

Catholic

Sunday > May 16, 2010 > Issue No 5100

Leader

Themes of forgiveness, gratitude and kindness relayed in poetic way

I GROW IN GRANDAD'S GARDEN

Brian Andrew and Ellie; illustrations by Banx; Oceanwave Communications
Reviewed by Selina Venier

I GROW in Grandad's Garden is a beautifully compiled literary and visual piece.

Brisbane author Brian Andrew, who also writes a weekly column called "The Good Life" for Quest Newspapers in Brisbane, found its inspiration in granddaughter Ellie, now 10.

"I'd be in the garden with Ellie and ask her things like, 'What makes you happy?' or 'What makes you afraid?', and the book was an extension of that," Brian said.

"Extraordinary things have happened (to people and in people) because of this book.

"Adults will often read it and say, 'it's a kids' book but I feel like it was written for me.'"

Brian commissioned contemporary artist and children's book author Banx to portray some of the "hundreds of photos" taken of his Yeronga backyard to accompany the text.

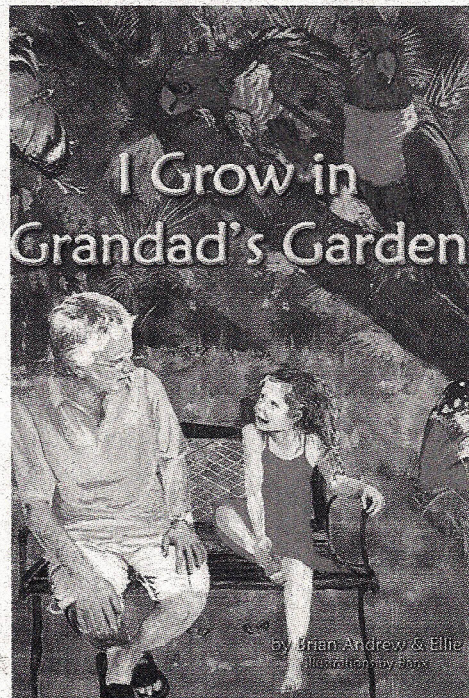
With a strong link to faith, *I Grow in Grandad's Garden* has themes of forgiveness, gratitude and kindness relayed in a poetic, colourful and engaging way.

The "Think and thank seat", "Dream table" and "Let go log" are some places visited in the book as Brian takes the reader on a journey of self-awareness and reflection.

The New Zealand-born father and grandfather, married to Moria for 34 years, has a strong Christian faith originating in childhood.

"Growing up I went to everything (for faith development) I could because I was so hungry for God," Brian said.

After undertaking some "inter-denominational studies" he found himself



working for World Vision and further understanding the value of human life.

To Brian the book doesn't ask the question, "Where is God?" but more, "Where isn't He?"

Comments to describe *I Grow in Grandad's Garden* include "inspiring ... a feature of our classroom culture" and "the perfect gift for disadvantaged families".

The Brisbane author is working on other books – one exploring the value of being responsible and another appreciating "the life lessons that we can learn from creatures and animals".

For more details about his work go to www.grandadsgarden.com.au