



The family of Mary warmly invite you to join them for refreshments at Alexandra House following the committal service at the \*\*\*\*Lawn Cemetery.



Requiem Mass

Giving thanks to God for the life of

*Mary Patricia Guy*  
*OAM & Civic Reception 1986*



Her late husband, Frederick William Guy,  
(23rd June, 1927 - 31st August 2005) OAM 2004

11th August 1927 – 19th April 2021



# ORDER OF SERVICE

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## **- Words of Welcome -**

Dean Gresle

## **- Entrance Hymn -**

*Here I Am Lord*

## **- Symbols of Life -**

Blessing of the Coffin ~ Hayley & Alexandra

Placing of the Pall ~ Anna & Jessica

Lighting of the Candle ~ Glenn

Placing of the Christian Symbols ~ Michael & Maree

Placing of the Wreath ~ Gabrielle & Anna

## **- First Reading -**

*St Paul 1st Letter to the Corinthians*

Read by Maree

*Response: .....the word of the Lord*

*All: Thanks be to God*

## **- Responsorial Psalm -**

*The Lord is my Shepherd*

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## **- Gospel -**

*John 14:27, 15, 12*

*Response: .....this is the Gospel of the Lord*

*All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.*

## **- Homily -**

Fr. Pat Mugavin

## **- Prayers of Intercession -**

Read by Brian, Matthew & James

*Response: .....We pray to the Lord*

*All: Lord, hear our prayer*

## **- Offertory Procession -**

Ashton & Vivienne

## **- Offertory Hymn -**

Better Place - Performed by Daniel, Patrick & Glenn

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## **- Words of Remembrance -**

Maree, Julie, Rachael

Mary Guy's Eulogy- OAM

Dictated by Nanna and recorded by Mary's Grandson, Daniel, on the 26th of December, 2014.

Nanna always referred to herself as 'mum' right up until the end and certainly throughout this, the eulogy that she wrote herself. She asked that I read it today and I do so deeply humbled by such an honour. I'm sure that Nanna's voice and wit will shine through. (Reference capital letters)

Mary Guy OAM was born Mary Patricia Gearon in Bendigo on the 11th of August 1927 to Charlotte and Roderick Gearon. Mary was the youngest of their 5 children and their only daughter. She was 5 years younger than her youngest brother, Len. She was preceded by her brothers William, Raymond, Thomas, and Leonard (Bill, Ray, Tommy and Len). Little Tommy was tragically killed by a bus outside the family home at the age of 2, when their mother was 5 months pregnant with Len. Mum always felt that her mother never recovered from that tragedy, and Mary although she never knew him, was always saddened by the thought of the incident.

Mary commenced school at the age of 4 and a half at St Kilian's Primary school at Bendigo. Her secondary education was at St Mary's College, commonly referred to as the Convent. Mum completed a commercial course, where she learnt very little and left when she was 16 and a half. All she was interested in was acting. Invariably, she played the lead in the school plays, usually comedy. She had been taught acting privately, periodically, from the age of 7 until 20. She had her first success in the Bendigo competitions which are still an annual event. At the age of 7 she competed in a set piece, 'the short cut', one of 27 competitors in the under ten section. Mum was awarded 2nd place, 1st and 3rd places going to competitors from Melbourne. She hated praise and when neighbours who were in the audience, rushed to congratulate her, she tried to hide behind her mother's skirt. She also learnt Irish and Scottish dancing, and later the piano.

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Later in life, Mum was the first female reader in the old St Mary's Church and the only person to narrate The Passion in Full on two consecutive Palm Sundays. Mum remembered the years of 'The Great Depression'. The family's home was opposite Lake Weerona and men walked the country seeking employment. They were referred to as TRAMPS or SWAGGIES because they tramped everywhere and carried SWAGS on their backs with a billy can suspended from the swag. The swag being just a roll of blanket to cover themselves wherever they camped at night, and the billy to boil on a small camp fire, to make billy tea, and the space around the lake was where they camped. Mum remembered men coming to her door begging for food, and her mother never refused them. Mum would have been only 3 and a half to 4 years old in 1931; but, perhaps those events planted the seeds in her mind of hungry and homeless people.

During the second world war, Mum decided so she would join the W.A.A.F (Women's Australia Air Force)- Her second eldest brother Ray was in the air force. All brothers were in the services, and mum was the only one at home during those years of anxiety. Mum turned 18 on the 11th of August, 1945. The War in the Pacific, ended on the 15th of August. When her brothers returned, she decided to move to Melbourne, as she wanted to experience 'the big smoke', and the bright lights, to watch plays at the comedy theatre, and to go to Luna Park. The secretary of the Bendigo Repertory Society wrote to The Little Theatre in South Yarra, which was later renamed St Martin's Theatre, requesting an audition for Mum. She was given an appointment time for an audition which, due to a gastro attack, she cancelled and she never bothered to make further contact. Many years later after her involvement with India, she felt that the illness which caused her to see a GP, the first of only two GP's in the 6 years she was away from home, was PROVIDENTIAL, as she used whatever talent she had to promote the needs of THE THIRD WORLD. She was a guest speaker all over the Hamilton district and radio broadcast her lectures. She was also the guest speaker three times for the 'Women's World Day of Prayer'; she refused further requests. During 1966, a letter appeared in the Melbourne Sun from Mother Raphael, the superior of 'The Mercy Home' Madras, now Chennai, India, begging for food parcels. This set the wheels in motion. Famine had resulted in black

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market prices which were unaffordable as the home had three hundred destitutes, many of whom were young babies and children. The maximum weight sent through the post office was 22 pounds, and two pounds had to be reserved for packaging, and forms had to be filled in declaring every item and cost. The post office was then open Saturday mornings. Mum and dad and their five children, in a state of great excitement, took the carton of food to be posted to what then was a very foreign, foreign land. When the parcel was weighed, it was half a pound overweight and had to be unpacked and a half pound packet of tea was taken out. Mum was overwhelmed and excited when she received a long letter of thanks from Mother Raphael, who was a French salesian sister, just 6 weeks later and so she continued with those food parcels every month for many years. She also sponsored a physically and intellectually disabled child at the home.

A few months after the letter in the Sun, the BIHAR Famine hit the news. BIHAR is in the north of India, repeated to be the poorest and most populous of the Indian states. E.W (Bill) Tipping, a journalist and presumably foreign correspondent was commissioned to report on the six trouble spots in the world- today, the number would be more like 600- and the BIHAR Famine commanded the most attention. Mum read his articles and bearing in mind that you can believe about one third of what you read, she felt compelled to go and see for herself. She made enquiries at a travel agent and told she might get a berth on a small ship but no ship's doctor. At the time she and Dad heard community aid abroad had a group in Hamilton which had been formed about a year before. A general meeting was announced which Dad attended- the C.A.A. director had come from Melbourne to speak and their monthly news magazine was available and the C.A.A study group of India- 36 days- was advertised. Great excitement! But how to fund the cost and most importantly to have their 5 children, their main responsibility, cared for during that long absence?

About the same time a magazine came from one of the organisations dad belonged to, advertising Junior Country Club at Kalista. The situation seemed ideal but the cost prohibitive. When the operators, a Dutch couple, heard the reason for mum and dad's intended journey, they made a sizeable reduction to the fees, especially as there were 5 of children. Maree the eldest at 14, Gabrielle the

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youngest at 4, and the 3 brothers in between. To fund the tour cost and accommodation, mum sold the investment shares bequeathed to her by her late father. Three years later mum and dad sold their home in Bendigo which had been rented and we all lived in three different rental properties before buying our home in McIntyre Street in 1979. After their first C.A.A tour of India, and what was then Ceylon, now Sri Lanka, naturally mum and dad joined the local group of C.A.A. where very soon she took on the role of Treasurer and C.A.A. speaker, she had no trouble keeping books. After two years Treasurer, she became Secretary for three years. According to Nanna, being on a committee really wasn't the way- too many members went whatever way the wind blew. She resigned although Dad remained President of the local C.A.A. group for 20 years. Mum, Dad and Mrs Rita Hurley formed a 'CO Workers Mother Teresa' group, just the three of them. One venture was procuring an empty shop in Gray shop for two weeks before Christmas, an opportune time to sell Indian handicrafts for gifts- something different and the proceeds to Mother Teresa. Mum persuaded the shop owner to let her have it rent free. Because of the cause, he agreed. Mum wrote to trade action which was the trading subsidiary of C.A.A. And her request was refused as the funds raised were not going to C.A.A, but to Mother Teresa. Mum persisted and finally they agreed and she could return to them what wasn't sold. A lot of hours and eye strain went into this operation resulting in a recurrence of the corneal ulcer on her left eye which had plagued her most of her life. She had also made preserves and aprons to sell. Mum wrote to an English lady she had met in BIHAR working with a doctor at a leprosy clinic in a rural area during the second C.A.A tour, and she and mum became correspondents. Mum told Helen about the fund raising effort and she wrote back and asked "IS IT A PERMANENCY?"

At first mum dismissed the suggestion, but then like the assassinated Kennedy brothers she thought "you don't ask why! You ask why not!" and she thought if she fell flat on her face doing it, she would by the grace of god, be able to get up and start again. She opened "Namaste", with no capital just faith, hope and love in April 1972, at the age of 45, and traded for 19 years! She was solely and totally responsible for the operation of Namaste. She had been allowed \$1000

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of stock on credit to commence, and prior to opening she worked at home for three months making a great variety of preserves and sewed aprons and covered coat hangers, all displayed on trestles joined together and no fittings in the shop (then it was the only vacant shop in the main block of Gray street and in horrible condition). She displayed clothing by poking the hooks of coat hangers in holes in the walls. The late Jim Healy, a carpenter and a friend of dad's gave her a day of free labour before she opened on the Monday. In the small window, her desk was beside it, the floor boards were broken and some space occupied by a dead rat. Jim fixed all that and erected shelves to display handicrafts and when he finished the day's work he handed her a \$20 note to get her started. When mum was trading she would never accept money donations for Namaste- there weren't many but any that were given were given to the Co Workers Mother Teresa account.

Mum first met Mother Teresa in Calcutta during her first C.A.A. group study tour of India only three of the 11 group members met her. When they were given a reception at the university of Madras (now Chennai) they were told by a Belgian Jesuit "when you go to Culcutta you must meet Mother Teresa. Outside Mrs Ghandi, she is the best known women in India" but, then she wasn't known internationally. They had never heard of her. The group's accommodation was at "the great eastern hotel" in Culcutta, then one of the top hotels. The group attended a small meeting in the early evening of people who were doing social work. Amongst them was father John Hart who was the Chaplain of the university of Perth. Talking to him, mum and dad and a teacher from University High Melbourne said they would like to meet mother Teresa. He offered a meeting saying "I know she is there tonight. Tomorrow she is likely to be in Ceylon". Father Hart was known to her as he was spending his Christmas holidays working in the slums of Culcutta with the late brother Andrew who mother Teresa had chosen as the superior of the men's order of her work. They are known as the missionary brothers of charity. Mother Teresa took them first to her congregation house in which there was a room with six wooden humidi cribs which a carpenter had made for her and in the cribs were 6 premature babies, then to "the house for the dying" where they arrived just in time to observe the death of young Hindu

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women, lying on the stone floor. She had been brought in from the pavement a couple of hours earlier. Mother Teresa willed her to live and wrapped a shawl around her shoulders but she was deeply unconscious. Mum hoped, that in spirit that women knew that 4 Australians knelt on the stone floor and prayed for as she died. They returned to the great eastern hotel where the remainder of the group were seated for dinner; but mum found that she had no appetite for food or for the cabaret that was in full swing. Too different worlds- not 2 miles apart. "Namaste" funds did not go to Mother Teresa as her work had captured the attention of the world and mum saw so many good people working to improve the lives of the poor all over India.

During the first C.A.A they met on St Thomas mount Madras, where St Thomas the apostle was martyred, sister Sheila Thompson, F.M.M from Preston who was stationed as a large home for abandoned babies and children, most of whom remain there until of marriageable age. Maree and Glenn have also visited there as have David and Maureen MacPhail. When mum and dad first met sister Sheila, she had been in India for 16 years without any home leave. After that meeting monthly parcels were going there as well to the mercy home and after a couple of years sister Sheila came home on leave and visited us for 5 days, she and mum became very close friends and "holy apostles crèche" on St Thomas mount, one of Namaste's chief projects. Until returning to Australia permanently sister Sheila had 32 years in India.

Mum didn't drive (she used to say she was one less menace on the roads) so dad had to take a day off his annual leave periodically to drive mum to Melbourne and back in the one day to buy from the wholesalers. Fitting as much as possible in the car, the remainder had to be freighted. When they arrived home about 9:30pm mum would iron the clothing she had bought and dad would take it into Namaste on his way to work the next morning, mum of course, walked. Until the shop was carpeted many years later, dad washed the old linoleum every weekend. It was two years before a phone in the shop was affordable and eight or more years before a jewellery cabinet could be purchased in Melbourne, and a comfortable chair for mum at her desk. Until then it was a \$1 chair from St Vins.

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She sat by the open door and froze for the first two winters then Rita Hurley brought in a one bar radiator. Namaste was broken into twice, the window broken for entrance and the second time ten thousand dollars of uninsured jewellery stolen. After several months the police retrieved some of that, buried in a Hamilton backyard. In the last year of operation in another premises, all the sterling silver chains from the top shelf of the cabinet were swooped out when she went to the back room to out the jug on for coffee. During her 19 years trading, mum had no lunch break and no annual holidays and no remuneration. During that time she travelled around India visiting her projects, no holiday travelling, by every mode of transport from the very south Kanyakumari to the very north Kashmir and when she returned customers would ask her if she enjoyed her holiday. She had also been on two C.A.A study group tours- so 7 times in all around India. No regrets! She had spent considerable time with Mother Teresa during 3 visits. She remains very grateful to the close friends (Rita Hurley, Fay Rook, and Rita Taylor) and to dad who kept Namaste open during her absences. Dad took his annual leave to look after Namaste for the duration of one of Mum's visits to projects in India.

During one of those visits, David and Maureen MacPhail lived with our family for a month as dad was already in India having attended a conference in Hyderabad, as a representative of the C.A.A's state committee with the state secretary and one other committee member. When mum arrived in Madras he was at the airport with Sister Sheila to meet her and he accompanied her for a month to visit her projects all over India. In 2014 at Mum's request, David and Maureen agreed to accept the responsibility of supervising the TRUST mum had set up in India when she retired after closing Namaste. The interest was to be shared by her two main projects at the time of her retirement- a village school north of Bangalore of 50 children- fully funded by Namaste for many years, including two meals daily for the children. The other a house for 17 destitute men in Kerala where Australian Tom Sutherland had been involved for many years (dad had first met him at the conference in Bangalore and he asked if mum would visit and she did). Namaste purchased the house for the men to live in. She sold in Namaste hand painted leaf cards- the painting of the cards taught by Tom at "Trappaadam". Mum was solely responsible for the management and operation of Namaste and

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the distribution of the funds raised. Namaste was not affiliated with community aid abroad or any other aid organisation in any way.

Mum and dad shared the local Australia Day award in 1982, the second year it was awarded in Hamilton, and in 1986 mum was awarded the OAM. She was given a civic reception. In her response to the Mayor's speech, she finished by saying "I don't look at anything I've done with pride; but, at what I haven't done- that I could have, that I should have, with shame!" The sins of omission!

Both parents retired at the age of 65 and went overseas for 1 year, visiting 22 countries, travelling on a shoestring budget. Two years after returning, they drove around Australia for three 3 months (dad drove) and two years later they went overseas again for 3 months- Ireland, England and Scotland, again dad driving and mum navigating.

For the season of 1948, Mum was taken by a young man to watch Collingwood play football. Her relationship with the young man did not survive, but, her relationship with Collingwood remained for the rest of her life, and it was Mum who took Dad to watch Collingwood play and the reason he became an avid supporter and all our family. Mum's 1949 membership ticket is here today.

Mum was very proud of her Irish ancestry- just one great grandfather was English. Both grandfathers died long before mum was born- but she remembered both grandmothers. Grandma Gearon died when mum was 6, and Grandma Crofts died when she was 10, mum expects all our family to remain united and to be supportive of each other when and if necessary. Whatever the future brings Mum wants us all to remember "THE LAUGHTER".

Laugh and the world laughs with you. Weep and you weep alone!

**- Recessional Hymn -**  
I Did It My Way - Frank Sinatra

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