sign part 3.

1. **Signature of Applicant:** (My signature also gives/does not give permission for any photo of myself to be used for any promotion or media coverage relating to GFS world wide and for my name to be used/not to be used.

2. **Signature of Country President/Coordinator/Leader**

I.....country leader of GFS in

agrees that this applicant is a member of GFS in the country of

3. **Signature of Parent/Guardian:** (for applicants under 18 years of age as at 10 July 2017)

I,..... Parent/Guardian of

give my permission for to attend the 2017 World Council of GFS in Perth, Australia, and nominateas the adult responsible for the care of my child during this event.

and give/do not give permission for a photo of my child to be used and named for any promotion or media coverage relating to GFS Worldwide.

.....(Signature of Parent/Guardian) (Date) **This form**

to be forwarded to the World President - gfsworld@bigpond.com by 31 January 2017

Please carefully read the Information Sheet which accompanies this registration form.



GFS WORLD COUNCIL

11-21 JULY 2017

SECOND ROUND OF REGISTRATIONS CLOSE ON 31 JANUARY 2017

Registration form: You can either apply online or

Go to www.gfsaustralia.org.au

Click on home, click on GFS World, click on GFS World Council Registration form

or complete the paper based form and return to gfsworld@bigpond.com

Cost: Total cost of Council is \$AUD1400. Deposit must be paid before registration is accepted. Final payment of \$AUD1000 due by 31 March 2017. **In this second round there will be no lower fee if you elect to live out so \$AUD1400 whether you live in or out and you must meet the cost of your own accommodation if you live out.**

Approval from your Country leader: Your country leader has been sent a master copy of a letter which must accompany your registration. It states that you are an active member of GFS and eligible to attend World Council. Please request the signed letter from your Country leader. If you are applying on line it must be saved to pdf format and attached at the respective field. If you are sending a hard copy registration form, the form from your country leader should be attached to the return email. Australians do not need to seek this approval as we are well aware of all financial members. ALL Australians who attend World Council whether living in or out must be Financial members of GFS Australia.

If you are under 18 as well as requiring the approval of your country leader your parent/guardian is also required to sign the form and provide the details of the person who will be responsible for your care while you are at World Council.

We apologise that at the moment the online registration form requires that everyone signs the Under 18 para. I suggest those over 18 just fill in this part of the form as N/A including the signature field.

If you are applying online use your mouse for your signature.

No applications will be processed and you will not be registered unless all requirements are fulfilled.

Deposit: You are required to pay a deposit of \$AUD400 and again your registration will not be processed until the deposit is paid. You can pay in either of the following ways:

Online registrations: Will only accept \$400 deposit at this stage. You will be directed to PayPal where you can pay with a PayPal account or use your Visa card.

Hardcopy registrations: The GFS World Account details are on the form and you can organise a bank transfer. Make sure that you describe your payment as **NAME WC2017**. It is important your name comes first as often banks truncate this information.

Refund policy:

- 1 Deposit paid only – Cancel by 31 March 2017 \$50 fee from payment already made
- 2 Full payment made – Cancel before 30 April 2017 \$50 fee from payment already made
- 3 Full payment made – Cancel before 30 May 2017 25% withheld, balance refunded
- 4 Full payment made - Cancel before 30 June 2017 50% withheld, balance refunded
- 5 Full payment made – Cancel up to commencement of Council or no attendance 75% withheld, Balance refunded.

There will be opportunity to discuss other options in difficult circumstances, particularly in relation to visas.

Travel Insurance:

Everyone is expected to have travel insurance.

Medical Information:

Once your registration is processed you will be sent a Medical Information Sheet. This must be completed in full, placed in a sealed envelope with your name and country on the front (in large letters) and brought to Council. It will be kept sealed and in a secure place during Council. It will only be opened in an emergency and will be returned to you at the completion of council.

Travel Form:

Once your registration is processed you will be sent a Travel Form. This should be completed as soon as you have made your travel arrangements.

Other matters:

Accommodation at Swanleigh: There are no twin or double facilities. Males attending will be housed in a separate cottage. Accommodation is in a variety of cottages. You can look at Swanleigh on <http://www.swanleigh.org.au/>

The area with bunks will be used mainly for our youth members.

External accommodation: Some have elected to stay outside Swanleigh. The two suggested Holiday Parks are

Midlands Tourist Park – www.midlandtouristpark.com.au

Discovery Park – Perth Vineyards – www.discoveryholidayparks.com.au

These are the only two places where we will supply transport to and from Swanleigh. If you elect to stay anywhere else you will be required to arrange and pay for your own travel to and from Swanleigh.

Any queries should be directed to Val Gribble at gfsworld@bigpond.com

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Children's ministry is a form of outreach to your local community. It is an opportunity to reach not only children but also parents. Building links with parents will become an important part of ministering to the children in your group. Below are some ways leaders can connect with parents and build important relationships with families:

1. Invite children and their parents to **join the** congregation on special occasions such as Carols by Candlelight, Christmas, Easter or special events.
2. Before and after your children's group **provide coffee/tea for parents.**
3. Invite **parent help** during the children's program. Maybe a parent could come on Mother's Day or to share a skill.
4. Invite parents to **go on outings** such as picnics or bushwalks.
5. Remember to be aware of the situation of the family and respond appropriately. For example organise a hospital **visit** for **family members** that are unwell.
6. Invite families to **church camps** or special church performances like a drama, or choir performance.
7. Involve parents in **church fairs / fetes.**
8. **Communicate with parents** via a regular newsletter as well as personally.
9. Encourage **the whole congregation** to get involved in **connecting with families.** You may be able to recruit others in the church to make supper or welcome/meet parents at sign-in or home time.
10. **Encourage prayer support by your congregation.** Remember all Christians are in ministry and all ministries are linked.
11. Finally don't forget that **relationships take time** and grow slowly.



WHAT IS HAPPENING AROUND OUR GFS WORLD?

GFS Sri Lanka

Fund raising for our Hostel Development

1. **Sing Along** - We have been very busy with our SING ALONG fund raiser which was held on Octber 29. The Executive Council members met every week and worked very hard and it was a great success. We are happy that in these small ways we are able to slowly but surely augment our hostel development fund. The sing along was led by one of Sri Lanka's top pop singers Mariazaelle, ably backed by Wendo, a one-man band. A special feature was the participation of the Pink Pearls – they took part in a comic skit and one presented a song item. Both items were received well by the audience. Our Chaplain was present with his wife. The event was heavily publicized in the local press and gave the GFS good publicity as well.

2. **Pre-Christmas Sale** - On Nov. 27, we had our annual Pre-Christmas Sale which was also good. Our Hall was full of tables laden with Christmas items, cards, decorations and goodies. Sales were brisk and the stall holders were pleased. Our "GFS Table" sold clothes, books and food items donated by members that brought in some funds.



Lending a friendly hand

1. While trying to raise funds for ourselves, our GFS did not forget the valuable work carried out by other organizations. At our Sale, we offered three charities the opportunity to display and sell Christmas items made by their inmates and volunteers – Hands of Hope for differently abled girls (run by the Diocese of Colombo of the Anglican Church), the Cheshire Home for the permanently disabled and St. Margaret's Convent (Order of Sisters of the Anglican Church). When advertising the Sale in the local newspapers and through posters, hand bills and e-flyers, the GFS ensured that they too were given good publicity.

2. The GFS assisted two women who were facing some difficulties.

WDP & AGM

1. As we were unable to observe the GFS World Day of Prayer on the appointed date, we observed it on Nov. 12 with prayers for GFS worldwide. 2. It was followed by the AGM and a fellowship lunch.

Christmas Programme

Spreading Christmas cheer - 1. Instead of our usual Christmas get-together, we have decided to visit a Girls' Home a few miles away from Colombo. We will give them lunch and gifts, play a few games and try to spread Christmas joy.

2. For the first time, we have planned to go carolling to members' homes, along with the Pink Pearls. We are now busy practising Christmas carols and Christmas songs - we hope those we visit will enjoy our singing!

"God gave His greatest gift to us on that first Christmas Day ... may the wonder of it always guide and light our way".
We wish you all, dear GFS members worldwide, a Merry Christmas! May you be blessed with joy, love, peace and happiness!

GFS JAPAN

Greetings from Japan GFS.

World Prayer was translated into Japanese by Maso Yoshida, and supervised by Rev.

Simon Peter Ueda who has become the new chaplain of Tokyo GFS.

Each diocese held the prayer meeting. **Osaka GFS and Kyoto GFS**

Osaka GFS and Kyoto GFS got together at St. Trinity Church in Osaka.



Ayumi , the president of Japan GFS is in the middle.

Hokkaido GFS

Hokkaido GFS at the office of Hokkaido Diocese.

After praying, Haruko Amemiya who is a nurse talked about the people of Tanzania in Africa.

She has come back from a small village in Tanzania as a member of Tanzania Study Tour.

Tokyo GFS

Tokyo GFS got together at the Chapel of St.Luke's.

After the worship they enjoyed playing and singing. Three girls were honoured as a junior leader of Tokyo GFS.

From the left Ryoko,Akiko ,Mayu.and Riko who used to be the president of Japan GFS. Mayu has been elected to be the junior delegate for the coming world council in Perth.



GFS LIBERIA

Happy Advent to you all.

GFS Liberia first like to thank Canon Val for keeping us posted on the activities of GFS World wild. We have not missed up on any info.

The St. Stephen GFS Branch had its annual program on September 18, 2016. During the program, the girls read and appreciated various poems. They also show-case their talent through worship dance, debate, and stating why they are desirous in taking up courses in various disciplines. 22 girls and 6 women were admitted into GFS. They served as Latinist, Lay Readers and Ushers for the day.



GFS Liberia had its World Day of Prayer on October 9, 2016. About 97 Girls and Sponsors were in attendance. It was a wonderful service. Lunch was served after service.

The Trinity Cathedral GFS is having admission service for GFSers and sponsor today. They have bounced back with vigour.

The girls are doing well in the studies. This calls for the attention of GFS Advisor/Sponsors to continue to encourage them to remain in school by calling them on their birthdays and other special occasions in their lives; and by checking on them generally.

By God's grace, GFS Liberia will be represented at WC 2017 if all things remain constant. Please find attached some photos taken during GFS Liberia World Day of Prayer



It is exciting that Liberia is working hard to bring at least three people to World Council. We look forward to hearing all about their ministry.

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GFS UK

Back in September, we asked for young GFS women to step forward and apply to represent England and Wales at GFS World Council 2017.

Applications for GFS Junior Delegate closed in October, and having completed the selection process, we're happy to announce who will be representing us in Perth, Australia next year:

Junior Delegate for England:

Jade Clarke (Atherstone Branch)

Junior Delegate for Wales:

Katie Charlesworth (Brecon Branch)

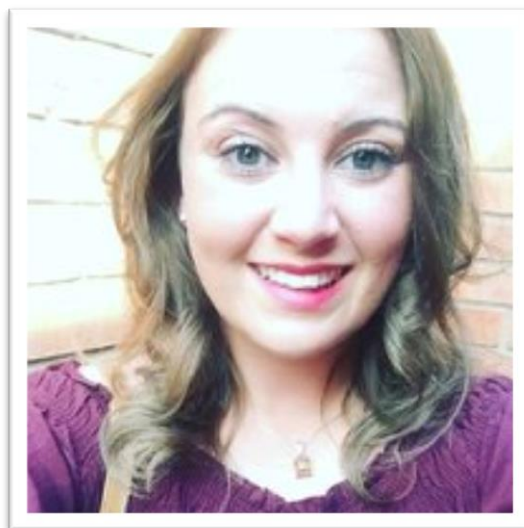
Reserve Delegate:

Megan Hunt (Gloucester Branch)

Junior Observer:

Lucy Allen (Atherstone Branch)

Junior Delegate for England, Jade Clarke said:



"I am so excited and very extremely proud about representing GFS England in Australia. I am looking forward to meeting new people, making new friendships, learning and getting involved with other girls' cultures.

I have been involved and supported within GFS since I was six years old, it has helped me make lifetime friendships and become a confident, independent women. GFS means a lot to me and I give my time every week to help out and support other girls and women within GFS. I am grateful and feel very honoured to be offered this opportunity!"

GFS World Council is held every three years in countries around the world where GFS is in operation. The last council was hosted by our very own Wales, this year Australia have the honour of hosting the event in July 2017.

The World Council was established so that member countries can work together more closely to promote friendship between members of the society around the world, to plan the work of the society and celebrate the fellowship of GFS.



GFS WALES

Greetings from a cold but sunny Wales!

Our new Branch Development Worker Christine Hall began work with us in June. Her roles is support existing branch work, help with recruitment and training of volunteers and to help raise the profile of GFS in Wales. Christine has been busy getting to know the existing branches and meeting with people who want to know more about our work.

Our existing branches continue with their valuable work and are now looking forward to Christmas. Numbers attending have increased in a couple of our groups but the work they all do is vital to those who attend. There is the possibility that new branches may open in 2017 including one in my village so please pray for us as we seek to introduce girls to GFS.

The selection day for the English and Welsh Junior Delegates was held recently. I am pleased to say that the Junior Delegate from Wales will be Katie Charlesworth – my middle daughter. This will mean that all three of the Charlesworth girls will have held this role!

We are looking forward to 2017 and to World Council. Plans are being made for those of us who will be fortunate enough to attend. The time since our Council in Swansea seems to have flown by so quickly.

We in Wales wish you all Nadolig Llawen & Blwyddyn Newydd Dda!

We give thanks for the recovery of Glenys, our World Vice-President from major surgery and continue to pray for her and her family

GFS IRELAND

Christmas Greetings from Ireland

Many Christmas Newsletters get written in early Advent which I expect is good. Maybe as we think of what to write we also get time to count our blessings. We are well aware of how much we need a Saviour so this season of Hope, Love, Peace and Joy is the perfect time to reflect as we commemorate Jesus' first coming and prepare for His eventual return.

Branches have re-opened since September/October. The usual programmes have begun. The theme for the Bible Study is: *"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms"* – 1 Peter 4:10. The stories of Dorcas, the seamstress and Hannah, the prayerful one are being used to illustrate.

In early September a residential Training weekend took place in the Theological Institute, Dublin. The Saturday was an open day where the numbers attending doubled. A follow-up session took place recently where nine ladies were commissioned by our Central Chaplain in the GFS Chapel, Christ Church Leeson Park. These Leaders now titled 'All-Ireland' Leaders or alternatively known as 'Green Lanyard' Leaders enjoyed their time together concentrating on GFS in a nice atmosphere and meeting with others. The

Theme for the process was based on the Bible Study theme: *"Gifts – Friendship – Serving"*. Great satisfaction was felt as everyone parted company.



Clonfeacle 50th Celebrations with Mrs. Mary Hinchliff (front row in pink) founder member



Newmills 50th with Mrs Anna Fisher and Mrs. Joy Montgomery (extreme left and right) founder members

I had the pleasure of being a guest at two 50th branch anniversaries in Clonfeacle and Newmills in Northern Ireland. Last year I was at another one nearby. These were all lovely occasions and well attended. Sadly one lady from Newmills had passed away that but it was great to meet with the others who started up these branches. The history in each case was interesting. I can imagine the huge drive there was for

GFS in the area fifty years ago.

Congratulations to Jane Cairns, Irish Junior Delegate to World Council in Ireland in 2011 on her recent engagement. Also to Jennifer Maybury 'All-Ireland' Leader whose engagement was discovered at the Training Commissioning day.

Gemma Willis who was injured in a car accident nearly eighteen months ago has been released from the National

Rehabilitation Hospital. Gemma seriously ill in the early days has made a remarkable

recovery. Her own determination combined with her parents' and friends' support and God's help she is where she today – for this blessing we must 'thank God'.

Greetings as I close: *"May the meaning of Christmas be deeper, its friendships stronger and its hopes brighter as it comes to you this year".*

Wishing everyone a Blessed Christmas time and a Happy New Year.

With love from your GFS Sisters in Ireland. Sylvia Quinn.

(2017 is a special year in Ireland as GFS will be one hundred and forty years on this island)

IT's WEDDING BELLS FOR OUR WORLD YOUTH OFFICER

TEGAN HUDSON

Tegan Hudson will marry Joel Gillie on 22 December in Sydney. So at World Council Tegan will be Tegan Gillie and Joel is coming also as an important member of our team. We train our GFS husbands early in Australia! If you would like to send them greetings for their special day Tegan's email address is teгахuds@gmail.com



Here are Joel and Tegan receiving GFS Australia's wedding gift and the World Team is also sending them a gift on behalf of us all.

MOZAMBIQUE

Sociedade Amiga da Rapariga (SAR)

The name of GFS in Mozambique (in Portuguese) It is exciting to have two new languages in our GFS family – Portuguese and Spanish



Veronica in the Diocese of Lebombo, Mozambique has been working hard to establish GFS in the country. Veronica and the Chaplain attended the GFS Conference in Johannesburg, South

Africa after the visit of the World President, Thembeke and Nobantu to Mozambique. GFS leaders have been identified and commissioned. They are in the process of organising uniforms and working hard to meet the Bishop's hope that GFS will be established in every parish. Veronica hopes to attend World Council and to obtain funds for a Junior Delegate.

RWANDA



Thembeke Pama, our next World President has just returned from Rwanda where she attended a GFS Conference and also spoke to MU members. Such wonderful photos on Facebook of the visit and here are

just two of them. So exciting that a Senior and Junior Delegate from Rwanda will be coming to World Council (visa application approved permitting!) And there are hopes of a third person. In such a short time they have a vibrant GFS ministry in their diocese of Kigali and today a gentleman from another Rwandan diocese sent a message via Facebook to see what could be done to spread GFS to his diocese. These messages are always so exciting.

Bishop Muvunyi (his wife who is Chaplain to GFS, The Revd Winnie Muvunyi - next to Thembeke) and GFS members.



GHANA

Photos from their Celebration of World Day of Prayer



LATE NEWS FROM SIERRA LEONE

As I was finishing the newsletter I had a message from Alberta in Sierra Leone telling me that the 50th celebration ended with a Thanksgiving Service on 24 October. At the November elections Mrs Hannah Broderick was elected the new President. Hannah's email is iyabordavies@yahoo.com if you would like to welcome her to the GFS world family. Sadly it was too late to apply for funding and so Alberta does not think that Sierra Leone will be represented at World Council. Their economy is in a very poor situation and their internet access is so spasmodic. I will endeavour to see if I can access some funds for their Council fee and they will be eligible for a Travel grant. If any country wishes to assist please let me know. (Val)

PAPUA NEW GUINEA



GFS Children's Ministry Training Port Moresby

For our visit in September Gail Orchard, our Australian National Chair plus Betty and Elsie (Melanesia) joined our usual team of the Revd Canon Cheryl Selvae, The Revd Sue Wilson and myself. Betty and Elsie Elo came to see how GFS operated in PNG and to participate in training, all part of the Melanesia (Solomon Islands World Project) It was a

week of intensive training – both in Children's Ministry and in GFS Leadership both in Port Moresby and Popondetta. Cheryl and Sue provided the Children's Ministry training and Pastoral Care training at the Theological College in Popondetta and I provided the GFS training. We celebrated the World Day of Prayer in great style in Popondetta and then visited a village where Betty was actually born (and where she met with family members she had not seen for many years). Gail and I stayed on for a couple of days and visited an Anglican



Elsie Elo and Betty Kesaka from Melanesia

school at a settlement near Port Moresby. It is a school that my diocese supports and we were able to provide them with sporting gear and a monetary gift to purchase a Christmas gift for the 400 students
Arriving at Popondetta Airport

plus assist with education. And from this we are in the process of establishing GFS in this settlement – an unexpected and wonderful result. Girika Sanata, the Chairman of the School Board, will be attending World Council as will Wilma Moi, the Provincial GF Coordinator, Mary Bagu and of course our World Chaplain, Fr Isaiah.



World Day of Prayer, Resurrection Cathedral



Jean and Giriki establishing GFS in their settlement



Arriving at Popondetta Airport

Prayer thoughts for December 2016

Week beginning December 5th

We are entering Advent – a time to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of our Lord Jesus. We are charged with preparing the hearts and minds of many in our GFS groups who are waiting to hear about Jesus and His power in their lives. May we continue to do this with the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we go about our task.

Week beginning December 12th

We give thanks for the many industrious times at the GFS Hall in Sri Lanka as it hosted a sing along and a Pre-Christmas fair. We give thanks for those who meet in this hall and pray that they might be encouraged and strengthened in their faith. We give thanks for Jeanne and her team of willing workers.

Week beginning December 19th

As we prepare for the celebrations, may we be guided to focus on Jesus who came and died for us. We can be caught up in the many frivolous and commercial happenings that have little to do with Christmas. Help us to leave this aside to be quiet before God as we give our thanks for His gift to us.

Week beginning December 26th

We prepare for the start of a new year. Each day is a gift given to us, to be mindful of our blessings and for our 'daily bread'. We pray that we might be ready to look for new ways to worship our Lord, to bring others to know Him and to honour Him in our daily lives.



Prayer thoughts for January 2017

Week beginning January 2nd

We think about the highlight of this year, as we look towards our opportunity to be gathering as one group at World Council. We pray for those who are preparing for World Council - for those who are coming as observers and those representing their countries. We pray for the Australians who are joining together to be helping in preparations for the visit by our GFS family.

Week beginning January 9th

We pray for those who are considering ways to help make changes within their community to put an end to gender based violence. We pray for the victims of this – whether as victims of emotional, physical, social or economic violence and pray that there are many to give them a new life with hope and love surrounding them. We thank you for the USA project aimed to end violence against women, thinking of the girls in the Diocese of LA who made cards to sell to raise funds.

Week beginning January 16th

We pray for those countries beset by natural disasters that destroy homes and communities in their path. Please provide care and restoration quickly to these places. We think especially of the earthquakes in New Zealand and for the Kids Refresh camps run by GFS Japan for children affected by the Tsunami. We pray for countries afflicted by hurricanes and violent storms and wonder at the power of these natural events.

Week beginning January 23rd

We give thanks for new leaders thinking especially of the many new leaders recently commissioned in Ireland in November. We give thanks for their supporters and those who will mentor them in the years to come and for the girls in their charge.

Week beginning January 30th

We pray for Glenys Paine, as she recovers from recent surgery and pray for everyone who has spent time in hospital that they will have a speedy recovery with time to rest and restore their bodies and minds. We give thanks for the girls in Wales and England who have set up an art show to display their talents. We thank you for the mentoring provided by GFS groups such as New Zealand's example in higher education venues.



Prayer thoughts for February 2016

Week beginning February 6th

As schools begin again in Australia after our summer break we give thanks for the many members who are working together on different projects such as our knitting groups. We thank you for their crafty endeavours often given to help improve the lives of people in need of warmth, love and care. Help us to consider how our talents could be used for improving another's life.

Week beginning February 13th

We bring before you with thanksgiving the Anglican Church of Korea Women's Mission Centre that had its grand opening in September, 2016. We praise God for this venture, 20 years in the making, that is going to be an outreach centre for women not only from GFS. We thank you for the faithful who persevered to see it to fruition knowing the great need for such a centre.

Week beginning February 20th

We pray for the GFS group in Zambia. News of their excitement travels through the Rainbow House connection, linked with Australian supporters, to showcase their work. We read with great pride and joy of their successes and pray for many more opportunities to witness about their Lord.

Week beginning February 27th

We pray for Thembeke and her team as they too prepare in their own country for their term of office and as they prepare to come to Australia. We pray for GFS that they will flourish and prosper as GFS focus is shifted from Australia to South Africa.



**CUT OFF DATE FOR NEXT
NEWSLETTER 14TH Feb 2017**

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**GFS
World theme
Prayer
2014-2017**

**Gracious Lord, guide our
footsteps of faith that we might
walk in your grace and wisdom as
we act to serve you. Rekindle
afresh in us our spiritual gifts that
we might transform ourselves and
others, serving the whole body of
Christ through GFS. Make us
worthy of our calling to service,
through Jesus Christ
our Lord.
AMEN**

**Donations, Gifts or payment of fees,
etc., can be made by telegraphic
transfer to:**

Account Name: GFS Australia Account
ANZ Bank,
Shop 67
Whitfords City
Cnr Marmion & Whitford Aves
Hillarys WA 6025
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