

MURPHY'S association, with
C.W. dates back to 1945
Movement was officially
Bendigo. As a founda-
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duced to its tech-
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in 1943.
formation



Visit Of Y.C.W. O
The Victorian Chapl
Y.C.W., Rev. Father
accompanied by the State
of Y.C.W., Mr. B. Ar
lea, and the State
N.C.G.M., Miss
visited Cobra

Mass of Thanksgiving Centenary of Young Christian Workers 1925 - 2025





*YCW had a beginning thanks to Cardijn,
YCW had a formal blessing thanks to Pope Pius XI.
Today we give thanks for those blessings.*

Welcome to Sacred Heart Cathedral

Sunday, 13 July, 2025

CELEBRANTS: Most Rev. Shane Mackinlay, Bishop of Sandhurst,
Monsignor Francis Marriott, Fulltime YCW Chaplain 1972-73
Rev. Dennis Cramer, former YCW member

Today we give thanks for a young Belgian priest,
Fr Joseph Cardijn,
whose vision a century ago commenced a movement that spread
across the world, reaching us in the Diocese of Sandhurst.

We are grateful for the priests of Sandhurst who initiated YCW
groups, encouraging, advising, guiding and sharing their faith with
their young parishioners from Bendigo to Wodonga
and all points in between.

We recognise the many young people who responded to the
challenge and have lived their lives immersed in the YCW
principles of See, Judge and Act.

This booklet is a collection of articles from
YCW minute books, newspaper articles and parish archives.
In particular, we acknowledge the 1999 publication,
More Prophetic Than We Knew:
A History of the YCW in the Diocese of Sandhurst by Breda Phillips

*Cardijn: We cannot respect God if we do not respect the working
men and women who are made in the image of God,
because they are sacred like God himself.*



OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus,

a Worker like me,
help me and all my fellow-workers
to think like You,
to work with You,
to pray through You,
to live in You,
to give to You all my strength and all my time.

May Your Kingdom come in all our factories,
workshops and offices, and in all our homes.

Be everywhere better known, better loved,
better served.

Deliver us for ever from injustice and hatred,
from evil and sin.

May our souls remain in Your grace today and
may the soul of every worker who died on
labour's battlefield rest in peace! Amen.

Sacred Heart of Jesus,
bless the Young Christian Workers.

Sacred Heart of Jesus,
sanctify the Young Christian Workers.

Sacred Heart of Jesus,
may Your Kingdom come through the
Young Christian Workers.

Mary, Queen of Apostles,
pray for us.



*Cardijn: The dignity of work needed to be reclaimed.
Workplaces can no longer be bastions separate from God.
Its victims must become its conquerors.*

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus,
Teach me to be generous,
To serve You as You deserve to be served,
To give without counting the cost,
To fight without counting the wounds,
To work without seeking rest,
To spend my life without expecting any other
return than the knowledge that I do
Your Holy Will. Amen.

Sacred Heart of Jesus,
bless the Young Christian Workers.

Sacred Heart of Jesus,
sanctify the Young Christian Workers.

Sacred Heart of Jesus,
may Your Kingdom come through the
Young Christian Workers.

Mary, Queen of Apostles,
pray for us.

*Tens of thousands of young workers around the world
attended YCW meetings and recited the same prayers,
spoken in different languages, but united in faith.*

*Cardijn: Work continues God's act of creation.
Make use of the creation, discover all the riches within creation, and place
them at the disposal of humanity in order that it may attain its destiny.*



THE JOSEPH CARDIJN STORY

— from the *Cardijn Community Australia* —

Joseph Cardijn grew up surrounded by the harsh realities of factory life, hearing the relentless clatter of wooden clogs each morning as workers trudged past his house, heading to the factories. By evening, they returned, worn out and defeated, their spirits crushed by the gruelling workday.

Determined to make a difference, Cardijn believed that the workers' actions could become the redemptive mission of Christ. The dignity of work needed to be reclaimed, and workplaces could no longer be bastions separate from God. "Its victims must become its conquerors," he declared.

Cardijn emphasised that every person is created in the image of God and thus has inherent dignity. Treating workers like machines contradicted this fundamental truth of faith. In 1916, due to his outspoken resistance against the German armies, he was imprisoned for thirteen months. Undeterred, Cardijn used his prison time to plan what would become the Young Christian Workers (YCW) movement.

Cardijn envisioned a movement for young workers to become missionaries in their workplaces. He founded groups for young



*Cardijn: Young workers are not machines, animals or slaves.
They are the sons, the daughters, the collaborators, the heirs of God.
That is their sole true destiny, the reason of their existence,
their life, and their work, the source of all their rights and all their duties.*



women, needleworkers and boys. By 1924, the Young Trade Unionists evolved into the Young Christian Workers, with Cardijn as their National Chaplain.

In 1925, Cardijn officially launched the YCW. It became an international mass movement under the Church's sanction. It spread beyond Europe to North and South America, Africa and Asia. Advocates in Australia, like Paul McGuire and Kevin T. Kelly, helped establish YCW through their dynamic leadership.

By the 1950s, Cardijn was internationally recognised, advocating for young workers worldwide. He delivered the keynote address at the first international Lay Apostolate Congress in Rome and brought thousands of young workers to the Vatican for a World Assembly.

Cardijn continued his mission until his death in 1967 aged 84, leaving a legacy of faith and optimism.



Cardijn: We must believe in the personal value of every human being, in the personal dignity, the personal mission, the personal vocation and the eternal vocation of every human being.

“I want to save the young workers! I want to die for the working masses!”

In the paper, *Jeunesse Ouvriere*, Cardijn gave his own account of his unofficial and unscheduled audience with Pope Pius XI. The Pope asked, “My son, what do you want?” I replied, “I want to save the young workers! If need be, I want to die for the working masses!”

“I give special blessings,” said the Pope, “to those working with workers’ organisations. Yes, you must have this holy ambition ... the working class will multiply themselves through an influence radiating even further into the masses of their work companions.”

(More Prophetic Than We Knew) **POPE PIUS XI**



In 1961, Pope John XXIII published an encyclical “*Mater et Magistra*” (*Mother and Teacher*) which focused on the importance of balancing economic progress with social justice and the dignity of the individual.

The encyclical stated: *There are three stages which should normally be. First, one reviews the concrete situation; secondly, one forms a judgement on it; thirdly, one decides what in the circumstances can and should be done to implement these principles. These are the three stages that are usually expressed in the three terms: see, judge, act.*

It is important for our young people to grasp this method and to practise it. Knowledge acquired in this way does not remain merely abstract, but is seen as something that must be translated into action.



POPE JOHN XXIII

Pope John XXIII also appointed Fr Cardijn to the Commission on Laity for the Second Vatican Council.



Pope Pius XI to Fr Cardijn:

“The Church needs the working classes. Without the working classes, the Church is not the Church of Christ. Every young worker has an infinite value.”

On 12 February 1965, Pope Paul VI consecrated Fr Cardijn as a bishop and a cardinal, allowing him to participate fully in the final session of Vatican II, bringing to the Council his wealth of experience in advocating for young workers across the world.



By the end of the Council, following the adoption of the Decree on the Lay Apostolate, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, Paul VI was moved to say: “Yes, the good seed sowed half a century ago by several generous pioneers, and particularly by a young Belgian priest, has truly borne fruit one hundredfold.” **POPE PAUL VI**



Addressing the Second Vatican Council in 1965, Cardijn said: “I have shown confidence in (young people’s) freedom in order to better educate that freedom. I helped them to see, judge and act by themselves, by undertaking social and cultural action themselves, freely obeying authorities in order to become adult witnesses of Christ and the Gospel, conscious of being responsible for their sisters and brothers in the whole world.”



*Cardijn: Never forget the words of Pius XI:
“The first and immediate apostles of the workers will be workers.”*

In Cardijn's words ...

“The life, the actual conditions of existence of the mass of young workers is in terrible contradiction with their eternal and temporal destiny. We must have the courage to face this reality, just as we must always face the reality of their eternal and temporal destiny.

We must remain with our eyes fixed to heaven and our feet on earth, as inexorable for the brutality of the conditions of earthly life, as we are inexorable for the demands of eternal destiny.

We must realise the age, the conditions of work, the influence of environment, the problems to be solved in isolation, in loneliness, in experience.

Present conditions increase the tragic aspect of the opposition between the two realities; unemployment crisis, impossibility of founding a home, of bringing up children. And all this in a wave of neo-paganism without precedent in history.

We are setting out to conquer the world. We hope our manual, translated and spread around the world, will help to continue that conquest in the spirit of overcoming all obstacles that prevent young people living the fullness of life which God intended for them.”



Cardijn: To be an apostolic movement, YCW must have, as its first concern, the eternal destiny of the working-class, its divine origin and the divine value of the life of each worker.



British Cardinal Basil Hume said of Cardijn:

“If today you wish to seek his monument, look no further than the Second Vatican Council, the world-wide movement of Young Christian Workers and Young Christian Students and the development of Family Social Action.”



Cardijn: It is essential to work in teams where they bring up the difficulties, share the difficulties, where they help each other. Teams made up of friends who pray and grow in faith. These are apostolic teams.

THE CATHOLIC YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY

— during the gold rush in Bendigo —

The CYMS in Victoria commenced in 1859 at St Francis' Church in Melbourne. Two years later, on 13 October 1861, Fr Henry Backhaus, the first priest on the Bendigo goldfield, formed a local CYMS group. Soon after, he chaired a meeting in St Kilian's school rooms on the topic "*The Development of the Moral and Intellectual Powers in Connection with Moral Training.*" Other meetings followed with guest lecturers speaking on similar weighty topics.

By May 1863, the first "Soiree" was advertised. Commencing with tea (dinner), followed by dancing, again in St Kilian's school rooms. Similar soiree evenings were held; also picnics in the country for members and their friends.

Other CYMS groups were formed locally at Eaglehawk, Maldon and Castlemaine.

The groups expanded and fundraised successfully for their own hall in McCrae Street, "adjoining the chapel". The foundation stone was laid and blessed by Rev. Dr Backhaus on 21 September 1863. Under the foundation stone were placed a copy of that day's Bendigo Advertiser, some silver coins, and the following list of Catholic Young Men's Society members:

Rev. Dr H Backhaus	W. Stephens, President	W. O'Connor, Vice-President
P. Drechsler, Treasurer	A. O'Keefe, Secretary	D. Hare, Warden
W. Lonergan, Librarian	P. Finn	P. Canavan
P. Flood	J. Lomasney	J. Abberton
W. Healy	J. McMahon	P. K. O'Hara
J. J. Howard	James Galvin	D. Byrne
J. Begly	M. Cook	M. McNamara
J. O'Dwyer	P. F. Burke	J. Keating
T. Considine	P. Hayes	

**LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE OF
THE BENDIGO CATHOLIC YOUNG
MENS' SOCIETY'S HALL.**

A ceremony of an interesting character, in connection with this society, took place yesterday, about noon—the laying the foundation stone of the Society's Hall, adjoining the Chapel, McCrae-street, by the Rev. Dr. Backhaus. The Catholic



Cardinal Cardijn would comment many years after the formation of the YCW,
"We are still at the beginning, we are always at the beginning.
We must persevere!"

BUT WHAT OF THE GIRLS OF BENDIGO?

— from “More Prophetic Than We Knew” —



Fr Patrick Deegan

In 1939 the CYMS chaplain, Fr Deegan, was concerned about the young Catholic girls of Bendigo, many of whom left school early to commence work and had no further contact with their religion apart from Sunday Mass. He commenced the Catholic Business Girls’ Discussion Group, later renamed the Catholic Girls’ Association. Activities included dances, tennis, debating, drama and basketball. Members visited patients in hospital, took food to St Aidan’s Orphanage and organised picnics with the orphanage children.

Meanwhile a Catholic women’s movement known as **The Grail** was established in Sydney and Melbourne to train leaders for Catholic women’s organisations. Some members of the Bendigo CGA went to these training schools where

topics of faith were discussed as well as meeting procedures and good leadership. They also learned of the inquiry method introduced by Fr Cardijn.

In 1945 a movement known as the National Catholic Girls’ Movement was formed and the Bendigo CGA joined itself to the NCGM. Activities in this post-war period included forming a singing group to perform on Radio 3BO on **The Diggers’ Show**, a session for returned servicemen.

Girls mentioned in these early reports included:

Mary McIntosh	Mary Dunne	Marie Hogan
Joan Dooley	Marie Booth	Letty White
Joan Sheehan	Peg Hoff	Joan Hunt
Sheila Searle	Faye Mooring	Win Jennings
Marie Cavagna	Monica Reilly	Eileen Mannes
Shirley Butcher	Audrey Keogh	Mary Power
Yvonne Smith	Margaret Waters	Marie Dobell
Evelyn Dixon	Maria Dorrington	Rhonda Lindrea
Pat Hollingsworth	Beatrice Grace	Kath Pearson
June Kerwin	Betty McGawley	Ethel Pearson
Phyllis Buck	Shirley Hunt	Stella Nash
Eileen Nicholson	Anne Ryan	



*Cardinal Cardijn, speaking in Ballarat in 1966:
“We must all help each other because we all have a divine origin, we all have a divine destiny, and we all have, here on earth, a divine mission.”*

YCW IN SANDHURST

When did it commence?

A newspaper article about the Australian YCW National Conference in Brisbane in September 1945, reported that there were 100 leaders and 60 priests from thirteen dioceses across Australia, including the Victorian dioceses of Melbourne, Sandhurst and Ballarat. The following year (1946), the Newcastle conference also had representatives from Sandhurst.

Local confirmation of the commencement comes from the **Bendigo Advertiser** of 30 September 1946, describing a rally of Catholic Youth organisations as “*one of the most spectacular sights in the history of youth movements in Bendigo.*” Groups present included the Young Christian Workers, the National Catholic Girls’ Movement and the Young Catholic Students’ Movement, representing parishes of Kyabram, Shepparton, Kerang, Echuca, Rochester, Inglewood, Elmore, Eaglehawk and Castlemaine. “At this rally the president of the Bendigo Young Christian Workers, Mr W (Bill) Gearon, welcomed the **Bishop of Sandhurst, Dr McCarthy, who said it was gratifying to be among so many young people, even though the societies had only been formed in Bendigo in the past twelve months.**”

This confirms the earlier article—YCW commenced in Bendigo in 1945.

Fr Joseph Cardijn commenced working with the youth of his Belgian hometown in 1919. By 1924 he called these groups Jeunesse Ouvriere Chretienne (Young Christian Workers).

In 1925 he received the approbation of the Pope to continue this work.

The movement spread to France where 100,000 young people followed its banner. From France it went into Holland, Hungary, Spain, Portugal, England and Ireland.

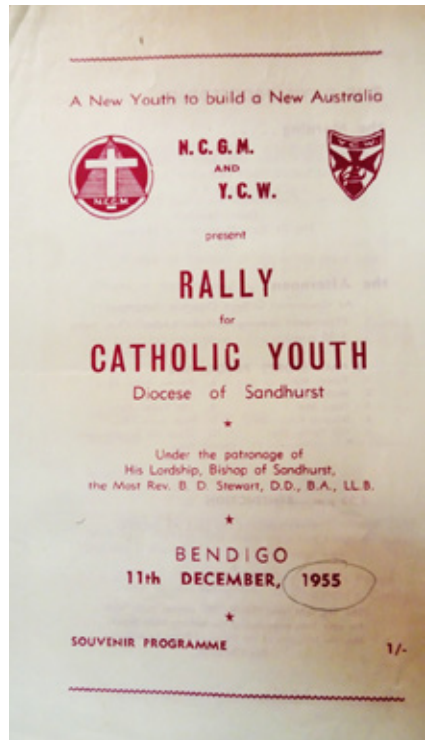
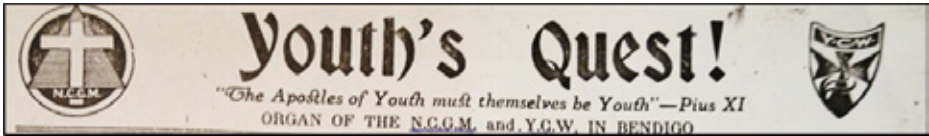
From these places it crossed the oceans and, by 1945, had spread its influence to the young workers of Canada, New Zealand, South America and Australia.



*Cardijn: We are setting out to conquer the world!
Give me leaders and I will raise the world!*

THE NCGM AND YCW

— a winning combination for the youth of Bendigo —



*Cardijn: Work must be respected and treated with dignity, honour and justice.
By its labour the world-wide working class must build the new world.*

THE DEVELOPMENT OF YCW IN BENDIGO

— from “*More Prophetic Than We Knew*” —

The YCW flourished in Bendigo and, by 1950, had about fifty general members. Each member paid one shilling per month membership fee, of which sixpence was sent to the Melbourne office as registration. The chaplain and leaders would gather prior to the meeting to prepare the Gospel discussion and assist the leaders in guiding this section of the meeting.

The first full-timer from Bendigo was Len Chalkley. He was branch president and part - time state president in 1954-55. In 1955 he took a year's absence from his work where he earned eleven pounds a week and commenced working for the YCW for eight pounds per week. Len travelled around the state, helping in the formation of new branches and the operation of those already established. Another Bendigo member, Michael Lalor, was influential in sponsoring six Hungarian men aged sixteen and seventeen to come to Bendigo in 1956 following the Hungarian Revolution.

Tom Fallon joined YCW in 1954 and became a Diocesan full-timer in 1959, working within Sandhurst forming new branches and helping the existing groups. Tom met Fr Cardijn at a national conference in Perth and again in Melbourne in 1958 and described the founder as a very passionate speaker, a man who really believed in the role of young people in the Church.

Sporting and social events were an important part of YCW. Brian McGrath helped organise Sunday night YCW dances for many years and was also secretary of the Saturday night public dances at St Kilian's hall. Around this time the YCW also entered a float in the Bendigo Easter Fair.

Another Bendigo member who was present at Fr Cardijn's visit to Melbourne in 1958 was Laurie O'Farrell. Laurie was a Bendigo member from 1957-62 and was involved in state conferences in Geelong and Ballarat.

A member from 1958-68, Gerard (Sanger) Smith held positions with the Diocesan YCW and was also a member of the state executive. He attended state conferences, as well as state and national key leaders' schools.

Each branch had to raise funds, mainly through sporting events, debutante balls and dances. Members paid their own fares to national conferences.



Cardijn: We must understand and bear witness to the dignity of the person. We must commit ourselves to defend this dignity of the person in the factories, the workshops, the offices.

From St Kilian's Archives ...



1946 YCW GROUP

BACK: Peter Carrigan,
Ted Dean,
Ivan O'Donnell,
Bill Reilly,
Kevin Walshe.

FRONT: Bob Kerr,
Don McQueen,
Stan Wright,
Fred Marchingo.



KATE GRIFFIN AND JILL SOUTHBY



AT HARRIETVILLE c1970

NCGM
"FLOAT"
IN THE
BENDIGO
EASTER FAIR
PROCESSION
1949



*Cardijn: Meditate more and more on what the human person is.
First of all about our own personality, our own dignity, our own
responsibility as persons.*

YCW in Print



PAT MURPHY'S association with the Y.C.W. dates back to 1945 when the Movement was officially launched in Bendigo. As a foundation member, Pat already had two years' experience in the Y.C.W., being introduced to its technique at the second Christmas Camp held at Cheltenham in 1943. Since the formation of a Bendigo branch he has held the following positions on the local executive: Junior Vice-President, Assistant Secretary, Warden, Social Organiser. In 1945, Pat Murphy also represented his Diocese at the second Y.C.W. National Conference, held that year in Brisbane.

ENJOYED CAMP AT AXEDALE. 1948

Completeness of camp equipment (the kitchen would be the envy of many country housewives); the beauty of the riverside surroundings, and the excellent playing grounds were things which impressed members of the N.C.G.M. when

'YCW growing and significant part of Church'

The YCW in Australia is growing steadily. Bishop Leonard Faulkner said during the bishops' conference.

changes that took place in the YCW both in Australia and abroad have been rather Church about unemployment. He said "Mich Campbell told our commi-

YOUTH WEEK HELD AT EAGLEHAWK

A Youth Week held at Eaglehawk for the young Catholic people of the district proved very successful. Y.C.W. chaplains travelled from Melbourne to give lectures after the 6 p.m. Mass at St. Liborius' International.

To Make Debut

Twenty-nine young girls will be presented to the Bishop of Sandhurst, the Most Rev. B. D. Stewart, when they make their debut at the Young Christian Workers' Ball in the City Hall on Wednesday night.

YOUTH IN ACTION RALLY 16/2/71

Sponsored by the Young Christian Workers in Bendigo, a meeting attended by more than 60 young people, aged from 15 to 25 discussed the Youth in Action State Rally to be held at Melbourne in March.

"FUTURE RESTS ON YOUTH"

— Mgr. HANNAN AT Y.C.W. RALLY

"It is no use speaking about Australia's past. It is the future of this country that should concern us; and that future rests in the hands of Australia's youth."

Visit Of Y.C.W. Officials

The Victorian Chaplain for Y.C.W., Rev. Father Burke, accompanied by the State Organiser of Y.C.W., Mr. B. Armstrong of Chelsea, and the State Organiser of N.C.G.M., Miss Estelle Hughes, visited Cobram last Thursday in the course of a tour of the Diocese.

\$1000 needed for YCW man in Vietnam



Cardijn: Do not be satisfied with dreaming of the mission, of wishing for the mission, but go out and build the mission.

SANDHURST PRESIDENTS AND FULL-TIMERS

— from “More Prophetic Than We Knew” —

Presidents – Boys

Frank Thomas	1953-54
Len Chalkley	1955
Brian Wraith	1956-57
Kevin Gallagher	1957-59
Frank Fitzpatrick	1959-60
Laurie O’Farrell	1960-62
Mick Coffey	1963-65
Pat Ellerton	1965-67
Gerard Smith	1967-69
John Smyth	1969-70
Laurie Fitzgerald	1970-71
Terry Daniel	1972-

Presidents – Girls

Pat Mason	1955-58
Betty Walsh	1958-60
Mary Brodie	1960-61
Marg Connolly	1961-64
Marg Burgess	1964-67
Josie Tuck	1967-69
Mary Dykes	1969-71
Mary Shiels	1971-72

Full-Timers – Boys

Len Chalkley	1955-56
Jimmy Ross	1956-57
Brian Marshall	1957-58
Tom Fallon	1959-60
John Cullen	1960-62
Ray Gibson	1962-64
Chris Houlihan	1964-65
Mick Keogh	1965-67
Leon Preston	1967-68
Clive McDonell	1968-70
Terry Daniel	1970-71
Wayne McCashen	1972-74

Full-Timers – Girls

Pat Davis	1959-61
Pat Jones	1961-64
Bernadette Martin	1965
Teresa Chevalier	1965-66
Sue Bell	1966-68
Kate Griffin	1968-70
Lynne Gleeson	1970-72
Glenys Kelly	1972-73



The concept of having young people work full-time with and for and on behalf of youth was discovered, developed and practised by the YCW. We thank those listed here who worked under the YCW banner. They changed the way the Church ‘did business’ with the young. (Fr F. K. Marriott, January 1999)

Sandhurst YCW Chaplains

The following list has been compiled from More Prophetic Than We Knew, newspaper reports, oral accounts and YCW minutes. Whilst every effort has been made to create an accurate list of the chaplains who assisted and guided the YCW groups throughout the Diocese, it is possible that there are some omissions.

Fr Patrick Deegan	Fr Leo Lacey	Fr Bill Harney
Fr Ray Owens	Fr Arthur Owens	Fr Donal O'Neill
Fr Eric Loorham	Fr Bryan Long	Fr Maurice Duffy
Fr Gerald Moylan	Fr James Walshe	Fr Francis Marriott
Fr John Naughton	Fr James Nihill	Fr Frank Jones
Fr Les Ring	Fr Peter Quinn	Fr John Ware
Fr Michael Goonan	Fr John E Ryan	Fr Frank Hickey
Fr John Gallagher	Fr John White	Fr Peter Jeffrey
Fr John Cahill	Sr Anne O'Brien RSJ	Sr Gerard George RSJ
Fr David Kilmartin	Fr John Duffus	Fr James Hogan
Fr Basil Thomas	Fr Finian Perkins OFM	Fr Anthony Bones
Fr John Hussey	Fr Bob Burtonclay	Fr John Gillian OFM
Fr Brian Connell	Fr Steve Bohan	



GIRLS' DIOCESAN COUNCIL HARRIETVILLE 1969,
WITH CHAPLAINS FR FRANK MARRIOTT AND FR JOHN RYAN



Cardijn: Each priest must transform the youth to see the problems, judge and act, and become apostles. They must then transform the environment wherever they work, the shops, factories, offices and mines.

Some results of See, Judge and Act ...

- 1945 Proceeds from a “monster dance” at the Melbourne Town Hall to be devoted to the provision of literature of YCW members in the Services.
- 1946 The first YCW Co-operative Housing Society set up for Catholic workers in Victoria; 300 homes were already built, 250 more were under construction.
- 1946 The first of many Holiday Camps held over each New Year period; 300 members attended.
- 1946 YCW Golden Gloves Amateur Boxing Championships at West Melbourne. Tickets 5/- entry, children half price.
- 1946 YCW hostel to accommodate boys leaving St Augustine’s Orphanage, Geelong.
- 1947 Fundraising commenced for the starving children in Europe following the upheaval of war.
- 1947 YCW Life Saving Club formed at Mordialloc beach.
- 1949 YCW Preparation for Marriage classes. Topics covered included budgeting, home ownership, painting, carpentry, boot repairing, gardening and general home maintenance.
- 1950 YCW Migration Scheme to bring British lads between 15 and 19 years to Australia. They stayed at the hostel for three months, then placed in private boarding homes. Fifty youths arrived every three months.
- 1950 A migrant hostel opened in Hawthorn to accommodate 60 youth migrants.
- 1952 Reintroduction of Pre-Cana Conferences to Bendigo.



Cardijn: And perhaps for the first time in history, all humanity realises in fear and trembling, the power of death and destruction if humanity loses the sense of God, of faith and eternity.

Some results of See, Judge and Act ...

- 1950s, 1960s Parish Co-operative Credit Societies were established by YCW groups in Bendigo. These developed into the North West Country Credit in Bendigo. Similar Co-operatives were established by Fr O'Neill in the Shepparton area which developed into the Goulburn Valley Credit Society.
- 1956 Involvement in sponsoring six Hungarian men aged 16 and 17 to come to Bendigo in 1956 following the Hungarian Revolution.
- 1969 The Youth Accommodation Service in Melbourne, financially supported by the Diocese of Sandhurst, found board in Melbourne for 150 young people from the country.
- 1960s Support for the Sandhurst Boys Home. YCW boys would field a football team to play against the disabled young men from the SBH. At the SBH's annual Social the YCW girls attended to provide partners for the young men who had been learning dances and practising social skills for some time.
- 1968-70 YCW and YMCA supported Neil Cush's work in Vietnam. The Australian Military Forces gave Neil the honorary rank of Lieutenant and he had charge of the YMCA facilities for Australian soldiers at Vung Tau providing an extensive library of books, magazines, newspapers and music tapes, as well as tapes of football matches from across Australia. Sports organised for the soldiers included volley ball, hockey, table tennis, judo and athletics.
- 1970 Meetings were held with the Victorian Young Farmers to discuss common issues such as decentralisation, road safety and the proposed .05 blood alcohol law.
- 1972 A joint YCW and Young Farmers' conference was held at the Dallas Brookes Hall in Melbourne. Motions passed at the conference supported the .05 campaign and expressed grave concern at the drift of young people to the city.



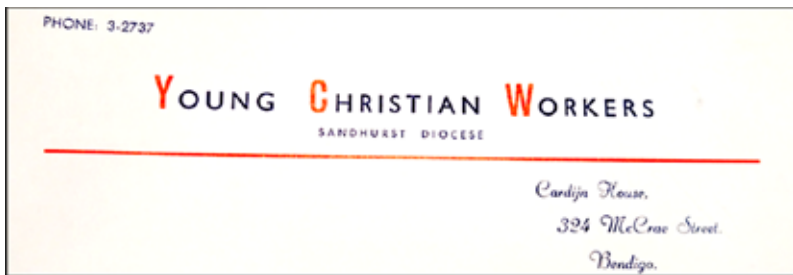
*Cardijn: Workers must be taught and helped to act in their environment.
They must transform it, conquer it,
bring it into harmony with the providential plan.*

THE MOVEMENT BECOMES ESTABLISHED

and spreads across the Diocese

CARDIJN HOUSE: In the late 1950s meetings were still being held in the Catholic Ladies' Club rooms at St Kilian's, but in 1958 the Diocese purchased a property in McCrae Street. This was leased to the YCW and renamed *Cardijn House*. Renovations were carried out by YCW members and the finished building was opened and blessed by Bishop Stewart on 8 September 1959. There were two offices (boys and girls), a kitchen and a hall for lectures and dancing. In the basement there was a meeting room, library and a large gymnasium.

LETTERHEAD OF YCW, CARDIJN HOUSE



NCGM TO YCW: The NCGM was strong in Bendigo with many active members in various groups. One group was made up of around seven telephonists who, because of their work hours, were not able to attend meetings at usual times. Another group were student teachers, based at the Bendigo Teachers College. At the national NCGM conference in Canberra in 1959, a decision was made to become part of the YCW (Girls). The change became official in February 1960.

CATHEDRAL AND ST KILIAN'S YCW groups were active from 1959. In 1962, Liz Rijken visited young people in **EAGLEHAWK** and a group commenced there, meeting in a school room at St Liborius, until they were offered a room in the convent for their meetings guided by Sr Anne O'Brien RSJ. They were driven to various YCW events by Fr Finian Perkins OFM.

BENDIGO CONFERENCE 1960: The first Annual Weekend Conference was held in Bendigo in February 1960. This was the first Australian conference that both boys' and girls' groups met together under the name of YCW. There were about one hundred and sixty delegates representing groups from all over the diocese.



*Cardijn: Relationships demand respect.
I must treat you as I would treat God himself.
Imagine the incredible and revolutionary value of that truth.*

YCW awakens the youth of the Diocese

WANGARATTA had an active CYMS group from the early 1940s. The group disbanded and the YCW established in 1944 with Bill O'Callaghan, a student teacher, the first president. They originally met in a school room, but eventually a renovated stable loft behind the Brigidine convent became the YCW headquarters.

In 1948 the YCW and NCGM combined to become the Wangaratta Catholic Youth Club with over forty members affiliated with clubs in **ALBURY-WODONGA, COROWA, BENALLA AND YARRAWONGA**. In 1956 the group was reformed again with several members undertaking YCW leadership training and taking active positions with the state and national YCW structure. The YCW was a strong part of Wangaratta parish life for many years.

SHEPPARTON YCW group formed in 1951 and rapidly grew to around seventy. In the early days, members undertook social work with troubled young people under the direction of a court-appointed probation officer. Working bees were held to collect wood for the convent fires and other fundraisers supported the parish's plans.

Shepparton delegates to the YCW Diocesan Conference: John Howlett, Ross Kelly, Adrian Ryan and Bernie O'Kelly



Shepparton Bath Push 1967—
see following page



*Cardijn: The only true leader is as the leaven in the dough.
In the dough, not alongside it, not even a millimetre away, but inside it.
Leaders, you are the leaven in the dough.*

Let's raise some money for the Royal Children's Hospital — Let's push a bath to Melbourne!

In 1967, **SHEPPARTON** YCW decided to raise money for the Royal Children's Hospital by pushing a bath to Melbourne, collecting donations on the way. The bath had good wheels, steering and brakes and their aim was to leave Shepparton at 5 am and make Melbourne eleven hours later. Teams of members took turns to push the bath while an accompanying bus carried those waiting their turn to push. A car and loudspeaker preceded the bath asking for donations. They collected \$492 enroute to Melbourne. The following year another bath push raised about \$300.

BENALLA YCW commenced under the guidance of Fr Don O'Neill in 1958. One of the original members, Ray Gibson became a Diocesan organiser and a member of the national executive.

When Fr O'Neill moved to Shepparton a few years later, former YCW members from Bendigo helped him to establish a parish credit society in both Shepparton and South Shepparton parishes. This later developed into the Goulburn Valley Credit Society.

MYRTLEFORD in the 1950s had a large population of migrants, predominantly Dutch and Italian. In 1955 Fr Frank Hickey formed three YCW groups, integrating young people from across the parish into a vibrant and faithful YCW community.

COBRAM had an NCGM group in earlier times, but Fr Frank Marriott commenced the YCW there in 1963. The boys cleaned up the school basement to become a club room and dance venue and the girls befriended the many Italian girls in the area and brought them into the YCW.

COHUNA Fr Peter Jeffrey was appointed to Cohuna in 1964. He had heard much of the YCW whilst in the seminary and so, very enthusiastically, he commenced a YCW group in Cohuna. They were regularly joined by young parishioners from Pyramid Hill.



Cardijn: An apostolic movement must have as its first concern the eternal destiny of the working-class, its divine origin and the divine value of the life of each worker and of each worker's family.

The 1960s – the movement expands

BEECHWORTH In 1966 Fr Peter Jeffrey formed a YCW group in Beechworth, but it only lasted a short time.

ELMORE AND HEATHCOTE parishes also had a YCW group for a short time.

NATHALIA Fr Bob Burtonclay commenced the YCW in Nathalia in 1967. Members from those times recall the shared Gospel discussions and training weekends in Axedale, Shepparton and Harrierville, and also the social activities such as games nights, barbeques, and a ten-pin bowling competition.

EAGLEHAWK GIRLS The earlier YCW group in Eaglehawk had waned, but a girls' group was formed again in 1966. A Bendigo leader, Joan Hayes, helped establish the group, which continued under the guidance of Sr Gerard George RSJ.

EAGLEHAWK BOYS Two years later in 1968 the Eaglehawk boys' group was formed with members Dennis Cramer, Laurie Fitzgerald, Terry Daniel, Bill O'Brien, Brian Trewhella and the late Aloys Ryjken. The boys met in the hall under the guidance of Fr John Gillian OFM.

SNOW TRIPS TO MT BUFFALO: Snow trips to Mt Buffalo in the 1960s meant an early start from Bendigo, but they were eagerly anticipated each year. After the snow the Wangaratta group would provide a barbeque, followed by a dance. Then it was back in the bus for the long drive home.”

PICTURED RIGHT: “A snowball hits the target in 1968 at Mt Buffalo.” By the way, the person hit by the snowball is Carmel Cramer, now Sr Carmel Cramer RSJ, Fr Dennis' sister.



PICTURED LEFT:
FIRST MEETING OF THE REVISED EAGLEHAWK YCW IN 1966.
L-R: Glenys Kelly, Sue Poynton, Carmel Fitzgerald, Maureen Loftus, Lyn Gleeson, Shirley Ross, with (centre back) Joan Hayes who helped establish the Eaglehawk group.



Cardijn: Everyone of those millions of workers has a divine mission to fulfil, a practical divine mission which no one else can fulfil in his stead.

A word from our Chaplain, Monsignor Francis Marriott ...

Many magazines, even some weekend newspapers, seem to have a page entitled “The Last Word,” or “The Back Page.” It seems that our Centenary Committee has adopted that policy!

YCW ... One Hundred Years since Pius XI blessed the movement to the great delight of thousands of young workers, foreshadowing the crowds that would greet the Pope in what is now called World Youth Day.

Joining the world of YCW in 1963 was, I believe, the greatest learning experience in my life. The methodology of See, Judge, Act, formed much of my pastoral approach in the following years. For that I am most grateful.

The YCW has gifted the world in many ways ... some of which arrived before I was born, some in my years as a Priest.

YCW also introduced me to the importance of formation; formation in faith and for life. It taught me that people, all people, were capable of doing great things for Church and Society.

YCW opened many doors for me, and for others. Some say that YCW helped



Cardijn: The YCW does not exist merely to proclaim a truth; it exists in order to begin a decisive phase in the church of tomorrow, among the whole of mankind, and for that part of mankind called the “working class.”



them grow from babes to mature Christians. For me, I met chaplains all round this world of ours that enriched my knowledge and exposed me to ways and means of doing the apostolate.

The YCW approach has been adapted by recent Popes and written into some of their recent encyclicals. Furthermore the following appears in the third Eucharistic prayer for special needs:

“Grant that all the faithful of the Church

Looking into the signs of the times by the light of faith

May constantly devote themselves to the service of the Gospel.“

It gives me great joy to pray that part of this Eucharistic prayer.

An aspect of Cardijn’s discovery, honoured, prayed now and for the future!
Indeed, Our Common Home is a better place for the gift of the YCW.



*Cardijn: Without workers there is no Host, not a single drop of wine to consecrate, no altar stone, no vestments, no Church.
Without workers there is no religion.*

ROUSE UP!

— *Song of the Young Christian Workers* —

- 1 Rouse up! Rouse up! Young Workers all.
Throughout our land a voice resounds.
'Tis Christ the worker's trumpet call,
To win for him our youth, our towns.

CHORUS: *Stand steadfast comrades for your rights,
Your work, your dignity, your pride!
Come march along we'll conquer all the world.
Young workers side by side.*

- 2 In this our native land we find
A mighty Standard which we greet,
His blood-stained Cross, round which entwined
Behold a golden ear of wheat. *Repeat chorus*
- 3 That symbol of our hope and faith
Its arms around His Cross entwines;
The sufferings that for us wait,
They, workers, of His love are signs. *Repeat chorus*
- 4 Our task to make our comrades men
Who think and speak and act like Christ;
Through Him it can be done again –
The Standard of His Cross, then, hoist! *Repeat chorus*
- 5 Each day we build Christ's Kingdom fair
Where Love and Truth and Justice reign:
And when the workers breathe that air,
They'll learn to praise God's Sacred Name! *Repeat chorus*



An online commentator: And so today I find myself singing the old YCW song, an unashamedly militant, idealistic anthem, set to a rousing, thumping tune. We were young, energetic and ready to conquer the world!



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SANDHURST

