

Thank you for a wonderful year...

It is hard to believe that this is the final Ephpheta newsletter for 2025. Where has the year gone?!

The Ephpheta team have worked hard to support our deaf community throughout the year – in providing a wonderful community retreat, accessible Mass, community groups, days out, pastoral support and all the many things we have done in 2025.

Of course, there have been some challenges and heartache – we have walked with members of the community as they have struggled, and we have said goodbye to some people who are dear to us.

Through the good times and bad times, the amazing spirit of the deaf community has shone through – the joy of community, shared experience, beautiful Auslan.

We look forward to seeing you as we head into Christmas – please look inside this newsletter for more information.

Thank you for your support throughout the year.

Best wishes,
The Ephpheta Team



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A message from Liz	2
Fr Michael’s Reflection	3
Community Christmas Party	4
Advent Activity & Christmas Mass Time	5
Ephpheta Holiday Close & Community Day Out 2026	6
Deaf Cafes	7
Craft Group & Craft Christmas Party	8-9
Auslan Play Group	10
Out and About in the Community	11-13
Prayer Group through Advent	14
Christmas Blessings	15

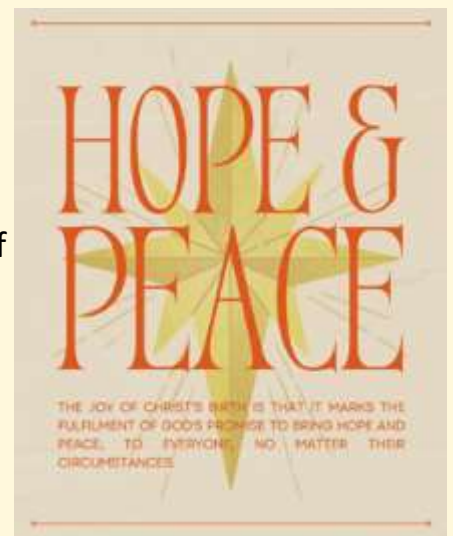
A message from Liz

As we come to the end of another year, it is good to take a moment and reflect on 2025. This year at Ephpheta has been full of hope, faith, moments of joy (and times of great sadness). Ephpheta continues as a deaf space where our deaf community can belong, grow, and celebrate God's love.



St Mary MacKillop once said, "We must teach more by example than by word." She reminds us that we must show our love and hope through our actions, through kindness, courage, and trust in God. At Ephpheta we try to live that love and hope in everything we do - from welcoming new people, bringing the community together and supporting people through hard times.

I think, if Mary MacKillop was with us today, she would see lots of examples of love in action in our deaf community. I am constantly inspired by the support and love which I see our deaf community show to other people every day. She would see deaf people living their lives with faith and love.



A great example of this was at our recent deaf community retreat – our theme was "Hope". We enjoyed a lovely weekend near Richmond. We were reminded that living with faith means knowing that every day, even in hard times, God is always with us and always loves us.

Through the weekend, I saw so many examples of love in action in the deaf community. Of people caring for each other, welcoming new people, praying for and with each other, showing friendship and concern for each other. I truly felt blessed to be with the community on the retreat. Thank you to everyone who came along.

As we come closer to Christmas, we are reminded again of the great love which God has for all of us - the birth of Jesus which is the ultimate sign of God's love and hope for the world.

May the peace, hope and love of God be with you and family this Christmas, and always.

Until next time,
Liz

Fr Michael's Reflection...

Saint Peter to Rot

In Rome on Sunday, 19 October, a young martyr from the island of New Britain was recognized as a saint. He is Papua New Guinea's first saint, and also another saint for our region of Oceania. His name is Saint Peter to Rot.



Catholic missionaries of the Sacred Heart were ministering on the island. Peter's father, Angelo was the chieftain of his village. He and his wife Maria, along with other powerful tribal chieftains and many villagers, converted to the Catholic faith, leaving behind polygamy (having more than one wife) and cannibalism. Angelo and Maria welcomed the faith into their village, gave land for the church, school and house of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, and raised their children in the faith.

Peter, one of six children, was trained as a catechist. He was humble, and listened to the older catechists, and soon was a leader among them. He married Paula, and they would have three children, though the last would be born after Peter's martyrdom.

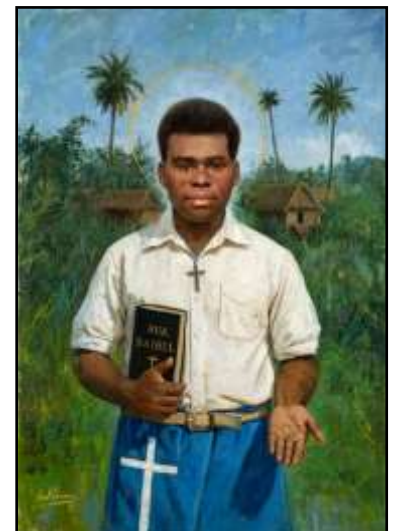


Peter's work as a catechist increased dramatically, when the Japanese invaded during the 2nd World War, driving out the Australian defenders. The missionaries were killed or imprisoned. Peter, now had greater responsibilities baptising, witnessing marriages and going on long journeys through the bush to secretly receive consecrated hosts from the missionaries, so that he could take Communion to people. Soon the Christian faith was not allowed. Peter built a hidden chapel from foliage to continue to teach.

Near the end of the Second World War, the Japanese began to encourage the islanders to go back to the practice of polygamy (having more than one wife). Peter boldly opposed this. He was arrested for continuing to practice the faith and teach against polygamy.

Peter's elderly mother and wife Paula often visited him in prison, and he told his mother, *"The police have told me that the Japanese doctor will be coming to give me some medicine. I suspect that this is a trick. I am really not ill at all and I cannot think what all this means"*. Hours before his death, he said, *"I am in prison for those who break their marriage vows and for those who do not want to see God's work go forward. That is all. I must die. I have already been condemned to death."* Peter dressed in his best clothes and put on his catechist cross. Another prisoner witnessed Peter poisoned and smothered to death.

Many people gathered for the burial. The burial was silent, because they were afraid of the Japanese soldiers. However, the faithful were confident that Peter had died a martyr for the faith and was with Jesus in heaven. He is shown with his Bible, which he often carried about for teaching, and holding two wedding rings.



ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US FOR

Ephpheta Community Christmas Party

MASS AND LUNCH

Sunday, 7 December

MASS - 10.30am

Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church
74 Underwood Road, Homebush

Our Christmas Mass will be celebrated by
Bishop Tony Percy - Bishop of Sydney



LUNCH - 12.30pm

The Auditorium, Canada Bay Club
8 William Street, Five Dock

Join us for a delicious buffet meal with fun games
plus our Christmas raffle

\$40 per person

\$10 per child (12 years and under)

For payment options please contact Ephpheta
Please arrange to pay us before the event

Tickets will also be on sale for a Christmas raffle

RSVP before 28 November

with any interpreting or dietary requirements

Chrisso 0405 749 488 (SMS)
christiane@ephpheta.org.au





Advent Activity - 30 November

This year we will be getting together to make and decorate ornaments of the Jesse Tree (Jesus' Family Tree).

Materials and morning tea will be provided.

All are welcome to join us.

When and where: after 10:30am Mass, Sunday 30 November

Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church - 74 Underwood Road, Homebush

So we have an idea of numbers [please RSVP](#) to Brett Beath 0407 064 872



Christmas Mass

These are our plans for Christmas Mass. All are welcome to come and celebrate the joy of Christmas at Mass with us.

Mass is at **Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church,**
74 Underwood Road, Homebush.



Wednesday 24 December
(Christmas Eve Vigil)

5.30pm
Deaf Mass

Join us for a cup of tea or coffee in
the Hall after Mass

Please bring a plate of food to share (does not need an oven)

Mass will be live-streamed so if you cannot come to Mass, please
watch the live-stream on Ephpheta Facebook

Any questions, please contact Chrisso 0405 749 488 (SMS).



Ephpheta closing and arrangements through January

The Ephpheta team will be taking a break as usual over the Christmas - New Year period. We have all been working very hard to support the community this year.

So please only contact us if it is a **genuine emergency during this time.**



**Ephpheta staff will be on leave from
5pm on Tuesday 23 December until 9am on Tuesday 27 January.**

If you would like to go to Mass, please go to your local parish. You can watch "Mass for You at Home" with interpreters on Channel 10 at 6am each Sunday or on Aurora or 10play at any time.

Emergency Contact numbers from 24 December until 26 January:

Liz: 0400 300 295 or liz@ephpheta.org.au

Chrisso: 0405 749 488 (SMS only)

Donovan: 0408 697 773 (SMS only)

Fr Michael: 0466 319 290

PLEASE ONLY USE THESE NUMBERS IF IT IS AN GENUINE EMERGENCY

Community Day Out - 13th February

First Community Day Out for 2026!

Join us as we visit Mary MacKillop Place in North Sydney.

Mary MacKillop is Australia's first saint. We will have Mass together, a guided tour of the museum where we will learn about Mary's life and faith. It will be a great day together.

We will start the day with morning tea, have a tour of the museum, then have Mass. After Mass we will have lunch together.



When and Where: Friday 13 February. Meet at 10am. Tour starts at 10.30am. Mass starts at 12pm. If you would like to only join the tour of the museum please let us know when you RSVP.

Mary MacKillop Place - 80 William Street, North Sydney.

Cost: \$30. Includes guided tour, morning tea and lunch.

RSVP: Chrisso 0405 749 488 (SMS) or email christiane@ephpheta.org.au before Friday 6 February.

Ash Wednesday - 18th February

There will be two Ash Wednesday Masses this year.

Homebush - Ash Wednesday

When: Wednesday 18th February, 7pm

Where: Our Lady of the Assumption,
74 Underwood Road, Homebush

Penrith - Ash Wednesday

When: Wednesday 18th February, 7pm

Where: St Nicholas' Catholic Church,
326 High Street, Penrith

Mass at Homebush will be live streamed onto Ephpheta Facebook for those who can't attend.





DEAF CAFÉ

The Ephpheta Centre runs deaf café for our deaf community - social catch ups at different locations around Sydney.

Here is the list of our next round of Deaf Cafes at different locations throughout Sydney.

- **Friday 21 November 2025. 10am**
 - Hornsby RSL Club
 - 4 High Street, Hornsby
- **Friday 19 December 2025. 10am**
 - DOOLEYS Catholic Club
 - 11-17 Church Street, Lidcombe
- NO DEAF CAFE IN JANUARY**
- **Friday 20 February 2026. 10am**
 - Wests League Club
 - 10 Old Leumeah Road, Leumeah
- **Friday 20 March 2026. 10am**
 - Central Coast Leagues Club
 - 1 Dane Drive, Gosford

We meet on the
3rd Friday of
every month

Please bring money
to buy your own
food and drinks from
the club

We look forward to
seeing you!

For more information please contact
Donovan Mulligan - 0408 697 773 (SMS) or email donovan@ephpheta.org.au



EPHPHETA CRAFT GROUP

All are welcome to get involved in our program of events or bring your own projects to work on.

We start at 10am and finish around 2pm. **Please bring your own lunch.** Ephpheta provides morning tea for a gold coin donation.

Dates for December 2025 - March 2026:

- **Wednesday 10 December 2025**
 - Craft Christmas Party!
 - Last Craft Group of the year
- **Wednesday 11 February 2026**
 - Welcome to 2026!
- **Wednesday 25 February 2026**
- **Wednesday 11 March 2026**
- **Wednesday 25 March 2026**

We meet on the
2nd and 4th Wednesday
of each month



Homebush Hall
Behind Our Lady of the
Assumption Catholic Church
74 Underwood Road,
Homebush

For more information please contact
Chrisso Quartararo - 0405 749 488 (SMS)



JOIN US FOR A
CHRISTMAS PARTY!

Craft Group Christmas Party

Wednesday, 10 December

Revesby Workers' Club
2B Brett Street, Revesby

10am - Morning tea at Café 240

12pm - Lunch at Firestone Kitchen & Bar

Buy your own coffee/tea and lunch

ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN

RSVP before 5 December
Chrisso 0405 749 488



AUSLAN PLAY GROUP

Auslan Play Group is for young families in our deaf community - a social group for mums, dads, grandparents, carers and their children aged 0 - 5 years.

Ephpheta loves supporting new parents and watching them support others as their children grow.

It has been wonderful getting to know the littlest members of our deaf community and watch them grow!

New families are always welcome!

Upcoming dates:

- **Saturday 29 November**
 - Christmas Party

Contact Ephpheta for more information
- **Tuesday 3 February**

Contact Ephpheta for more information
- **Saturday 14 March**

Contact Ephpheta for more information

Ephpheta will supply morning tea for the mums and dads when we are at Homebush but PLEASE bring food and drink for your children.

Parents are responsible for their children throughout the event and children CANNOT be left.

If you or your child are sick, please stay home.

For more information please contact
Chrisso Quartararo - 0405 749 488 (SMS) or email christiane@ephpheta.org.au

Out and About in the Deaf Community

Community Day Out

On 25th September, we had fantastic community day out visiting the famous Sydney Opera House in Sydney.

We learned a lot about the history of Sydney Opera House and the people who were involved in its design and construction. We were surprised that there were 2 people who were involved in the design especially the story of the

Danish architect Jorn Utzon and Australian architect Peter Hall. We saw a beautiful big theatre with 2000 seats for the audience and some other different smaller theatres for different performances. Now the Opera House is the home to around 1000 different performances every year – there is always a lot happening in that building!

Then we all enjoyed lunch nearby and had a little birthday celebration with Fr Martin Kershaw, a visiting priest from Liverpool England who has been the chaplain for the deaf community there for many years. Really great day!

Information for our first community day out in 2026 is on page 6. We look forward to seeing you.



Ephpheta Youth Group

On Friday 10th October, we held our second Ephpheta Youth event of the year - an action-packed morning of go karting at Bankstown Entertainment Park!

After the success of our first event, it was awesome to see an even bigger group come together for some friendly competition and plenty of laughs. Everyone had a blast racing around the track, cheering each other on, and catching up with both new and familiar faces.

It was a fantastic day full of energy, fun, and connection - and we're already counting down to our next event!

Stay tuned for details on our next adventure - we can't wait to see you there! If you know any deaf or hard of hearing youth aged 12 - 17 that would like to join us, please contact Ephpheta!



Thank you Ha and Kieu!

We were very lucky to have two young men join Ephpheta Centre for their seminarian placement - Ha and Kieu! They were with us from February - November.

You might have met them out and about with us at deaf café, at Friday morning Masses and in prayer group.

We have really loved having them with us, seeing their dedication to learning Auslan and getting to know our deaf community.

We wish them all the best of luck with their future studies towards becoming priests. It was wonderful getting to know you both!



Ephpheta Deaf Community Retreat 24-26 October 2025

What a wonderful time we had on our Ephpheta deaf community retreat – thank you to everyone who came along!

The venue for our retreat was the beautiful Benedict XVI retreat Centre at Grose Vale near Richmond.

The theme for our retreat was “Hope”. We had many interesting presentations and activities when we talked about what hope means for us – in our daily lives, in our relationships with each other and with God.

It was a lovely weekend of reflection, prayer, chats and connecting with each other.





Auslan Prayer Group through Advent

Jesse Tree (Jesus' Family Tree)

Advent is a time where we prepare ourselves for the birth of Jesus at Christmas.

It is a time of preparation, of hope and prayer. In the days leading up to Christmas, it reminds us of the true meaning of Christmas, celebrating the birth of Jesus.

During this time there will be an opportunity to pray together as a community as well as learning more about Jesus family tree.

Open to all deaf and hard of hearing people.



	When?	Where and Time?
Session 1: Preparing for Advent and Introduction to the Jesse Tree	Friday 26 November	Zoom - 1pm
Session 2: God creates and promises salvation from the beginning (Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham) Followed by Advent Activity	Sunday 30 November	Face to Face at OLA - after 10.30am Mass
Session 3: God's people hope for a Saviour (David, Solomon, Elijah, Jonah)	Sunday 14 December	Face to Face at OLA - after 10.30am Mass
Session 4: Jesus, the Son of God is born to bring light to the world (Zechariah and Elizabeth, John the Baptist, Mary, Joseph, Jesus)	Sunday 21 December	Face to Face at Winston Hills - after 9.30am Mass

NO PRAYER GROUP IN JANUARY 2026

Prayer Group will resume - Friday, 6 February 2026

1st Friday at Our Lady of the Assumption

On the first Friday of the month, we will be having the Rosary, Mass and Auslan Prayer Group at Our Lady of the Assumption (OLA) Homebush



Upcoming dates	Where and Time
Friday 5 December 2025	OLA Homebush Rosary - 10.30am, Mass - 11am No lunch or Prayer Group on 5 December
Friday 6 February 2026	OLA Homebush Rosary - 10.30am, Mass - 11am Followed by lunch and prayer group
Friday 6 March 2026	OLA Homebush Rosary - 10.30am, Mass - 11am Followed by lunch and prayer group

If you would like to join or more information please contact Brett Beath 0407 064 872.



Fix

a quarrel.

Get in contact

with an old friend.

Get rid of suspicion

and replace it with trust.

Write a love letter. Share

some treasure. Give a soft

answer. Support youth. Show

you are loyal in word and deed. Keep

a promise. Forget a grudge. Forgive an

enemy. Listen. Say sorry if you were wrong.

Try to understand. Don't envy. Look at your

demands on others. Think first of someone else.

Appreciate. Be kind. Be gentle. Laugh a little. Laugh

a little more. Deserve confidence. Do not be self-satisfied.

Do not hurt others. Express your gratitude. Go to church.

Welcome a stranger. Make a child happy at heart. Take pleasure

in the beauty and wonder of the earth. Speak your love. Speak it

again. Speak it still once again. Christmas is a celebration, and there is

no celebration that is better than knowing the true meaning of Christmas.

Then, only then, is it possible to grasp the importance of that first Christmas.

Christmas Blessings to all!





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www: www.ephpheta.org.au

 Join us on Facebook!
<http://www.facebook.com/thecentrefordeaf>

*The Ephpheta Centre is
supported by the Charitable Works Fund.*



Staff Email Addresses:

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Liz	liz@ephpheta.org.au
Fr Michael	frmichael@ephpheta.org.au
Kristen	kristen@ephpheta.org.au

EPHPHETA WEBSITE NEWS

Have you seen our website recently?

Our website is now being updated regularly so it is
always full of current information.

Please keep checking it!

If you have any ideas or feedback for our website
please contact Chrisso.

www.ephpheta.org.au

Please send your news, stories,
information and requests to Liz or Chrisso to
be considered for the next newsletter!



What does “Ephpheta” mean?

The name Ephpheta of our Centre came from the
bible - a story about Jesus meeting a deaf man, he
says “Ephpheta” which means “Be open”.

We are always open to you all!