West Wagga Wagga Catholic Parish Ashmont, Collingullie, Glenfield, Lloyd, San Isidore **The West Wagga Wag**

Issue 158

Coming Events

Monthly Cuppa, after 9am Mass on last Sunday of the month

Adoration - 6 to 7am daily, all night Fridays starting 9pm

The Feast of Divine Mercy Sun 3

Annunciation of the Lord Mon 4

Philippino Retreat all welcome 7 pm to 9 pm (English) Mon 11 to Fri 15





Happy Easter!

Thank you to everyone who helped and took part, especially Jesus!



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Wag Contacts

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The date for submissions for the next Wag is: Wednesday April 27th.









April 2016

pastor's page

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga is soon to celebrate its centenary of foundation, and Fr Justin Darlow has contacted each parish to gather historical information for the occasion.

What could we say about the history of West Wagga Parish and our achievements?

It is easy to focus on the buildings, and they certainly tell a story. They represent hopes and effort, fundraisers and donations. They also witness so many baptisms, confessions, First Holy Communions, Confirmations, Weddings, funerals.

Dare we say, they were the location of the more important events - our daily and weekly Masses, the real heart-beat of our parish and our Catholic Church. And here also people came to be alone with God, to pour out a heartfelt plea for help or word of gratitude.

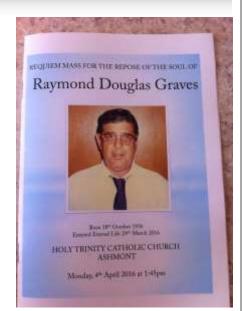
But buildings will fall or be replaced one day. The real, permanent history of the parish and Church is in the lives of individuals who by Faith and Baptism became part of the Family of God. The Church is a living temple made up of living stones, each one of us.

It is beautiful how in the Acts of the Apostles we read the chronicles of the Church, and come across individual names, like "Dorcas" who used to knit, and "Eutychus" who fell asleep and fell out of a window three stories high as St Paul preached long into the night (St Paul brought him back to life).

In the Gospels we meet Simon from Syria and are told he had two sons, Alexander and Rufus. And in the writings of St Paul we hear about Timothy's tummy troubles (to be cured by wine) and Paul's coat which he needed returned.

These names and details don't overshadow the Good News; the Good News enlightens them as ordinary people are touched by grace, helped to live the Christ-life, and led to eternal life in heaven.

This week saw the passing of one member of our parish, Ray Graves. He was born on 18th October 1936 and came to Wagga 30 years ago. He told the story of how he came to be in Wagga: he and some mates decided to get on the train and drink from Sydney to Melbourne. They were caught this side of Junee and put off the train in Wagga. Here he found a new chapter of his life and not only did he benefit from the new surroundings but he became a blessing to many others via St Vincent de Paul. He has been a friend to so many in the parish, in Vinnies and to every priest and



deacon who has lived across the road from him.

At Ray's funeral there will be many of the "old guard", and they in turn will bring back memories of so many others. They are the real history of our parish, its purpose and is boast.

Not all could tell a yarn as well as Ray but all are our real treasure. And while buildings may crack and crumble, those who by the grace of God die in His love will live for ever, not memories but saints.

Fr Thomas Casanova CCS

An Easter Poem

On the Third Day -- by Margaret Wideyke

As pale streaks of coral open The closed, dark, nighttime skies, Two women trudge the dusty road That leads to the place where He lies.

Bring burial spices, they enter, Subdued by all that happened before.

As they near the tomb they remember

The rock that blocks the door.

But when they reach the site, The rock stands at one side, And within, an angel dressed in white Speaks of their Lord who was crucified.

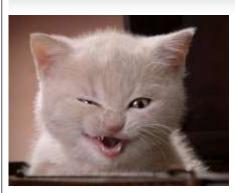
"This is the place where they laid Him,

But He is not here. He is not dead. Carry the word to His friends: He has risen as He said."

Joyful, astonished, afraid to believe, For a moment, they stand paralyzed. Then they rush to report what the angel said As the glorious sun is on the rise.



April Jokes



Seems a guy was driving for hours though desolate country when he passed a farmhouse, and before he could react, a cat ran out in front of him and *splat*... he flattened the cat. Out of kindness and consideration, he stopped, turned around and drove back to the farmhouse to notify the occupants. When the housewife came to the door, said he, "Pardon memadame, but I just ran over a cat in front of your house, and assumed that it must belong to you. I know this might be hard to hear, but I wanted to let you know instead of just driving off....

"Not so fast", says she. "How do you know it was our cat? Could you describe him? What does he look like?"

The man promptly flopped down on the ground, and said "He looks like this" as he gave his best shot at a dead cat impression.

"Oh no, you *horrible* man", she replied. "I meant, what did he look like *before* you hit him?" At that, the man got up, covered his eyes with both hands and screamed, "Aggghhhhhhh!!!!!!"

A farmer and his brand new bride were riding home from the church in a wagon pulled by a team of horses, when the older horse stumbled.

The farmer said, "That's once." A little further along, the poor old horse stumbled again. The farmer said, "That's twice." After a little, while the poor old horse stumbled again. The farmer didn't say anything, but reached under the seat, pulled out a shotgun and shot the horse. His brand new bride yelled, telling him, "That was an awful thing to do!"

The farmer said, "That's once."

A farmer wants to know how many sheep he has in the paddock, so he asks his kelpie to count them. The dog runs into the paddock, counts them and runs back to the farmer. The farmer says, "How many?" The dog says, "400." The famer is surprised and says, "How can there be 400 - I only bought 360!" The dog says, "I rounded them up."

A New York City yuppie moved to the country and bought a piece of land. He went to the local feed and livestock store and talked to the proprietor about how he was going to take up chicken farming. He then asked to buy 100 chicks. "That's a lot of chicks," commented the proprietor. "I mean business," the city slicker replied. A week later the yuppie was back again. "I need another 100 chicks," he said. "Boy, you are serious about this chicken farming," the man told him. "Yeeh " the yuppie replied "If L can

"Yeah," the yuppie replied. "If I can iron out a few problems." "Problems?" asked the proprietor. "Yeah," replied the yuppie, "I think I planted that last batch too close together."

An innocent farmer got sent to jail. His wife was trying to hold the farm together until her husband could get out. She wrote a letter to him in jail: "Dear Hubby, I want to plant the squash. When is the best time to do it?" The farmer wrote back: "Honey, don't go near that field. Every bit of money I stole is there." All of the farmer's mail was censored, since he was in jail. So after the guards read the letter, the police all ran out to the farm and dug up the entire potato field looking for the cash. After two full days of digging, they didn't find anything. The farmer then wrote to his wife: "Honey, now is when you should plant the squash."

Howard County Police officers still write their reports by hand, and the data is entered later by a computer tech into their database. One theft report stated that a farmer had lost 2,025 pigs. Thinking that to be an error, the tech called the farmer directly. "Is it true Mr. (Smith) that you lost 2,025 pigs?" she asked. "Yeth." lisped the farmer. Being a Howard County girl herself, the tech entered: "Subject lost 2 sows and 25 pigs."

Jimmy and his brother Ralph both lived in the same town. Jimmy lived with their 90 year-old mother, and Ralph lived across town with his 12 year-old cat, Silky. Ralph was obsessed with Silky and treated her like a queen. The two were never apart. But one day, Ralph learned he had to go to England on business. Cats had to stay in quarantine for two weeks in order to get into that country, so it was simply impractical for Ralph to take Silky with him.

Ralph asked Jimmy to care for his cat, and Jimmy agreed. So Ralph brought Silky over, spent an hour explaining the nuances of servicing the aging feline, and departed for London.

Every night Ralph would call and ask "How's Silky?". The first four nights, Jimmy, holding in his growing irritation at his brother's cat-obsession, answered, "Silky's fine," but the fifth night, in response to the question, he blurted out, "Silky's dead!" Hearing that Ralph almost died of

Hearing that, Ralph almost died of shock, himself. When he recovered, he said to his brother, "Jimmy, that's not the way to break news like that to someone. You don't just blurt out information like that. You have to prepare a person."

" Tonight when I called," Ralph went on, "you should have said, 'Silky's fine, but she's up on the roof.' Then tomorrow you could have told me, "Silky fell off the roof and I took her to the vet's." Then, the next day, you could have said, "Silky didn't make it, Ralph, she's dead," and I would have been able to handle the news." "By the way, Jimmy," Ralph asked,

"How's mum?" "Oh, she's fine," said Jimmy. "But

she's up on the roof."



Calls for canonisation as EWTN founder Mother Angelica dies aged 92



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The Poor Clare nun established EWTN in 1980 and saw it become the world's largest religious media network

Mother Angelica, the founder of the Eternal Word Television Network, the world's largest religious media network, has died at the age of 92.

The Franciscan nun died on Easter Sunday at Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Alabama, the monastery she had helped to found over 50 years ago. She had been in poor health for some time, and had been placed on a feeding tube.

Mother Angelica founded Eternal Word Television Network in 1980, using a converted garage at the monastery. It steadily grew, not least thanks to her own appearances on the talk show Mother Angelica Live. The channel broadcasts a range of talk shows, interviews, news programmes, and devotional items including daily Mass.

EWTN expanded to include a radio station and the National Catholic Register newspaper. In 2015 its programming reached 250 million homes in over 100 countries.

Mother Angelica was known for her straight-talking, feisty manner and her profound trust in God. She once said: "I'm not afraid to fail, but I am scared to death of dying and having the Lord say to me: 'Angelica, this is what you might have done had you trusted me more.'"

American Catholics have paid tribute to her. The theologian Janet Smith told Aleteia: "She was a simple nun, with a profound faith, and one courageously dependent upon God's grace to supply what was needed. Her life and deeds were miraculous. I have great confidence that some day she will be declared to be a saint."

Twitter users have also called for Mother Angelica to be made a saint. One tweeted: "A beautiful saint who lived an unforgettable life."

The philosopher Alice von Hildebrand, like many others who knew her, highlighted Mother Angelica's trust in divine providence: "She started from nothing. Everything was against her. But she trusted that with His help, she could spread the Gospel to the world through EWTN. It edges on the miraculous."

The author and EWTN presenter Fr Mitch Pacwa said: "She didn't worry about a thing except being faithful to Christ. It was the number one issue for her, hands down. She didn't care who you were or what you said – if it contradicted the faith, she'd shut you down, even if you were ordained clergy."

She was born Rita Antoinette Rizzo in 1920, to Italian-American parents who would later divorce. She has said that she and her mother were "barely surviving" in the years after the Depression.

In 1943, she experienced a sudden cure of a stomach problem, which she would later attribute to God's miraculous intervention.

The following year she entered the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration. She wrote to her mother: "Something happened to me after my cure. What it was, I don't know. I fell completely in love with Our Lord. To live in the world for these past 19 months has been very difficult." Having taken the name Sister Mary Angelica of the Annunciation, she continued to suffer from ill health. She promised God that if she recovered from one particularly serious back injury, she would found a monastery. She recovered and founded Our Lady of the Angels Monastery with four other nuns in 1962.

She began making TV programmes in the mid-70s; later, she bough satellite space to launch EWTN. It began with a mixture of specifically Catholic, generally Christian and non-religious programming (including cookery shows), but became more markedly Catholic; in its tone it mirrored many of the themes of John Paul II's pontificate. It is funded almost entirely by donations.

Mother Angelica said she had experienced a vision of the Child Jesus on a visit to the Basilica of Divino Niño Jesus in Colombia. He told her, "Build me a temple, and I will help those who help you."

As a result, Mother Angelica built the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament, next to Our Lady of the Angels.

In 2001 she suffered a stroke and afterwards spoke with more difficulty. Her health had slowly declined since, though until recently she continued to make appearances on EWTN.

"WHERE MOST MEN WORK FOR DEGREES AFTER THEIR NAMES, WE WORK FOR ONE BEFORE OUR NAMES: 'ST.' It's a much more difficult Degree to attain. It takes A LIFETIME, and you Don't get your diploma UNTIL you're dead." - Mother Angelica

The shenanigans' at Mother Angelica's first vows

If you picture a nun's first profession of vows, you probably picture a serene, peaceful affair with the sisters singing harmoniously and everything running joyfully and smoothly.

But the day of Mother Angelica's first vows was anything but.

Outside, a blizzard spit snow and ice, snarling roads and delaying the guests and the presiding Bishop James McFadden.

Inside, different storms were brewing.

As then-Sister Angelica knelt behind the grille, trying to pray before taking her vows, the organist sister and the choir director, Sr. Mary of the Cross (with whom Sr. Angelica had sparred in the past), began arguing about musical technique, within earshot of the already-arrived guests.

As the incident is recalled in her biography: Voices slowly escalated. Suddenly the two nuns were at each other: the organist refusing to play, Mary of the Cross threatening to throw her into the snow if she didn't.

"And I'm sitting there trying to recollect myself for my vows," Mother Angelica recalled. "The people must have thought we were nuts."

Then came the bug, scampering across the wooden floor in front of the sisters.

Mary of the Cross rose up, lifted the kneeler with both hands, and pounded it on the ground, attempting to annihilate the insect. Like a madwoman with a jackhammer, she repeatedly wielded the priedieu (kneeler), hurling it and herself at the crawler. The organist, thinking the display an underhanded critique of her playing, pounded the keys all the harder. Sister Angelica could not believe what she termed "the shenanigans." Then the bishop walked in.

Wet and cold from walking several blocks where he had to leave his stalled car, Bishop McFadden requested a fresh pair of socks, which Sr. Mary of the Cross sent Sister Angelica to get.

When it came time to place the profession ring on Sr. Angelica's fingers, the bishop couldn't fit it past her knuckle – her hand was swollen from a shower handle in the convent that had crumbled and cut her hand several days prior.

"With everything going on there, I'm thinking, Oh Jesus doesn't love me. You know?...I mean, it was a real spiritual experience!" Mother Angelica said. "But that's the way God works with me. As I look back, before anything big that was coming, something happened to me."

Despite "the shenanigans" of the day, Sr. Angelica took her vows seriously, writing in a letter to her mother that "the espoused" and "royal couple" (herself and Jesus) "wished to express their gratitude to their friend and member of their personal court...The spouse has asked the Bridegroom to fill you with his peace and consolation."

She signed the letter: "Jesus and Angelica."

Some of Mother Angelica's one liners

On Conversion: Even the devil believes that God exists. Believing has to change the way we live.

On Faith: Faith is one foot on the ground, one foot in the air and a queasy feeling in the stomach.

On clarity: If you are following God, he never shows you the end. It's always a walk of faith.

On Trust: Unless you are willing to do the ridiculous, God will not do the miraculous.

On Mindfulness: Everyone drags his own carcass to market, so be careful.

On Love: Love is not a feeling; it's a decision.

On Mercy: You can't go to heaven hating somebody. Forgive now.

On Anger: St. Jerome used to hit himself with a rock every time he lost his temper. I'd be dead as a

doornail with no ribs if I did that.

On Struggle: If you've got a cross, carry it. It's to make you holy.

On Reality: Those who tell the truth love you. Those who tell you what you want to hear love themselves.

On Error: Every moment of life is like God saying, "Look, I know you messed up the last moment, but here's a new one."

On Pride: Once you contemplate the humility of Jesus in the Eucharist, how can you possibly justify your pride?

On the Courage to Suffer: It takes a lot of guts to be in pain all day long.

On Enemies: Don't say, "If it weren't for that person I could be holy." No; you can be holy because of that person.

On Not Limiting God: Your plans, your projects, your dreams have to always be bigger than you, so God has room to operate.

On Perseverence: Faith is what gets you started. Hope is what keeps you going. Love is what brings you to the end.

On Holiness: Holiness is a beautiful struggle.

On Death: I guess that is what dying must be like: to be finished and to be able to look back at the struggles of life and know that God was your constant companion.

On Serving: God looks for dodos. A dodo doesn't know it can't be done. God uses dodos, and I'm a dodo.

On Worldliness: God wants you to be in the world but so different from the world that you will change it. Get cracking.

Rich-Poor Family in Church

I'll never forget Easter 1946. I was 14, my little sister Ocy was 12, and my older sister Darlene 16. We lived at home with our mother, and the four of us knew what it was to do without many things. My dad had died five years before, leaving Mom with seven school kids to raise and no money.

By 1946 my older sisters were married and my brothers had left home. A month before Easter our pastor announced that a special Easter offering would be taken to help a poor family. He asked everyone to give sacrificially.

When we got home, we talked about what we could do. We decided to buy 50 pounds of potatoes and live on them for a month. This would allow us to save \$20 of our grocery money for the offering. When we thought that if we kept our electric lights turned out as much as possible and didn't listen to the radio, we'd save money on that month's electric bill. Darlene got as many house and yard cleaning jobs as possible, and both of us babysat for everyone we could. For 15 cents we could buy enough cotton loops to make three pot holders to sell for \$1. We made \$20 on pot holders. That month was one of the best of our lives.

Every day we counted the money to see how much we had saved. At night we'd sit in the dark and talk about how the poor family was going to enjoy having the money the church would give them. We had about 80 people in church, so figured that whatever amount of money we had to give, the offering would surely be 20 times that much. After all, every Sunday the pastor had reminded everyone to save for the sacrificial offering.

The day before Easter, Ocy and I walked to the grocery store and got the manager to give us three crisp \$20 bills and one \$10 bill for all our change.

We ran all the way home to show Mom and Darlene. We had never had so much money before.

That night we were so excited we could hardly sleep. We didn't care that we wouldn't have new clothes for Easter; we had \$70 for the sacrificial offering. We could hardly wait to get to church! On Sunday morning, rain was pouring. We didn't own an umbrella, and the church was over a mile from our home, but it didn't seem to matter how wet we got. Darlene had cardboard in her shoes to fill the holes. The cardboard came apart, and her feet got wet.

But we sat in church proudly. I heard some teenagers talking about the Smith girls having on their old dresses. I looked at them in their new clothes, and I felt rich.

When the sacrificial offering was taken, Mom put in the \$10 bill, and each of us kids put in a \$20.

As we walked home after church, we sang all the way. At lunch Mom had a surprise for us. She had bought a dozen eggs, and we had boiled Easter eggs with our fried potatoes! Late that afternoon the minister drove up in his car. Mom went to the door, talked with him for a moment, and then came back with an envelope in her hand. We asked what it was, but she didn't say a word. She opened the envelope and out fell a bunch of money. There were three crisp \$20 bills, one \$10 and seventeen \$1 bills.

Mom put the money back in the envelope. We didn't talk, just sat and stared at the floor. We had gone from feeling like millionaires to feeling like poor white trash. We kids had such a happy life, we felt sorry for anyone who didn't have our Mom and Dad for parents and a house full of brothers and sisters and other kids visiting constantly. We thought it was fun to share silverware and see whether we got the spoon or the fork that night.

We had two knifes that we passed around to whoever needed them. I knew we didn't have a lot of things that other people had, but I'd never thought we were poor.

That Easter day I found out we were. The minister had brought us the money for the poor family, so we must be poor. I didn't like being poor. I looked at my dress and worn -out shoes and felt so ashamed--I didn't even want to go back to church. Everyone there probably already knew we were poor!

I thought about school. I was in the ninth grade and at the top of my

class of over 100 students. I wondered if the kids at school knew that we were poor. I decided that I could quit school since I had finished the eighth grade. That was all the law required at that time. We sat in silence for a long time. Then it got dark, and we went to bed. All that week, we girls went to school and came home, and no one talked much. Finally on Saturday, Mom asked us what we wanted to do with the money. What did poor people do with money? We didn't know. We'd never known we were poor. We didn't want to go to church on Sunday, but Mom said we had to. Although it was a sunny day, we didn't talk on the way.

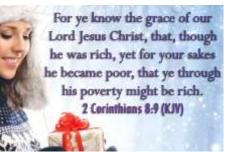
Mom started to sing, but no one joined in; she only sang one verse. At church we had a missionary speaker. He talked about how churches in Africa made buildings out of sun dried bricks, but they needed money to buy roofs. He said \$100 would put a roof on a church. The minister said, "Can't we all sacrifice to help these poor people?" We looked at each other and smiled for the first time in a week.

Mom reached into her purse and pulled out the envelope. She passed it to Darlene. Darlene gave it to me, and I handed it to Ocy. Ocy put it in the offering.

When the offering was counted, the minister announced that it was a little over \$100. The missionary was excited. He hadn't expected such a large offering from our small church. He said, "You must have some rich people in this church."

Suddenly it struck us! We had given \$87 of that "little over \$100."

We were the rich family in the church! Hadn't the missionary said so? From that day on I've never been poor again. I've always remembered how rich I am because I have Jesus!



The miracle of conversions and baptisms in China

Wang Zhicheng

An estimated 20,000 people were baptised on Easter night. Just outside Shanghai, 27 baptised people join a community of 100. Rampant materialism and individualism drive people to convert. Underground communities celebrated Easter without songs and in small groups.

Beijing (AsiaNews) – On Easter night, more than 100 adults were baptised in Beijing's Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception (pictured). Wrapped in a white robe, accompanied by godparents, they confessed their adherence to faith in Jesus Christ who died and rose again, baptised by Archbishop Joseph Li Shan.

The same ritual was repeated in all of China's Catholic churches during Easter eve vigil. In recent years, more than 20,000 new believers are baptised at this time of the year.

Some 27 baptisms took place in a parish just outside of Shanghai, in an area home to almost a million people. The local congregation



includes only a hundred members; hence, with the newcomers who joined on Easter night, the community has grown by more than 25 per cent.

Christmas, Pentecost and the Assumption provide other occasions for baptisms. About 100,000 adult baptisms occur each year in the Catholic Church.

The number of annual baptisms in underground Protestant Churches (not subordinated to the government -controlled Three Autonomies Movement) is even higher.

For the government, in particular the Religious Affairs Ministry, the rising number of Christians in the country is a source of concern. Some estimates put the number of Christians at around 100 million, more than the number of members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), estimated to be around 85 million.

For some observers, the Communist Party itself is to blame for the growth of Christianity in the country. As theoretical and practical materialism drive people to seek wealth and consumption, people are left bereft of meaning.

For many of the newly baptised, economic wellbeing "was not enough". They sought "something deeper", i.e. "non-material values". A bishop in central China described this as "a great thirst for God".



Materialism has led to widespread individualism and exploitation. Many people – especially migrants who moved to the cities to work – feel alone and with no one to help them. Paid low wages, they are treated like slaves.

"After I met some Catholics, I felt accepted and welcomed as a person with dignity, not valued for my wealth or poverty," said one of the newly baptised.

This year's Easter celebrations took place without tensions. Police told believers to carry out their services "without singing and in small groups", and even underground communities were able to hold Masses and liturgical services without much of a fuss.

In Zhejiang, where crosses and churches have been targeted for demolition, Zhang Kai, a Protestant lawyer was released not long ago after six months in jail.

Detained for defending his coreligionists against abuses, he thanked "Wenzhou police for taking care of me all this time".

A girl bought an iPad.

When her father saw it, he asked her, "What was the first thing you did when you bought it?"

"I put an anti-scratch sticker on the screen and bought a cover for it," she replied.

"Did someone force you to do that?"

"No"

"Don't you think it's an insult to the manufacturer?"

"No Dad! In fact they even recommend using a cover for the iPad"

"Did you cover it because it was cheap & ugly?"

"Actually, I covered it because I didn't want it to get damage and decrease in value."

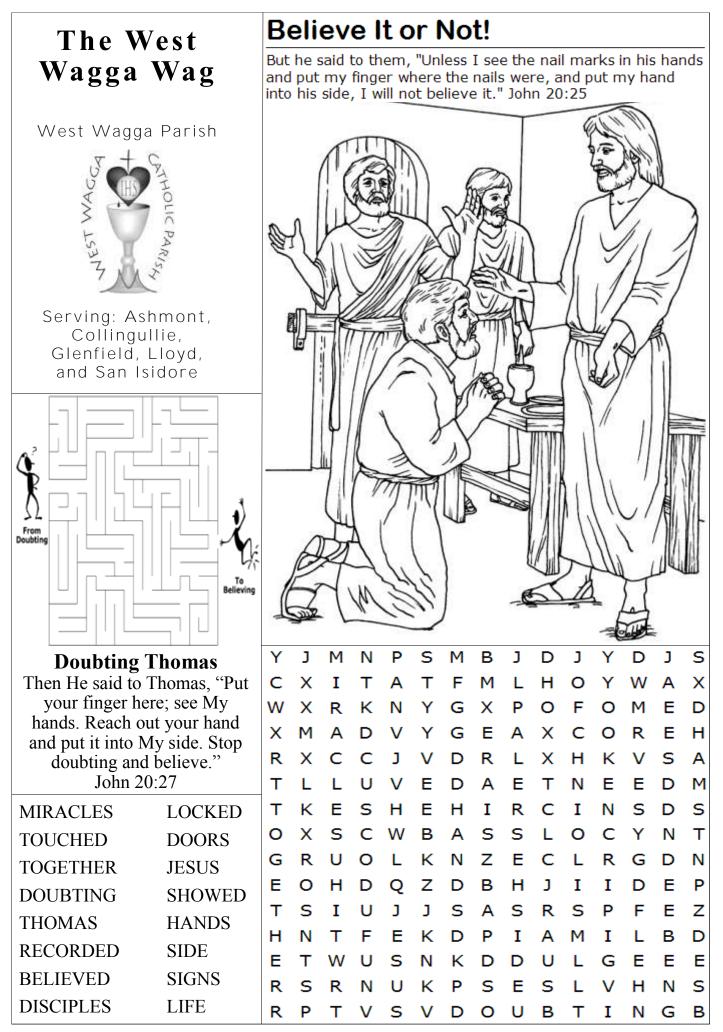
"When you put the cover on, didn't it reduce the iPad's beauty?"

"I think it looks better and it is worth it for the protection it gives my iPad."

The father looked lovingly at his daughter and said,

"Do you understand why I ask you to cover your body which is much more precious than an iPad?"





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