



ANNUAL REPORT 2009

John Pierce Centre
Spirit of the Deaf Community





MISSION STATEMENT

Inspired by Jesus Christ and the traditions of the Catholic Church, the John Pierce Centre seeks to empower all Deaf people and their families within Victoria to live their lives to the full.

Vision:

To Promote Community through Spiritual, and Family Support

Values:

- ❖ To be inclusive of Deaf and hard of hearing people and their families.
- ❖ To be fair and ethical in all of our dealings
- ❖ To have a team of staff and volunteers filled with passion and compassion
- ❖ To be open to working with other organisations, individuals and corporations
- ❖ To manage our resources with efficiency and effectiveness
- ❖ To create a safe environment
- ❖ To be accountable and transparent in our governance and business practices

John Pierce Centre – Directors’ Annual Report 2009/2010



On behalf of the John Pierce Centre (JPC) Board of Directors I am pleased to present our report for the 2009/2010 year.

The financial performance of JPC met expectations with the projected operating surplus for the year being met. The Directors note with appreciation the continued outstanding financial support received from parishes with collections taken up in 2009 substantially exceeding previous years’ results. This outcome is particularly surprising in light of current global financial difficulties and the generosity shown by the community in supporting the February 2009 bushfire disaster relief. This continued support for JPC work is most encouraging.

Pastoral works undertaken throughout 2009 continued across Victoria with the following table providing a synopsis of the activities undertaken:

Activity	2009 Statistics
Home Visits, Pastoral Encounters/Hospital Visits	638
Country Pastoral Visits	51
Funerals/Baptisms/Weddings	16/2/3
Sacramental Home Visits	19

Interpreting (church events only)	25
Masses/Communion Services	27/15
Activities/Excursions	11
Pastoral Network Meetings	28

The Directors place on record their gratitude for the work of JPC staff and volunteers in living out our *Vision to promote community through spiritual and family support*. As the statistics reveal there is a variety of needs that JPC routinely addresses within the Deaf community.

During the year the Board’s three standing committees met to consider governance matters relating to their respective charters. The planned rotation of Directors through each committee has been observed so that over time each Director will serve on the Finance and Fundraising, Public Relations and Governance Committees. As Chairman I am indebted to the commitment of the Directors in performing their respective committee roles and for the professional manner that they discharge their director responsibilities.

One of the objectives adopted by the Board is to make JPC better known in parishes and the wider community including both the deaf and the hearing. In the longer term it is anticipated that this initiative will promote understanding of the work of JPC, and develop a group of friends of JPC who can assist with various functions including fund-

raising works.

Allied to this objective is the planned development of a Media Plan. It is intended that JPC produce two articles each year for inclusion in Deanery magazines

As a departure from previous practice the focus of the annual JPC Annual Cocktail party was changed to being a social function to thank people who have helped JPC during the year. Importantly the Board agreed that at this gathering the JPC staff should be invited guests not required to undertake the planning of such an event.

An important task for the Board this year was consideration of the 2010 recipient of the JPC Director's Award for Outstanding Service to the Deaf Community. It was unanimously agreed that Sr. Bernadette Wallis mss. and Bruno Broglio be formally recognised for their wonderful contributions to the work of JPC. The Directors were delighted that both people consented to being recognised.

At present the Board is considering twelve recommendations arising from the Pontifical Council for Health Care Workers International Conference held in November 2009. Pleasingly this Conference specifically addressed the Deaf person in the life of the Church. It is encouraging that the Conference acknowledged the importance of recognizing Deaf issues when addressing faith and religious practice. Presently JPC is preparing its response to the recommendations many of which reflect much of what

is currently provided.

It was with much sadness that the Directors learned of the passing of two extraordinary people each of whom is an integral part of the JPC story. The death of Bryan A'Hearn marked the end of a remarkable and much valued contribution to the growth of JPC. He was always sensitive to the needs of the Deaf community and to those who sought to work in improving the situation for the Deaf. Throughout his time with JPC there are innumerable examples of his willingness to support, in practical ways, the efforts to achieve good outcomes for the JPC community.

With the passing of Michael Andersson Directors were saddened and shocked by the seemingly untimely death of their fellow Board member. Directors acknowledge the significant contribution Michael made to John Pierce Centre, and the loss his death will mean. He constantly put forward a faith point of view at Board meetings which enriched discussions and decisions.

Both Bryan and Michael will be sadly missed.

The Directors record their appreciation for the on-going property maintenance support received from the Archdiocese. The provision of improved lighting and the installation of extractor fans have done much to improve the amenity of the JPC building.

On behalf of the Directors I thank Nathan Rayner who concluded his

time on the Board at the 2009 Annual General Meeting. Nathan made a contribution that was much appreciated and valued. He demonstrated a capacity to identify and pursue tasks which have added significantly to our sense of Mission.

I also thank Br Paul McGlade who has continued with the onerous role of Minute Secretary to the meetings of Directors. We are very grateful for his generous and cheerful contribution to our work.

Finally I thank Rebecca Miller, our Chaplain, Janette Murphy and all the JPC staff and volunteers for their ongoing professional and sensitive approach to their work. They are the first point of contact for those engaging with JPC and we are the better for having such a dedicated group of people in our midst. I commend the John Pierce Centre Board of Directors Report for 2009/2010.

Patrick B. Gallagher
Chairperson

Executive Manager's Report

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Services Overview

2009

Pastoral Care involves engaging and listening with the heart to another's experience, journey and search for meaning. It is intentionally holistic. The goal of this care is the sustaining, nurturing, healing and

empowering of people in all aspects of their lives, whatever their circumstances.

(CPE -RMH 2009)



Recent years have proved an exciting time to be involved in the growth of JPC's ministry to the Deaf

community.

Our new Church and Community Centre and increased capacity to provide Pastoral Care throughout Victoria are all proud achievements. We are continually grateful to those generous individuals and groups who have continued to provide support to the JPC; whether this be financial, sharing of skills and time, offering accommodation or the simple act of being remembered in their prayers. The depth of commitment and interest in our services from many who have little direct contact with Deaf people and their families continues to amaze and inspire us.

In 2009 JPC continued employment of 8 part-time staff (*4.5 equivalent full time*), who each created a wonderful energy and welcoming environment for the Deaf people who sought support, comfort or information from JPC. Each of these people used their gifts to achieve the mission of the JPC and I thank the JPC team for their individual contribution, commitment and flexibility in fulfilling their various roles. Each have a significantly important role to play in achieving the mission of the JPC and ensuring

its day to day smooth operation.

We are increasingly aware of the needs of our older Deaf community members. Our Pastoral focus in 2009 was to increase our home visits to this target group and provide personal support and assistance to those who are isolated or experiencing difficulties in their later years.

Decreased mobility, chronic illness and poverty all exacerbate the common experience of isolation and disengagement. Depression, stress and anxiety are alleviated when a person feels connected with their community and has confidence that help is available. Visiting in the home provides a private and personal approach that allows people the freedom to share their concerns. No issue is too trivial for our Pastoral Care workers who continually display empathy and respect when visiting in a Deaf person's home.

Negotiating government departments, financial institutions and the health care system are challenging for many people. Deaf people are more vulnerable to poor health outcomes, financial crisis and insecure housing due to reduced access to information, language barriers and poor understanding of Deaf access in the broader community.

In 2009 we implemented a new 'duty worker' service to ensure a Pastoral/Welfare Worker was available at JPC whilst Deaf people attended Pankina – Deaf Seniors Group. This group regularly enjoys

an attendance of over 50 people. As some travel from all over Melbourne and even Geelong to attend, it is a convenient way to access assistance. Sometimes a phone call or a letter to be explained is all that is necessary. However this early intervention can resolve issues that may become more complex if left with no action.

Pankina are to be congratulated on providing their members with a wonderful trip to Darwin in 2009. Our Director Br. Frank Hennessey was also invited to assist with organizing the group and interpreting. From all accounts it was an interesting and worthwhile trip. The fast pace set by Bruno Broglio ensured many local attractions were visited, providing a wonderful holiday.

The Presentation Sisters kindly welcomed our group of Deaf families to Balnarring over Easter. This Camp was very well attended, with some families unfortunately missing out. Hopefully they will be able to attend our 2011 Camp. This Bi-Annual event is lots of fun for everyone and provides a great family focused weekend.

The Professional Development of all staff has continued with Pastoral and Administration staff attending training in Mental Health, First Aid, Pastoral Care and Suicide prevention. Katrina Mynard was recognized with an award by the Deafness Foundation Trust to assist her tertiary studies in Workplace Training and Assessment. Our capacity to provide Parenting Programs to the Deaf community is enhanced by her skills

in this area and we appreciate the support of the Foundation.

Volunteers

The commitment and goodwill of our many volunteers continues to humble us. We are fortunate to have a dedicated group of volunteers who are so willing to give their time and skills to support our services, newsletter and fundraising activities. To all our volunteers we extend our sincere thanks for your help and friendship in 2009. We are also grateful to Peter Tarrant who has assisted in the maintenance of our website.

Donors

JPC is grateful to the Murphy family for their contribution to the landscaping of our Memorial Garden. Launched in August of 2009 the Memorial Garden provides as a special place of reflection for the Deaf community.

The Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation and the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust each provided support for diverse projects. One allows us to provide fun activities for Deaf families with young children, and the other will allow us to install water tanks and landscaping to improve our environmental awareness and sustainability.

The Bishop's Family Foundation provided a much needed grant to cover the travel, staff and interpreter expenses of Pastoral Care and rural outreach to Deaf families and individuals living in the Sale Diocese. We appreciate this support for 12

months and hope that it might be available again in the future.

All Philanthropic Trusts and donors to the JPC are to be sincerely thanked and congratulated for their willingness to take action and address real areas of need in the Deaf community in 2009.

The JPC operates as an independent not-for-profit company and maintains its links with the Catholic Church as a member of Catholic Social Services Victoria. We are thankful for the support of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne and Archbishop Hart for providing the premises for the Centre and by funding for the cost of the Lay Chaplain, religious and pastoral care services. JPC receives no Government funding but receives generous donations, bequests and grants from philanthropic organizations to fund its work each year.

The services of the JPC are available to all Deaf people throughout Victoria and are inclusive of their immediate families – this may include Pastoral Care to the parents and siblings of an adult Deaf person, and regularly includes support to the hearing children of Deaf parents.

Strengthening Networks

Our ability to provide quality counseling to Deaf people and their families has always been viewed as an important aspect of our work. In 2007 we sought the expertise of Centacare – Catholic Family Services to assist us to better meet the demand for grief counseling,

marriage counseling, family therapy and counseling to hearing children in the Deaf community – each areas of specific skill and expertise.

Centacare staff at Cabrini Centacare - Malvern have willingly met the challenge of how to ensure Deaf people can access their counseling services. With their assistance we are able to fulfill regular requests for counseling. We continue to support Centacare with training and support to learn about Deaf culture, issues specific to Deaf people and their community, and working effectively with Auslan interpreters.

Christmas Hampers

Each year the JPC is able to deliver 25 – 30 Hampers to families in need throughout Victoria. We travel as far as Bendigo and Lakes Entrance to visit isolated Deaf people in these area. These hampers provide food and presents to assist families experience the joy of the Christmas season. We are indebted to the good people of St. Paul Apostle Parish - Endeavour Hills who generously assist us with this service each year

Rural Outreach

Visits to the following districts have been possible.

- ❖ Bendigo
- ❖ Geelong
- ❖ Albury/Wodonga
- ❖ Wangaratta
- ❖ Sale
- ❖ Horsham

Support by our Rural Outreach Workers included arranging transport and support to those attending our Country Masses, Social events such as lunches at the local Pub,

attending local Deaf club activities, visits to Schools where deaf children are attending, referrals to counseling and support to access welfare and financial support agencies, bereavement support and funeral preparation. We also played a role in distributing information regarding local social/recreation events in these communities.

Signee-Tots & CODA (*Children of Deaf Adult*) Activities

A range of activities were organized throughout 2009 to bring Deaf parents and their children together. The focus of the playgroup is:

- For children to play in an environment where Auslan was used as the main language
- To tell stories in Auslan
- For children to appreciate and improve their Auslan
- For parents to focus on the children; and
- For parents to have company and talk with other parents.

Signee-Tots celebrated it's 10th. Anniversary in May 2009. Over these 10 years many Deaf Mums and Dads have played a role in organizing activities and supporting the group. This has been a wonderful achievement for all involved.

In addition to Signee-Tots activities for older school aged children and their parents were also provided. Ranging from a Movie night, BBQ's and visits to the Pool. All activities encourage peer support and friendship building.

Executive Manager
Rebecca Miller

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Thank - You

The Board of Directors and Staff of the John Pierce Centre sincerely thank the following Philanthropic Trusts, businesses and individuals who have generously supported and donated to the John Pierce Centre in 2009

- ❖ The Deafness Foundation Trust
 - ❖ Helen Macpherson Trust
- ❖ Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation
 - ❖ Snowy Nominees
- ❖ Bishop's Family Foundation
 - ❖ Murphy Family

JPC would also like to thank the following Parishes for warmly welcoming our volunteers in November, and supporting the work of the John Pierce Centre so generously in 2009.

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|--------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ▪ St Mary's | <i>Ascot Vale</i> | ▪ St Matthew's | <i>Fawkner North</i> |
| ▪ St Phillip's | <i>Blackburn North</i> | ▪ All Saints | <i>Fitzroy</i> |
| ▪ St James' | <i>Brighton</i> | ▪ St Anthony's Shrine | <i>Hawthorn</i> |
| ▪ St Dominic's | <i>Broadmeadows</i> | ▪ Mary Immaculate | <i>Ivanhoe</i> |
| ▪ St Margaret Mary's | <i>Brunswick North</i> | ▪ St Peter's | <i>Keilor East</i> |
| ▪ St Catherine of Siena | <i>Caroline Springs</i> | ▪ Holy Rosary | <i>Kensington</i> |
| ▪ Holy Cross | <i>Caulfield South</i> | ▪ St Richard's | <i>Kilsyth</i> |
| ▪ Ss Peter & Paul's | <i>Doncaster East</i> | ▪ Corpus Christi | <i>Kingsville</i> |
| ▪ St Thomas' | <i>Drysdale</i> | ▪ St Jude's | <i>Langwarrin</i> |
| ▪ St Joseph's | <i>Elsternwick</i> | ▪ St Mary Star of the Sea | <i>Melbourne West</i> |
| ▪ St Dominic's | <i>Melton</i> | ▪ St Elizabeth's | <i>Noble Park North</i> |
| ▪ St Francis of Assisi | <i>Mill Park</i> | ▪ St Stephen's | <i>Reservoir East</i> |
| ▪ Sacred Heart | <i>Newport</i> | ▪ Resurrection | <i>St Albans West</i> |
| ▪ St Anthony's | <i>Noble Park</i> | ▪ Holy Spirit | <i>Thornbury East</i> |

John Pierce Centre
Spirit of the Deaf Community

A Company Limited By Guarantee - ABN – 55 005 611 601

Board of Directors – 2009

Mr. Patrick Gallagher
Mr. John Davies
Mr. Michael Andersson
Ms. Catherine Perry
Mr. Nathan Rayner (resigned April 2009)
Mr. Peter Meyers
Mr. Kevin Ziebell
Fr. Greg Reynolds
Ms. Margaret Urquart

Minute Secretary to the Board of Directors Br. Paul McGlade

Board – Subcommittee Members

Finance Sub – Committee

Mr. Peter Meyers
Mr. Patrick Gallagher
Mr. Kevin Ziebell

Award Sub-Committee

Ms. Rebecca Miller
Ms. Margaret Urquart

Public Relations Sub-Committee

Mr. John Davies
Ms. Margaret Urquart

Management Sub-Committee

Br. Frank Hennessy CFC
Mr. Michael Andersson
Fr. Greg Reynolds

Members of John Pierce Centre as at 31 December, 2009

A'Hearn, Bryan Francis	McPhee, Anne
Andersson, Michael	Miller, Jack
Baldwin, Kath	Moore, Dorothy
Batson, Eric Stanley	O'Callaghan, Barry David
Bourne, Kevin	Perry, Catherine
Bourke, Gregory	Phillips, Carmel

Broglio, Bruno Joseph
Davies, John
Donnellon, Karon
Griffiths, Moreen Ann
Hennessy, Frank
Hill, John
Kenny, Joan

Robinson, Peter James
Rogers, Jo
Ryan, John
Thornton, Carl
Thornton, Raylee
Tully, Jan
Urquhart, Margaret
Ziebell, Kevin

JPC Staff and Pastoral Care Team For 2009

Rebecca Miller	Executive Manager
Christine Elder	Office Administrator
Gail Finn	Pastoral Administration Officer
Janette Murphy RSJ	Chaplain
Katrina Mynard	Pastoral Associate/Community Worker
Jules Hayes	Rural Outreach Pastoral Care
Gabriel Noonan	Rural Outreach Pastoral Care –Sale Diocese
Wendy Devlin	Community Development Worker
Fiona Goldab	Signee-Tots Coordinator (resigned July 2009)

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