Welcome to the June - July 2020 Visionary Newsletter. Peter’s greeting in 2 Peter is still a fabulous prayer … to you and me today:

Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature... Christ. (2Pe 1:1-8 KJV)

Introducing Arnella

For 11 weeks or so we have been praying and interceding for Eulogio and Arnella (Angie) Regaliza who run Christ is the Head Resource Centre at Oxley Park.

Arnella was struck down with Covid-19 some 11 weeks ago and was one of the worst cases – world-wide! She was one of only 8 people in the world who were affected by the virus in the same way that she was struck down.

She has been on life support. Her kidneys, liver, lungs and heart have all been variously affected and declared beyond healing – but God and his people did not agree!

We at Vision Colleges prayed, you all prayed, I contacted as many of you as I could and you responded, prayed and sent messages of hope and encouragement.

The doctors and nurses have been magnificent working with her. The nurses risked their lives but kept working for hers. The doctors worked in collaboration with other physicians and specialists overseas to find a way. No one quit.

While Angie has been in the hospital, Eulogio could only wait helplessly. For weeks he could not be with her at her bedside – an ordeal for any married man when his wife is so close to death.

Steadily, we have heard how she improved, from death’s door to recovery; baby steps it seemed, but they made it. Many of us feel we have walked with them on their journey.

It is a great pleasure – in fact, very moving, to be able to add this article and photo and such good news to our newsletter.

The Nursing staff at the hospital made a space for them on the balcony so they could celebrate a special event: their 31st wedding anniversary, on Monday 1st June 2020. Angie is being prepared to move to the ward in a few days, perhaps a week.

We rejoice with Eulogio and Arnella as she continues to recover in Westmead Hospital. We also thank the nursing staff, along with all who prayed and watched and messaged her — in particular those who prayed.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; (Eph 6:18 KJV)
Ken Chant

ALIVE IN THE SPIRIT!

- If you can overlook it when people blame you, even when it was not your fault;
- If you can be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains;
- If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles;
- If you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it;
- If you can understand when loved ones are too busy to give you time;
- If you can face the world without lies and deceit;
- If you can take criticism and punishment without resentment;
- If you can relax without liquor;
- If you can start the day without caffeine or pep pills;
- If you can conquer tension without medical help;
- If you can sleep without the aid of drugs;
- then .... you are probably a DOG -
- Or else you are !

ALIVE IN THE SPIRIT!

Many people are baptised in the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues, but they seem to gain little benefit from the gift. Why? Because nothing will change for anyone unless he or she learns how to turn the fulness of the Spirit into the power of the Spirit –

“When Jesus left the River Jordan he was full of the Holy Spirit . . . (But) when he returned to Galilee the power of the Holy Spirit was upon him, and a report about him quickly spread throughout the whole district!” (Luke 4:1,14)

How did the Lord turn the fulness of the Spirit into a daily experience of the power of the Spirit? He knew the links between —

The Spirit and the Word

“The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ep 6:17)

The empowering Spirit is rendered powerless unless we arm him with the Word of God! This means reading your Bible daily and meditating on it, constantly –

- looking for the face of God.
- listening for the voice of God;
- looking for the command or promise of God;
- learning about the character of God.

The Spirit and Prayer

“Dear friends, you must keep on building yourselves up in your most holy faith by praying in the Holy Spirit.” (Jude 20)

“Praying in the Spirit” is a synonym for praying in tongues (glossolalia) – which appeals to the heart of the Father. It also includes praying in the vernacular (English) – which appeals to the mind of the Father.

Both kinds of prayer are essential components of full life in the Holy Spirit (1 Co 14:15).

The Spirit and Walking

Twice Paul says, if we would live victoriously, then we must “walk in the Spirit” (Ga 5:16, 25).

The idea is, that wherever we go, whatever we are doing, we should see ourselves as people filled with the Holy Spirit, and dependent upon his indwelling grace.

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1 I have lost the source of this piece of humour.
Without such renewed surrender, our old nature will slowly re-assert itself and our victory will be stolen.

**The Spirit and Authority**

*Said Jesus – “If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, who is the Finger of God, then the Kingdom of God has already come to you!”* (Mat 12:28; Lu 11:20)

The Holy Spirit in you is **“the Finger of God”**! This means that your *hand* outstretched is like the hand of the Father; and that your *voice* upraised is like the command of the Almighty!

**CONCLUSION**

During one of the many battles in the Napoleonic war, a Scottish piper was captured and brought to the French emperor. Napoleon had never before seen a set of bagpipes close up, nor heard them, so he asked the piper to play him a typical piece of Scottish music, which the piper did willingly enough.

“Now play a military march” – which the Piper again did cheerfully.

“Now play a retreat” – which the Piper declined, saying that he had never learned how to play a retreat!

Neither should you!

**A Voice Does Count**

With regard to the Covid-19 restrictions I know I am not alone in my conviction that the church is being unfairly treated, yet at the same time I heard no voice of protest regarding the number of people allowed into a place of worship when pubs, clubs and restaurant have 50 but not the church — for us, only 10.

Feeling stirred to do something I wrote to all my contacts, some 3000 of them, and asked them to pray, to write, to speak up to members of Parliament, and so on. I contacted every state member of parliament, my own denomination and several others, contacted radio stations 2GB and Hope Radio seeking to advise them, to stir them, and to gain support.

I pointed out that the risk with 50 persons in a restaurant far exceeds the risk in a local church. With a limit of 50 persons, a restaurant potentially reaches 400 people plus staff over an 8-hour period. With the same restriction, the local church can only reach 50 people. We are not an 8-hour rotating group. We know, care for and look after our people. We have far greater concern for them due the nature of what we are, as opposed to restaurant. Now, I do not imply that they do not care; but a restaurant is simply a business whereas we are a community.

The risk in a local pub is even greater where alcohol may reduce the sensitivity of its patrons to social distancing and/or increase the risk of violent action by someone who does forget to behave responsibly.

On Wednesday May 27 I received this response from the minister: *In a hook up with the Health Minister and the Chief Medical Officer yesterday this issue was raised.*

*The Health officials have been working on increasing limits within places of worship and have looked at places and evidence from overseas and part of the problem and the reason for the lower limit comes back to the spread of the virus through singing.*

*The current 1.5m social distancing measures are not suitable in a venue where singing takes place due to the ways droplets and aerosols travel and current evidence points to them spreading over a greater distance.*

Infuriated, I took to my mailing lists and Facebook and presented the response from the minister with my response.

Consequently, many people prayed, while others called me asking what to do. We joined together for the Church. And not only us, but also many other leaders, pastors and laity, who could pray, make phone calls and send emails. There was good pressure. Pressure not only from us but combined with others, who independently called on the government and had enough influence to turn a flat NO to a positive YES within 24 hours. From the 1st of June we can have 50 in our churches.
But the fight must not stop here. There are larger churches well able to social distance and deal with this issue. We all need to stand together. We need to make it clear that while in the heavenlies the church has far more authority than the secular world, we ask for and expect no less than the same rights and responsibilities that secular entities are given in the world in which we live.

**Book of the Month**

**Marriage and Family Life**

We have an oversupply of *Marriage and Family Life* by Stan DeKoven so we are putting them on Special for this next month of JUNE, we will reduce the cost by $10.00, so a book is $15.00 (reduced from $25.00); and as a hard copy title it is $85.00 (reduced from $95)

Marriage and family life is intended to be wonderfully fruitful and a deeply blessed union — when all is working well. Marriage is a union of two people, deeply in love and committed to the idea that they will continue in this state of bliss through all the trials and triumphs, successes and failure, joys and pain that will come to them in life. So often, too often, the Living is replaced by duty, the romance of Loving lost in the "contentment of relationship", and the Laughing gives way to the hurly-burly of getting through the day. It ought not to be so. We can, we should, we must realise the early dreams of "Living, Loving, Laughing"

Our society has attempted to define marriage in ways that cannot be supported by the Bible, for marriage is an institution ordained by God. Basically, the Christian view of marriage is not that it is primarily or essentially a binding legal and social contract. The Christian understands marriage as a covenant made before God and in the presence of fellow members of the Christian family. Such a pledge endures, not because of the force of law or the fear of its sanctions, but because an unconditional covenant has been made. A covenant more solemn, more binding, more permanent than any legal contract.

Marriage is a relationship between man and woman intended by God to be a monogamous joining, intended to be a permanent bond, one in which many needs are satisfied — the need to love and be loved, the need for deep friendship, for sharing, for companionship, for sexual satisfaction, for children, and the need to escape loneliness. Marriage ought to be a bond of love, reflecting the love Christ has for his people, a bond of sacrificial love where husband and wife have become one.

**Alison’s Corner**

**A Lesson From Nahum**

The prophet Nahum came from Galilee. “Kaphar-Nahum” means the “village of Nahum” and became Capernaum where Jesus performed many miracles.

Nahum follows Isaiah in the time of Judah’s wickedest king, Manasseh. (665-664 BC). The prophet had only one subject: the doom of Nineveh.

In the days when Jonah preached to Nineveh, the people responded with repentance but later, as time went on, they presumed on God’s mercy by resuming their wicked ways.

Now Nahum preaches to Nineveh, that wrath restrained is wrath reserved if wickedness returns.

The Lord is a jealous and avenging God; the Lord takes vengeance and is filled with wrath. The Lord takes vengeance on his foes and vents his wrath against his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger but great in power; the Lord will not leave the guilty unpunished.

...Who can withstand his indignation? Who can endure his fierce anger? His wrath is poured out like fire; the rocks are shattered before him (Nahum 1:2-3,6; NIV)
Nineveh shows us for all time how God deals with Gentile nations, that they should take heed and not presume upon God’s patience.

The lesson is that God will forgive sin repented of, but he will not condone sin that is persisted in. The righteous principles of his administration among earth’s peoples do not change.

That is, compassion can never be exercised at the expense of righteousness. There must be a settling of accounts.

We can see then, the goodness and mercy of God toward Nineveh when they repented of their wickedness through Jonah’s preaching.

But in contrast, we can see the severe judgment of God through Nahum when the Ninevites reverted to their former wicked cruelty.

Having warned the Ninevites of the judgment to come Nahum can now give a wonderful promise to Judah who suffered the endless cruelty of Nineveh over many years.

*Look, there on the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace! Celebrate your festivals, Judah, and fulfil your vows. No more will the wicked invade you; they will be completely destroyed.* (Nahum 1:15; NIV)

What can we learn from Nahum? It does not pay to presume on God’s mercy by continuing deliberately in any sin. However, we know he will forgive if we are truly repentant (Psalm 51:1-2; 1 John 1:9).

**Student Honour Roll**

During this Covid-19 lockdown the colleges have been busy. In this last two months we have sent out 51 separate subjects to 171 students. The colleges have enrolled 42 new students from England, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, the United States, Zimbabwe and, in Australia, from NSW, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia.

Vision Colleges are distance education Bible Colleges. That is all we do: we offer Bible College courses by distance education. Our colleges include the Internet Bible College which hosts both the non-accredited Vision Christian College; and the accredited Vision International College; and we offer degree courses from the Texas University of Theology (Religious Exempt); and Vision International University (State Approved).

Vision Christian College is our mail-order College and uses a mail-order system mostly for students in Australia and Local Church Bible Colleges.

Our Degrees are issued by the Texas University of Theology or by Vision International University (Ramona CA). Below is a list of Graduations since the beginning of April to the end of May.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Award/Qualification</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Church Name</th>
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<td>Boreen Point</td>
<td>QLD</td>
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<td>NSW</td>
<td>The Rock</td>
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<td>Cert IV Christian Ministry and Theology</td>
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**We are featuring two of our Local Church Bible Colleges**

One of our strengths is the ability to stand with the local church in presenting their own Bible College. We supply the materials; the local church provides the venue and the teachers. This enables each church
to present its own flavour through their Bible College. This process develops the local church, enhances its ministry capacity, develops the student body, and more importantly keeps local members where they should be as they learn – in the local church.

**Awesome Bribie Island**

Presented by Stephanie Ross the director of Awesome Bribie Island Church College. The Church has its origins stemming from the network of churches started by Clark Taylor. He trained ministers to move in the gifts of the spirit and To Reach Australia For Christ. Two progenies from Christian Outreach Centre (COC) Bible School were Ian and Jan Ross who now have 33 years of ministry under their belt. Having pioneered COC Caboolture and handing the church over debt free, it was to be a few years’ hiatus before planting COC Bribie Island now Awesome Bribie Island Church. It is these days pastored by Senior Pastors Cameron and Stephanie Ross who both hold fulltime careers while leading a church bolstered by a qualified team of 4 assistant pastors and an associate pastor.

Attending Bible College this year are Ps Eleni Taueva, who with her husband Ps Skip, are Directors of a 20 strong creative team of musicians, technicians and singers. If you go to Skip's and Eleni's Life Group be prepared to be bombarded by the Word and food galore.

Sharron Sweeney, who was a Vision student last year, is an enthusiastic Worship Leader and leads a vibrant Life Group also.

Aleisha Johnson has her hands full as she works at the local primary school, runs an exciting Life Group. She has just completed another Diploma course, while studying for this Diploma as well, and she is a mum.

Pastor Cameron Ross, our Principal, takes his role as Senior Pastor very seriously. He is Ian and Jan's son, is hardworking, demanding a lot of himself, and possesses an unflagging trust in God. The latter, you too would need, if you had flying as your means of living!

Ardal MacMahon is our Bible College instructor. He is also Head Church Deacon, represents our church at Aged Care meetings (which he leads) as well as at the Bribie Island Christian Leaders Network and has run church men's meetings.

Kristalee and Phil are newbies. A few years ago you would be hard pressed to find them within cooee of a church (Phil is a scientist). So, to have them eagerly attentive upon learning about the Bible and its teachings says a lot about how well they have been translated from one kingdom to another. They faithfully help out at Global Care Bribie Island too.
Daniel Thompson is the youngest of the class but don't let his youth fool you. He completed his Cert 4 at CityEdge last year. He has been on several mission trips with Ps Ian Ross (to Indonesia and the Philippines) and helps out in our social justice arm, Global Care Bribie Island. In fact, he was cofounder, with Ps Cameron's son Lachlan, almost 10 years ago. Today, Global Care Bribie services the 3 local schools 700 free school breakfasts per week, provides 50 food parcels to low income families per week and 400 free meals (COVID19 initiated) per week to our community vulnerable and is a second phase disaster responder. Daniel loves to thresh out the Word of God with Ps Cameron, sister Ps Stephanie Ross, brothers Peter and Brett. He is a muso also.

I, like so many of my colleagues, wish to pursue excellence in the ministry. Whether pastor, deacon, local or international missions or ministry of helps, we each have been created for His purpose. As we search the scriptures, we find His Divine Will for our lives. (2 Timothy 2:15).

The Rock Church
Kingsgrove NSW

Presented by David Collins the Director of The Rock Vision College and a pastor with the Rock Church in Kingswood, NSW.

The Rock Vision College has been operating for almost one year now. In this short amount of time we have found this to be greatly beneficial. Those of our church family who are involved have thoroughly enjoyed the Vision College subjects content. I have had the pleasure of watching excited students communicating revelations that they are finding in the college material. What this has ultimately done is encourage our students involved to spend more time in God’s Word, which has been great to see overall.

One comment that has been expressed on a few occasions is the excitement about learning and gaining understanding of Christian foundational beliefs. I have witnessed the students sharing the Word of God with excitement and have heard testimonies of how they have used the understanding that they have gained to witness the gospel of Jesus Christ to others.

We have been greatly encouraged to see relationships between students organically grow. Those involved in the college regularly meet in each other’s homes, study the subject together outside of our college class times whilst sharing a meal together.

We will shortly have some of our students completing their first year of college. Being able t share this journey together has been a blessing. I would like to sincerely thank Vision College for the amazing work they do.

God Healed My Sight After Prayers

A testimony from Barry Mortlock. About nine months ago, I was diagnosed with a Macular Hole and cataract in my left eye. If it got too big it could cause problems with my sight. I was given a date for my operation ten days before.

I had my preassessment at the hospital, and because I was not looking forward to it, I asked many Christians to pray for me that God would heal my eye.
On Monday, March 13, I arrived at hospital for my operation. I was being prepared for the operation. A doctor came in to check me. After a few minutes, he called the surgeon in and he looked at my eye. He sent me to have a further scan.

I came back with the photos and he looked at them and said to me: “The hole has completely closed up.” Then he checked on the cataract and said there was no cataract.

He said I did not need an operation, but to come back in six months’ time. On that same day, while I was in the waiting room, I was reading the letter page of the Daily Mail and each Monday there is a thought for the week from the Bible. On that morning the verse was from Acts 9:34: ‘Jesus Christ heals you.’

I believe through the prayers of many Christians, God healed me. What a wonderful mighty God we have! Praise His Name.

**Corn Corner**

While on vacation in Rome, I noticed a marble column in St. Peter’s with a golden telephone on it. As a young priest passed by, I asked who the telephone was for. The priest told me it was a direct line to heaven, and if I’d like to call, it would be a thousand dollars. I was amazed but declined the offer.

Throughout Italy, I kept seeing the same golden telephone on a marble column. At each, I asked about it and the answer was always the same: It was a direct line to heaven and I could call for a thousand dollars.

Then, I traveled to Ireland for the final leg of my trip. I decided to attend Mass at a local village church. When I walked in the door, I noticed the golden telephone. Underneath it there was a sign stating: “DIRECT LINE TO HEAVEN: 25 cents.”

“Father,” I said, “I have been all over Italy and in all the cathedrals I visited, I’ve seen telephones exactly like this one. But the price is always a thousand dollars. Why is it that this one is only 25 cents?” The priest smiled and said, “Darlin’, you’re in Ireland now. It’s a local call.

**The last Word.**

We are so pleased, as are so many others, to be able to open our church on Sunday 7th June. The first time for two months but it feels longer. During this time the church has generally risen-up to the opportunities presented to us that we simply did not see before.

Online Services. So many churches thought it was an option only for big congregations. But no, the little churches got involved, and now there is a plethora of Christian services available on Facebook, YouTube, and so many other options. Some churches and Bible Colleges have introduced Zoom meetings. While online social media are not renowned for their support of the Christian message, they are now carrying the Gospel message far and wide – local churches are reaching places they could formerly only dream about.

Two scriptures come to mind with God’s capacity to turn things around for his kingdom.

> But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. (Gen 50:20 KJV) … And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. (Rom 8:28 KJV)

**Contact Vision**

President and Founder
Rev. Dr. Ken and Dr. Alison Chant, 02 9623 8474
Email: kuchant@vision.edu
web: www.visioncolleges.net

Principal and Office
Rev. Dr. Denis Plant: 02 9603 2077
PO Box 84, Macquarie Fields, NSW, 2564
email: principal@visioncolleges.net
web: www.facebook.com/visioncolleges; Skype: Vision Colleges; Twitter: @visioncolleges