



## Welcome to Week 4!

We trust this newsletter finds you in good spirits as we approach the middle of the semester. As the temperatures drop, keep your focus and enthusiasm high in all your endeavors on campus.

## Cultural Night Poster Reveal

Get ready for an amazing evening celebrating diverse cultures. Scan the QR code to RSVP for the event. If you can, bring some traditional food to share, but no pressure – we want this to be a fun and relaxed event for everyone. Feel free to contribute to the Quiet Auction as well. Please see the Poster on a separate page!



## Library Book Sale

Explore our new book sale section downstairs along the library corridor. Who knows, for just \$5 per book, you might discover an amazing read at an affordable price.

## Board Game Corner Fun

Join the excitement at our Board Game Corner! Grab your favourite board game, unwind with friends, and make lasting memories. Thanks to Margaret for this brilliant idea!

## 2023-2024 Social Justice Statement

The Australian Catholic bishops are just launching their Social Justice Statement, focusing on building stronger connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This year's theme, "Listen, Learn, Love: A New Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples," reflects actionable steps guided by Catholic social teaching. Source: Cathnews.com

## Angela's Story This Week

A heartfelt appreciation to Angela for generously sharing her inspiring story this week. Her narrative, centered around her late brother's battle with cancer, highlights the unwavering faithfulness of God even in the face of adversity. Your remarkable journey deeply resonates with many, and your openness is truly valued. Have a read below and be inspired by Angela's story.

Stay warm and engaged!

Every Blessing,

Hoa

## Our God is a Faithful God

My story starts on a regular week day in January, 1973 when we are told that my brother Johnny who was my best friend and constant playmate from the time I could walk, had terminal cancer. And, there was nothing they can do to help him.

Johnny was fifteen months older than me so at the time we received this totally devastating news, he had just turned nineteen and I was soon to turn eighteen.

I remember my knees turning to jelly and my mum, dad and much older brother by seven years, looking totally shocked and speechless.

Johnny wasn't there for this family meeting with the specialists and it was decided that we should not tell him. They all thought he was too young to handle his own mortality, so soon.

Except for me. I thought he had a right to know but no one listened to me as I am the youngest in the family and also a girl.

I grew up in a loving family but also a very Italian and patriarchal one.

Our world in those very few seconds had been totally shattered to pieces.  
And, time moved on.

February arrived quickly and I started Year 12.

Johnny was being looked after at home by mum and dad.

By early April my parents were not coping with his care and Johnny knew it. The cancer had spread even further and he was riddled with it. The pain was enormous.

Johnny asked me if I would help care him until he got better. I think he believed he would get better right until close to the very end.

I told him I would care for him as best I could. I loved him. And, I totally knew that it was the right thing for me to do. I had no doubts and never any regrets.

My family objected strongly, especially my older brother. He said, "You've got your whole life ahead of you and Johnny is dying". Instinctively I knew he was totally wrong.

Soon after I met with my lovely, school principal who listened respectfully to my story and offered me tissues as I kept sobbing.

She assured me that if I wanted to return to Year 12 next year that there would be a place for me. I had no time to think about that at all.

School belonged to another world I once occupied.

My world now was Johnny and taking care of him as best I could.

The days and nights merged together and I was on call twenty-four seven. As his condition quickly deteriorated he needed morphine to manage his pain. I would administer it orally, on demand.

I kept praying for the strength to keep going. I would go to bed clutching my rosary beads in my hands praying that I would wake up each time as soon as Johnny called out for me two, three, four times during the night.

After several months exhaustion was setting in and Johnny was getting sicker and sicker and I was praying more earnestly. My prayers were answered and I was graced throughout, always managing to do what needed to be done for him, as I watched him daily slipping through my fingers.

One day as I was getting Johnny something to drink from the kitchen, I thought to myself, how did it come to this that my world has shrunk to two small rooms in my parents small house. My world had shrunk to almost nothing. In my prayerful reflection I received the message, “Your world is now so small but one day I will show you how great my world is”.

I didn’t really understand what God meant at the time, all I knew was that I needed the strength to keep going. It wasn’t until years later that I fully understood.

By early August Johnny had deteriorated to the point where he was bare skin and bones. The cancer had eaten him away to almost nothing. He was totally immobile and constantly in chronic pain.

We could no longer look after him at home and Johnny was admitted into palliative care.

Early one morning two weeks later, we got the dreaded phone call that Johnny was dying and to rush over.

We got there in time to see him smile his beautiful smile and then die peacefully.

I had been trying to prepare for this moment but the finality totally overwhelmed us all.

He was gone. And we were totally devastated. And, our lives would never be the same again. Despite all this, time kept moving on relentlessly.

The following year I did return back to school and somehow with God’s grace got through Year 12 and went on to Teacher’s College.

I graduated and taught for the next four years before I became disillusioned with life and teaching.

In prayer I was trying to work out what I really wanted to do. The answer came quickly. I wanted to travel the world. I had never travelled overseas before.

So, the following year after a lot of careful planning, I travelled around the world for ten months on my own. Well not totally on my own. I was aware of been gifted with lots of divine providence.

My mum prayed the Rosary for me every day I was gone and I felt somehow safe and protected. I still think of it as feeling like our Mother Mary had her mantle over me and that everything would be fine. And so it was.

My travels took me mainly to Europe, North America and Canada.

In the middle of my travels whilst staying on a magnificent Greek Island I remember thanking God for all the beauty, I was so totally immersed in.

God said, “I told you that one day I would show you my great, big world”.

It was August 1983, exactly ten years after Johnny had died.

It was now that I fully understood God’s message all those years ago.

God kept God’s word to me.

Our God is a faithful God.

It is now August 2023, the fiftieth anniversary of the death of my most beloved, brother, Johnny. And, God is ever present, forever listening and eternally faithful.

For all of this I am truly grateful

Angela