



FROM THE HEART

NEWS FROM THE LAITY OF THE CHEVALIER FAMILY AUSTRALIA

January - March 2024

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the first edition of *From the Heart* for 2024!

I sincerely hope the year has begun well for you and your family. In a world with so much conflict and suffering, we are fortunate to live where we do.

There is, as usual, much to read and reflect on in this edition. Clare does a fantastic job preparing these newsletters for us. I highly recommend the reflection "Reclaiming our Hearts". It is a beautifully constructed, thought-provoking article I'm sure everyone will enjoy.

I'm sure you have all enjoyed reports about the Assembly in the Philippines. Congratulations to Alison McKenzie and the organisers, and thanks to our delegates who represented us there. There will be things flowing from the Assembly for us to consider.

The Australian Council is working toward our national gathering on 20 to 22 September 2024, as well as a national ZOOM gathering sometime in the year, too; more details will follow soon.

15 March 2024 is the 200th birthday of our founder, Jules Chevalier. Several of our communities will gather to reflect on and celebrate the occasion. I'm sure you will be welcome to attend if you live near such a community. Many, of course, will not be able to do that, and Clare has written a beautiful Chevalier Year Reflection. If you have a photo or a short note about your 200-year celebration, please send it to aus.lcf@gmail.com.

Happy reading,

Fred

(Chair, Australian Council of the Laity of the Chevalier Family)

PS How are you going with your carbon fasting?

RECLAIMING OUR HEARTS

Join us as we nourish and challenge ourselves with the reflection: 'Reclaiming Our Hearts'. In particular, this International Women's Day, we honour the women - past, present, and emerging - who live 'Spirituality of the Heart' and inspire us with their loving presence and leadership. We celebrate the example of Mary, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, as a woman of faith and mother-disciple of her Son, Jesus (the Sacred Heart).

[Download](#) the PDF or [view](#) it on the LCFA website.



COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION

In this edition, Kerrie Wehbe reflects on International Women's Day (8 March 2024).

[Download](#) the PDF or [view](#) it on the LCFA website.

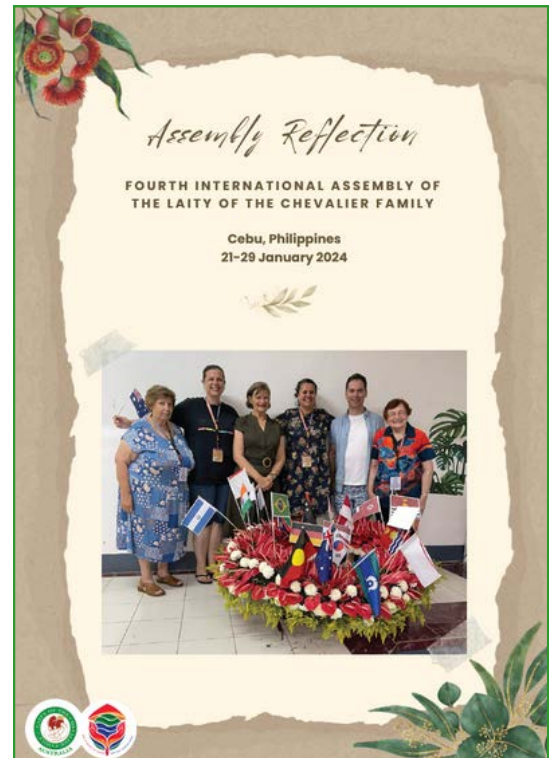


ASSEMBLY REFLECTION

The Fourth International Assembly of the Laity of the Chevalier Family was held in Cebu, Philippines, on 21-29 January 2024. The Australian delegates have prepared an Assembly Reflection on their experiences.

Australian delegate Alison McKenzie was reelected as the General Secretary of the International Council of the Laity of the Chevalier Family (ICLCF). Alison's reflection will come out with the official ICLCF report at Easter. Additionally, Australian delegate Aidan Johnson was elected to the ILCF. We congratulate Alison and Aidan on their election and pray their work is blessed and fruitful.

[Download](#) the PDF or [view](#) it on the LCFA website.



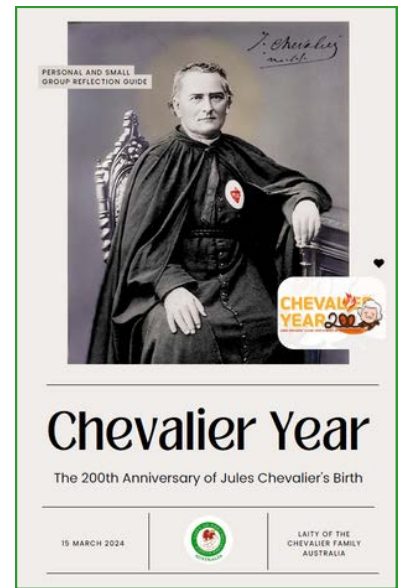
CHEVALIER YEAR REFLECTION GUIDE

The International Chevalier Family celebrates the 200th anniversary of Jules Chevalier's birth on 15 March 2024. This 'Chevalier Year' reflection guide has been prepared to assist individuals and small groups in their celebrations.

Australian Chevalier Family parishes and schools will host events, so look for those details.

Tag any social media posts of celebrations with #jchevalier200, and the International Chevalier Year Committee will compile them on their website (jchevalier.ametur-msc.org).

[Download](#) the PDF or [view](#) it on the LCFA website.



CHEVALIER YEAR ANNALS

The January and February editions of the Chevalier Year Annals are available.

Download the PDF ([January](#)) ([February](#)) or [view](#) it on the LCFA website.



CHEVALIER YEAR LETTER

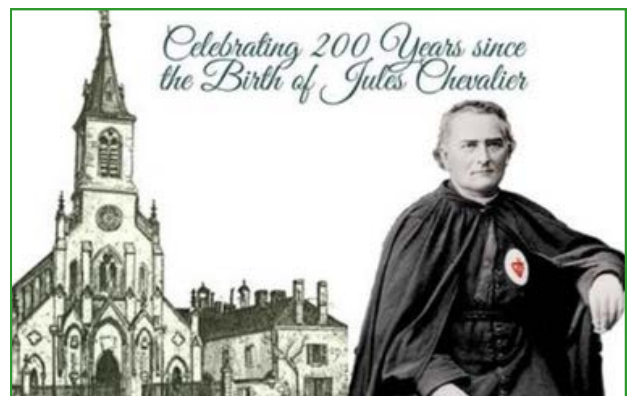
The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart Generalate have written the Chevalier Family a letter about the Chevalier Year.

[Download](#) the PDF.



CHEVALIER YEAR VIDEO

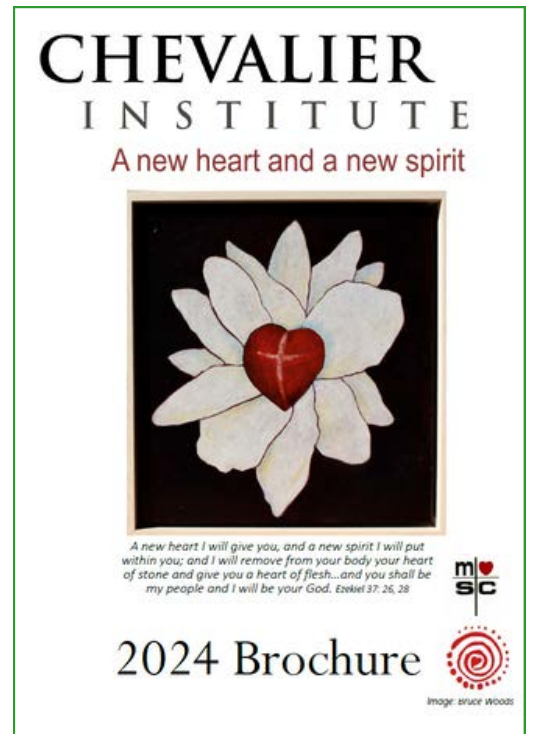
The Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart are excited to share a beautiful short film, "Who is Chevalier to you?". We interviewed students, staff, Sisters, MSCs, and laity from across Australia to hear their thoughts and reflections on what Chevalier means to them. Watch it on [YouTube](#).



CHEVALIER INSTITUTE 2024 BROCHURE

The Chevalier Institute, a ministry of the Australian Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, has released its 2024 Brochure. The Chevalier Institute's mission is to facilitate and support lay adult faith formation in the Chevalier Family's Spirituality of the Heart.

[Download](#) the PDF or [view](#) it on the LCFA website.




LENTEN CARBON FAST

Again, we have embarked on a Lenten carbon fast. Have you been joining us?


Follow us on social media ([Facebook](#)) ([Instagram](#)) or [view](#) it on the LCFA website.

CARBON FAST FOR LENT



Purchase a reusable bread bag to take to your local baker. They can slice the bread and put it straight into your reusable bread bag. Let's eliminate soft plastics one bag at a time.

DAY 23
Laudato Si'



CARBON FAST FOR LENT



Mulch your garden. Mulch will not only help retain moisture in the soil but feeds important soil microbes, improving soil health and biodiversity.

DAY 24
Laudato Si'





First Friday Reflection

Download the First Friday Reflection ([PDF](#)) ([Image](#)).

Jan 2024

12 FIRST FRIDAY STEPS TO *Laudate Deum Goals*

AWARENESS:

Eight years have passed since the Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* was published and now we have *Laudate Deum*. Pope Francis has realized that "our responses have not been adequate, while the world in which we live is collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point." (LD 2)

PRAYER:

Lord, inspire in all of us a holy reaction to the neglect of climate action, so that citizens' pressure on political leaders may push them to a radical commitment to our common home. Amen.

ACTION:

Read the entire *Laudate Deum* and the results of COP 28 documents and reflect on it.



Australian Reflection

[Laudate Deum](#), Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation is a 'call to arms' on *Laudato Si'*'s actions that calls for an urgent individual and community response as "everything is connected and nothing is saved alone" (LD19). As people living Spirituality of the Heart, our hearts echo the thought, "The world sings of an infinite Love: how can we fail to care for it?" (LD65).

[COP28](#) was a 2023 UN Climate Change Conference that undertook a global stocktake of the climate crisis status and agreed on urgent climate actions (e.g., eliminating fossil fuels and increasing climate finance). It "recognises the science that indicates global greenhouse gas emissions need to be cut 43% by 2030, compared to 2019 levels, to limit global warming to 1.5°C" and notes that "countries must deliver new nationally determined contributions. Every single commitment on finance, adaptation, and mitigation must bring us in line with a 1.5-degree world." (UN) In the COP28 closing address, the pivotal role of individuals was celebrated and encouraged in a "message to ordinary people everywhere raising their voices for change. Every one of you is making a real difference. In the crucial coming years, your voices and determination will be more important than ever. I urge you never to relent. We are still in this race. We will be with you every single step of the way." (UN)

As we begin 2024, let's reflect on what we, as individuals and Australians, can do together in love.



First Friday Reflection

Download the First Friday Reflection ([PDF](#)) ([Image](#)).

Feb 2024

12 FIRST FRIDAY STEPS TO *Laudate Deum Goals*

Awareness:

"Climate crisis is one of the principal challenges facing society and the global community. The effects of climate crisis are borne by the most vulnerable people, whether at home or around the world". (Laudate Deum, 3)

Prayer:

Lord, we pray that local communities and indigenous peoples will have a voice and be recognized as key players in local decision-making and climate action. Amen.

Action:

You can try walking or riding a bicycle instead of driving as this will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help maintain health.



Australian Reflection

Australia is a land with vast distances between places. As the sixth largest country in the world, it is about 3860 kilometres long (north to south) and almost 4000 kilometres wide (east to west) ([Geoscience Australia](#)). For some, home, work, school, church, and shops are close by, whilst a daily commute of a few hours and several hundred kilometers is common for others. Household vehicles, which emit greenhouse gases and air pollutants that cause the greenhouse effect, smog, and heart/lung diseases/cancers, are responsible for nearly 11% of Australia's carbon footprint ([Green Vehicle Guide](#)).

Reducing vehicle emissions will come from investment in cleaner technologies (hybrid and electric vehicles), regularly servicing vehicles, and changed driving and transport behaviours (e.g., non-emitting options like walking or cycling, using public transport such as buses or trains, carpooling, planning trips for efficient routes and avoiding peak times, reducing additional weight by removing unnecessary items, slowing down and driving efficiently) ([Green Vehicle Guide](#), [GVG](#)).

At the International Assembly of the Laity of the Chevalier Family, the Australian delegates renewed our commitment to live simply and to drive consciously. What steps will you take?



First Friday Reflection

Download the First Friday Reflection ([PDF](#)) ([Image](#)).

Mar 2024

12 FIRST FRIDAY STEPS

Awareness

Greater scarcity of water will lead to an increase in the cost of food and the various products which depend on its use. The environmental repercussions could affect billions of people; it is also conceivable that the control of water by large multinational businesses may become a major source of conflict in this century. (LD, 31)

Prayer:

We pray to you, Lord, that the right to clean water will be fulfilled everywhere and that food systems will be transformed globally to organic and sustainable production. Amen.

Action:

Establishing rainwater reservoirs is one solution to increase the availability of clean water and also reduce the crisis on clean water availability.



Australian Reflection

Water is a gift of Creation needed to sustain life. As Catholics we use water as a key liturgical symbol in blessings and sacraments, such as Baptism, linking it back to Jesus and biblical traditions.

In Australia, First Nations peoples have long recognised the sacredness of water, practising sustainable water management and linking dreaming and community life around the natural water sources ([Indigenous Knowledge Institute](#)). Freshwater is scarce in Australia and yet needed to sustain communities with food production (three-quarters of Australian use), industry, environmental conservation, and household use ([DAFF](#)). Australia's freshwater supply is vulnerable to extreme weather events (such as floods, droughts and cyclones) and climate change, with reduced rainfalls and river flows, increased evaporation or algal/bacteria blooms from warmer air/water temperatures, increased salinity from sea level rise, and soil erosion leading to poor water quality or reduced water retention ([CSIRO](#), [Adapt NSW](#)).

At the International Assembly of the Laity of the Chevalier Family, the Australian delegates renewed our commitment to live simply and to use water efficiently. Consider taking shorter showers, fixing leaks quickly, or turning off taps when brushing teeth. What steps will you take?

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Australian Council for the Laity of the Chevalier Family is looking for contributions to social media stories and *From The Heart* to help build connections in the Chevalier Family.

- Hosting an event?
- Have a story?
- Know of an achievement?

Anything related to MSC, OLSH Sister, and MSC Sisters communities, missions, ministries, and lay people that would interest the wider Chevalier Family. Whether a local item or something of national/international significance, send a reflection, article, short paragraph, or sentence with any photos/images (with permission to be publicly shared) to aus.lcf@gmail.com.



Australian Council of the Laity of the Chevalier Family

 [aus.lcf](https://www.facebook.com/aus.lcf)

 aus.lcf@gmail.com

 [aus.lcf](https://www.instagram.com/aus.lcf)

 chevalierlaity.com.au



With deep respect and love, we acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (the traditional custodians of this land) and their Elders - past, present, and emerging.

We support the Uluru Statement From The Heart and recognise the importance of ensuring First Nations people have a voice in Australia.



We commit to a "greater love for our Creator, each other, and the home we share" (Laudato Si 14). We live in the Spirituality of the Heart and are called to love and care for Creation and the Created.



We rejoice in our differences and celebrate the gift of the LGBTQIA+ community. We live 'to be on Earth the heart of God' and welcome and include all people in their diversity.