

Rome: Lay Centre inauguration

## Trinitarian values of community, hospitality and dialogue

The new home for the Lay Centre in Rome was inaugurated on Wednesday afternoon, 14 April. It was co-founded by Donna Orsuto and Henrica Van Velzen in 1986. The celebrations began with Vespers in the little Church of San Tommaso in Formis – dedicated to the Holy Trinity – and then continued with a prayerful procession towards the Lay Centre in Largo della Sanità Militare, where a reception was held.

Before Vespers began, Dr Orsuto warmly welcomed all, including Titular Bishop Giorgio Corbellini of Abula, the United States Ambassador to the Holy See, Dr Miguel Díaz, his wife Dr Marian Díaz and the other Ambassadors present.

Special thanks were offered to Bishop Brian Farrell, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, who presided at Vespers. Dr Orsuto acknowledged the Lay Centre's long friendship with that Pontifical Council.

Like the Church of San Tommaso in Formis, the chapel in the Lay Centre is also dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Orsuto explained that this icon was chosen because "Hospitality and dialogue in the heart of Rome is what we are all about as we try to live out our lay vocation and mission in the Church and in the world".

After Vespers, Ambassador Díaz spoke briefly, sharing his personal affection for Trinitarian icons, particularly Andrei Rublev's 15th century icon of the Trinity, a copy of which



hangs at Villa Richardson. The Ambassador reflected, "Throughout my life journey, I have drawn much personal inspiration from this icon... [which] suggests the values of familial and communal living, the affirmation of human differences, creaturely interdependence, the sharing of resources, and above all, the practice of hospitality".

Dr Díaz congratulated the Lay Centre for offering "an oasis for persons of faith to come together, set aside divisions, and engage in mutual and transformative actions", affirming that "this sharing will birth again and again, a vibrant community of learners". (Joanne Ford)

Catholic Association for Racial Justice

## Prejudice toward Gypsies and Travellers in England

Since 2005, the Catholic Association for Racial Justice (CARJ) has been repeatedly calling attention to the prejudice and disadvantage suffered by Gypsy and Traveller communities, as well as the lack of suitable accommodation and security of tenure on existing local authority sites.

This position was officially confirmed last year when the Equality and

Human Rights Commission published *Inequalities Experienced by the Gypsy and Traveller Communities: A Review* (Research Report 12, Winter 2009). The Review pointed out that overt racism towards Gypsies and Travellers is still common.

In a Statement released by CARJ on 20 April, the Association expressed its concern that, in the light of the "serious marginalisation of Gypsy and Traveller communities... recent initiatives by the Conservative Party and the Labour Government may undermine progress towards a more equal and more cohesive society".

Developments in London over the past year have highlighted the difficulties in providing additional Gypsy and Traveller Sites. Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, has engaged in a series of consultations regarding the London Plan (which sets out an integrated framework for the development of London over the next 20-25 years). Response to the need for these additional sites was polarized. Despite his attempt to reach a compromise of 538 new pitches, the Mayor "settled on a minimal target of 238 new pitches".

The statement from CARJ cited this as one example of "the intractable difficulties we face as a society in providing adequate sites for Gypsy and Traveller communities. Our inability to meet this challenge over many years is the root of other problems involving these communities".

Also addressed in the statement were the Conservative Party's Policy Green Paper and its section on Travellers, as well as the Government's new Guidance on Social Behaviour associated with Gypsies and Travellers.

CARJ "accepts and shares the underlying intent behind the new initiatives of the Conservative Party and the Government – to move toward a society characterised by law and order, mutual respect and social cohesion", the statement concluded. "However, this will not be accomplished by imposing punitive restrictions on extremely marginalised and vulnerable groups, without seriously addressing the causes of their marginalisation and vulnerability".

## USCCB launches new vocations website

On the World Day of Prayer for Vocations and Good Shepherd Sunday – 25 April – a new website was launched as a resource for both laity and clergy in the promotion of vocations.

The site, found at [www.ForYourVocation.org](http://www.ForYourVocation.org), is an initiative of the US Bishops' Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations. It has two goals: to help individuals hear and respond to the call to priesthood or consecrated life, and to educate all Catholics on the importance of promoting vocations through prayer and other activities.

Site elements include discernment sources, aids for promoting a culture of vocation within the home, and a range of tools for educators, youth leaders and vocation directors. Among these are prayers, videos, best practices, lesson plans and vocation awareness programs. It also hosts videos of priests and religious giving witness to their vocations, along with testimonies from family members.

The launch of the site is being promoted through social media forums. On Facebook, for example, users can become "eVangelizers" in order to connect others to the site's blog posts.

In the fall, a Spanish-language site will also be available at [www.PorTuVocacion.org](http://www.PorTuVocacion.org).

## ANZAC Day Commemorative Service in Rome

### Lest we forget

JOANNE FORD

Australians and New Zealanders in Rome came together to celebrate one of their most important national occasions, ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) Day, on Sunday, 25 April. These soldiers are known as the ANZACs. The ANZAC spirit signifies courage, mateship and sacrifice.

On 25 April 1915 the ANZACs landed on the Gallipoli peninsula and a nine-month bloody battle with Turkish forces ensued. ANZAC Day is now a day when the two countries pay tribute to members of their armed forces who have served and given their lives in all military action and peace-keeping operations.

This year's service at the Commonwealth War Graves was organised by the Australian Ambassador to Italy, Ms Amanda Vanstone. New Zealand Ambassador Mr Laurie Markes also gave an address. Ambassadors Vanstone and Markes were joined by Ambassadors and representatives from Turkey and many of the ANZAC allied forces at Gallipoli, including Great Britain, Canada, France and its colonies, India (and what is now Pakistan and Bangladesh), Ireland, Nepal and South Africa. All nations laid wreaths of poppies at the memorial as a symbol of remembrance. Cardinal George Pell, Archbishop of Sydney and Reverend David Richardson, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative to the

Holy See, shared the readings and prayers during the service. Card. Pell celebrated a commemorative Mass that evening in the Church of Santa Maria del Priorato by gracious permission of His Highness Frà Matthew Festing, Prince and Grand Master of the Order of Malta.

The *Ode of Remembrance* which follows below was recited on Sunday morning just as it has been done since 1919 all over Australia, New Zealand and around the world. At this point in the ceremony it was difficult for most people to remain composed. I thought of my grandmother who earlier that day had marched with my mother in the Dawn Service on the Gold Coast in Australia. It is the custom for family members to march proudly together or on behalf of deceased war veterans in remembrance. Both my grandparents on my mother's side served during the Second World War; my grandmother was driving trucks, towing generators and bringing rations to the anti-aircraft stations dotted along the Victorian coastline, in her words, "everything that could be done to free up the men for fighting"; my grandfather fought in the Middle East then was sent to New Guinea before coming home to Australia. My grandmother recounted that her father served at Gallipoli, spending his 18th birthday in camp in Australia waiting to sail with his troop. He survived the battle



Cardinal Pell (left), Ms Vanstone and Rev. Richardson (photo by Lisa Golden)

and was sent to the Western Front before returning to Australia alive.

#### *Ode of Remembrance*

*They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old;  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.*