



eNews February 2025

You are a marker to point the way in 2025

Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" Jesus said: "I am the Way the Truth and the Life, no one comes to the Father except through Me." John 14:5-6

Over October last year Cath and I, along with Darren and Tracey Thomas, undertook to walk 315km of the Camino de Santiago (The way of St James) from Leon to Santiago de Compostela in Northern Spain. There were many other



people walking this pathway for many differing reasons. People would either walk past you or you would walk past them, this gave you an opportunity to engage with and at times speak with them, find out about them and encourage them. There were a couple of times when people who were walking solo really appreciated the companionship even if it was only for 5 or 6 kilometres.

To show you the way there were yellow arrows and way markers. You could also buy maps, download guides all to help you stay on the right path. Even so, there were times when we missed a turn or thought we were going the wrong way only to discover that we were actually on the right way.

The important thing about this walk is that it forced you to focus on the immediate and stay in the present moment. At times Tracey would stop us all and we would have to describe 5 things we could hear. Each morning, we started with Scripture readings and Morning Prayer and each evening we would discuss what we had done new, what we had liked and a Spiritual Insight that had struck us during the day. All this helped us to focus on listening to God and seeking Him intentionally during the day.

In the MCF, we are like a way marker pointing people to Jesus and helping them either get onto the right Way or assisting them on the Way. This is our mission, walking alongside people, to introduce them to the Way of Christ, to encourage them, to journey with them for a season be it long or short.

Can I encourage you to remember this this year when you feel discouraged or that others in the MCF are doing better than you. You never know the importance of speaking with that one person who came this week, or you had a chat with in the coffee line.

God's speed,

Steve (MCF Chair, taken from the Chair report at the 2024 MCF AGM)

New Position on Council – Assistant Treasurer

Hi, my name is Cath Neuhaus and I am currently the Assistant Treasurer with MCF-A. I am married to Steve, who is the current Chair of MCF. We have 3 children and 7 grandchildren, and our daughter Leita, who has Down Syndrome and still lives at home with us.

My walk with Jesus also started early as I was baptised into the Catholic faith as a baby, but I really felt called to follow Jesus after I encountered the Holy Spirit when I was confirmed in primary school.

My father was a pilot in the RAAF, so I was introduced to military life early. As a teenager, I met a RAAF Chaplain who used to come and visit Dad at home when we were at RAAF East Sale. He and Dad used to have great conversations, which encouraged Dad to go to church at the Anglican Chapel on Sundays, while mum took the rest of us to the Catholic Chapel on the base.



I joined the Army Reserve when I was at university, as I couldn't join the RAAF as a pilot back in the early 80's. During my time in the Army, I have served both full time and part time, and deployed to Timor Leste in 2007/08. Last year I had the privilege of returning to Timor Leste on a short-term mission with St John's Anglican Church in Canberra. I believe this helped provide some closure on my time there, as I was able to see where I had worked in Dili – my office was still there next to the presidential palace – and I spent some time with an amazing group of people intent on bringing Christ's love to the people of Timor Leste. My hope is to return there in the near future to see how I can contribute to this work.

I am still serving in the Army in a part time capacity. During my over 40 years of service in the Army, I don't recall having any issues being a Christian in the military, and during my time have met some great Army Chaplains and other Christians in Defence.

I was first involved with MCF-A around 2005, when we ran a family Bible Study and support group for military members from our home in Townsville, and have been involved on and off since then. We have continued the friendships formed during this time, and still catch up when we can.

Whilst in Townsville, I joined the then fledgling Solid Rock group for military spouses, set up by Janet Mumford. I have watched it grow and change over the years, and made some great friends, while it still continues to support the vision of providing a support network for military spouses.

I feel blessed to have been part of MCF and Solid Rock over the last 20 years and pray that they will continue to support military Christians as they navigate the intricacies of military life and their journey with Christ.

PHOTO: Jul 2024 - standing near the front gates of the Heliport in Dili where I worked when I was deployed to Timor.

No personal mobiles in the MCF Office

Those working on Defence Bases have come under a new instruction, meaning **mobile phones can't be taken into most workspaces. Please note the MCF Office also falls into this category** so if you are on Defence Skype please use this to ring the office/Julie, otherwise ring the office number (listed at the end of this email). If no one answers please follow the instructions if the matter is urgent, or leave a message including a return phone number. Please note if you leave a message it may be a few days before it is heard. Sorry for any inconvenience.

Final Celebration - 40 years of MCF-A

As I looked out across the faces gathered at St John's Church Hall, Reid in Canberra on the evening of 30 November 2024, I could only agree with the promise of Psalm 133: *How truly wonderful and delightful it is to see brothers and sisters living together in sweet unity.* New and seasoned members, family and friends mingled over a marvellous meal whilst treated to delightful live music from Michael Dooley and Rachel McNally (check out their new album 'Water of Life'). The evening marked the culmination of a number of events held across Australia to commemorate 40 years of MCF-A activities. Spotlight interviews with Chaplains Grant Dibden and Steve Neuhaus called us to keep sharing and growing our faith whilst seeking out fellowship with believers. MCF-A Patron, MAJGEN Sue Graham, encouraged us

all to give thanks for God's faithfulness in sustaining the ministry. She urged us to share our lived experience as Christians with others, sowing seeds of God's word across the Defence ecosystem, spreading the message of God's love. Such encouragement and fellowship was food for the soul and a challenge for love in action as we head into 2025.

A special thank you to MCF-A Chairman Steve and his wife Cath, along with MCF-A Staff Worker Julie (and their helpers), for organising such a wonderful and uplifting evening. May we be encouraged to keep meeting together in unity for His glory over the next 40 years and beyond.

Alyssa

There are still a few copies of Russell Bielenberg's personal history of MCF-A available. Please follow the links on the website to purchase your copy – book info can be found at bottom of the website page on MCF history: [Purchase book link](#)



Greek Orthodox Icon instillation

Some exciting news from one of the MCF Reps at Gallipoli Barracks in Brisbane.



I thought it would be of great interest to the MCF-A to know that I escorted His Grace, Bishop Bartholomew of Brisbane, onto base to see the chapel on the morning of Tuesday 26th Nov, 2024.

This comes after word of the Gallipoli Barracks All Saints Chapel's acceptance of my petition to install an icon of Christ Pantocrator on one of the vacant walls in the name of ecumenical cooperation, as there is a Roman Catholic alcove present, and the grand nature of the chapel is Protestant.

The significance of this extended hand of friendship is not lost on the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia.

LCPL Gibbs (2CER MCF Rep)

Pray that all MCF members will work together with Christ at the centre of all they do as part of the MCF, as we are all one under Jesus Christ our Lord. Give thanks for this hand of friendship that has been extended at Gallipoli Barracks.

There are at least two Greek Orthodox Chaplains currently in the ADF.



(Photos used with permission of the Bishop and Command)

Another reason to celebrate, give praise and pray



On the 13 December 2024 SIG Jacob was Baptised at Port Gawler Pontoon, Port Gawler SA by Chaplain Luke.

Joining Jacob on this special occasion were members of the Edinburgh MCF group and other Friends in Defence and their families.

Congratulations Jacob on making the decision to follow Christ. Welcome to God's family Brother!

Chaplain Luke

Please uphold Jacob and the ADF Chaplains, along with the MCF groups in prayer.

New Giving Platform on MCF website

Due to the takeover of our old donation platform provider, **MCF now has a new giving platform** via the donation button on the website. A huge thank you to Generous, the new host, for their assistance in this change. Please let the office know if you enjoy the new platform, or if there are any issues when donating. <https://mcf-a.org.au/donate/>

S P Kuffer, if that is you or someone you know, can you please contact the MCF Office as we have no info on how to get your tax receipt to you. mcf.office@defence.gov.au

Defence Welcome Events

Don't forget to check out the MCF-A, Chaplain, Solid Rock, and other Military Christian's stalls at the upcoming Defence welcome events. Say hi to the Rep/Chaplain and get to know what MCF groups and events are in your area. Reps are always looking for ways for Defence Christians to connect so feel free to share ideas. A huge thanks to those who've helped host a stall. [Find out what's happening in your area](#)

Other items

Spiritual Warfare – free online course

Bjorn and Lilian Schmid have been running the Kjell Sjoberg Video sessions on spiritual warfare since 2020, Free registration is now open for 2025. Please email us your interest and please take it before the Lord because there is a commitment in this program. More information here <https://prayerstrategy.org/spiritual-warfare/>

Have you posted or moved house? Are you deploying or away from home for a few months or longer?

Posted or moved, please update your details [HERE](#)

Deploying or on a long exercise? MCF-A would love to support and pray for you while you're away. Let us know at: mcf.office@defence.gov.au

Membership

[Membership](#) is free and **open to every Christian**. If you've not had an association with Defence or you don't identify as Christian you can be an associate member via the same link.

Donations

MCF is supported almost entirely through freewill donations by members and supporters. Please look at Supporting MCF in prayer, with your time, and through [financial support](#). (Direct debit preferred – details at right side of the webpage link) ***Note that donations (over \$2) to MCF-A are tax deductible.***

Prayer requests

To put forward prayer points for inclusion in the calendar please email the MCF Prayer Coordinator Dr Daniel Solomon: [Prayer Requests](#)

You can also send through **urgent prayer points** that are sent on confidentially to the MCF Prayer Warriors, or to enquire about becoming an MCF Prayer Warrior, contact the MCF Office or Daniel (via the Prayer Request link above).

Contacting the MCF Office

PHONE: Office: 02 6132 7845.

EMAIL: mcf.office@defence.gov.au You can also find us on Facebook and ForceNet.

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