As you embark on your university adventure which surely will be some of the best years of your life, we take this opportunity to welcome you to the UOW Catholic Society.

The Catholic Society is about enriching our campus lives with God, particularly through sharing, expressing, and living our faith on campus. We are a community of young Catholics who are passionate about our faith and are challenged to live it.

Maria Pineda, Louise Bryne, Virginia Adnan

Please check out our activities calendar. We look forward to meeting you!

UOW Catholic Chaplaincy
(Verbum Dei Missionary Fraternity)
Maria Pineda, Louise Bryne, Virginia Adnan

Hello Everyone! Welcome to the Catholic Society’s first newsletter. My name is Maria Pineda. I am the Catholic chaplain at the University of Wollongong. I have been on campus for over 10 years since firstly being appointed by (then) Bishop Wilson.

I feel very privileged to “connect” with and encounter so many people from different nationalities and places, and backgrounds. The university, for me has been a place to act as a bridge to bring people in a closer relationship with Christ, through the Word of God.

I would like to share with you something about who I am. I was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois of Mexican parents. At the age of 15 my parents returned to Mexico and now my whole family resides there. I became a Verbum Dei Missionary at the age of 21.

I experienced God calling me while contemplating the crucifix. “I need you,” were the words I understood from a broken Jesus on the cross. Answering God’s call as a Verbum Dei Missionary, through our ministry of prayer and ministry of the Word, has taken me to many countries: Colombia, the Philippines, Spain, Ireland, England, Mexico and now Australia.

I love my vocation! Listening to God’s Word every morning guides me to live and give witness in the day, and share the Word with others. I hope to share with you my personal experience of prayer with the Word, in this corner!!

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“...We are declaring to you what we have seen and heard, so that you too may share our lives. Our lives is shared with the Father and with His son, Jesus Christ.”

1 John 1:3
Highlights of Spring Session 2013

On 24 August 2013, members attended the Uni Day-Retreat at Berry. The theme was “What Faith Can Do”. Members recollected and shared their journey of faith. Faith, born of an encounter with the living God who calls us and reveals His love, transforms lives where actions are given meaning and purpose.

The final Mass on campus was celebrated on 23 October 2013 by Father David O’Brien. It was a time of thanksgiving as well as to pray for students for their final exams. From 2 to 10 December 2013, several members joined the Verbum Dei community for a mission trip to the Philippines. Their presence during the Advent season brought peace, hope and joy to the Tagaytay community.

LETTER FROM ALUMNI

Where am I now? ~Keiran Roche

Keiran Roche, from Helensburgh, studied an Arts Degree at UOW. He was the secretary of UOW Catholic Society (CS) in 2004. Keiran is presently the principal of a Catholic primary school in Arizona, USA. He is happily married to Janele from the States and they have a one year old boy. Keiran shares with us on how CS was a major influence on his life.

To try and see Jesus, I was not doing anything. I was just hoping Jesus would reach out to me.

“Instead of the world forming my decisions, it is me living the Word of God.”

As an Australian male attending public high school, I was afraid to let my friends around me know I was Catholic. I wanted to experience God but was embarrassed to seek God out. Attending university was a true test of faith. At the university, I enjoyed the drinking culture - getting drunk and being silly. I knew if I did not do something about my faith then it would be just something I did on a Sunday. It was at this point that I met Maria, Verbum Dei Missionary and found out about the Catholic Society on campus. I thought if I went to anything that the CS did, the first thing I would have to do was to stop drinking.

At the university, I began my first experience of praying with the Word of God. The reading was about Zacchaeus. I struggled to connect with Jesus because unlike Zacchaeus who was actually doing something beautiful son, Liam Joseph. Has blessed us with a one year old boy. Keiran shares with us on how CS was a major influence on his life, helped him to come to know God, and brought his wife and him together!

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