



MARY AIKENHEAD MINISTRIES

JOURNEYS

NEWSLETTER

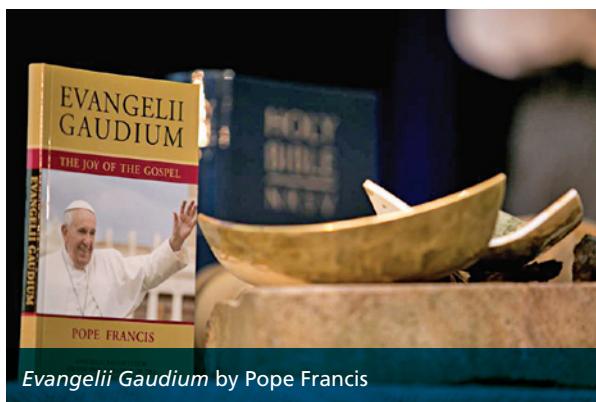
VOLUME 7 | ISSUE 2 | JUNE 2015

JOYFUL HEARTS LIVING THE GOSPEL

Our ministries serve during a time of many changes. The theme of this year's Mary Aikenhead Ministries conference *Joyful Hearts – Living the Gospel* was inspired by key messages of Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium*: messages of joyful service in living the Gospel through our everyday work and relationships. The conference was held in Brisbane on 21-22 May.

The conference Mass was celebrated by the Vicar General Monsignor Peter Meneely in the Cathedral of St Stephen, with the wonderful accompaniment of the Mt St Michael College choir and liturgical dance by College students.

Ms Darlene Dreise, Mission Executive of St Vincent's Private Hospital Toowoomba, and Ms Mary Dalmau, Mission Executive of Holy Spirit Northside Private Hospital, invited attendees to join in a beautiful reflection to open the conference. Their clever adaptation of contemporary media as news reporters in "Business Today" about Pope Francis was brilliant and engaging.



Evangelii Gaudium by Pope Francis

Our energetic and inspiring keynote speaker, Fr Stephen Bevans SVD, a priest in the Society of the Divine Word, reflected on Pope Francis' messages of joy, tenderness and mercy expressed in *Evangelii Gaudium*. Fr Bevans challenged the attendees to reflect deeply about how this would translate into their own ministries.



David Bryant, Melinda Sukhla, Paul Robertson and Brendan Earle at the conference

Fr Bevans' two presentations spoke to the heart and aptly bookended inspirational examples of joyful service: the dinner speech by Ms Sarah Brown and five scenarios from Mary Aikenhead Ministries.

Ms Sarah Brown amazed, empowered and enlightened us with her story of a personal odyssey developing and implementing the delivery of mobile renal dialysis services to Indigenous communities in remote regions in the Northern Territory and Western Australia.

Miss Tessa Holman and Miss Jacqui Hurwood, Mt St Michael College students, presented the first scenario on *College Indigenous Outreach Programs*. Tessa and Jacqui gave an outstanding and moving account of how our four Colleges involve young women in culturally sensitive immersion programs with Indigenous communities.

It was wonderful to gain the perspectives of all four Colleges in a common mission of the education ministries.

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JOYFUL HEARTS

LIVING THE GOSPEL

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In the second scenario, *Inclusive Health*, Ms Cheryle Royle, General Manager, and Mr Matthew Kearney, Mission Executive of St Vincent's Private Hospital Brisbane, described the successful partnership between St Vincent's Private Hospital, Mater Hospital Brisbane and Micah Projects to provide a continuum of health and social services to the homeless in the Brisbane area. They highlighted the importance of acknowledging that we do not have the whole solution to issues and the need to work with partners to care for the poor and vulnerable.



Sr Anthea Groves rsc, Helen Miller and Dr Anthony Grabs

Mr Ian Grisold, Chief Executive Officer of St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne, wrote a wonderful blog about the remaining three scenarios and has kindly given his permission to include his reflections on these remaining scenarios. I am deeply grateful to Ian for sharing his insights and reflections.

In the third scenario, *Alcohol-related Harm and Violence*, Mr Toby Hall, CEO of St Vincent's Health Australia, and Dr Tony Grabs, Director of Trauma at St Vincent's Hospital Sydney, discussed the reduction of alcohol-related harm and violence since the introduction of lock-out laws in New South Wales. Figures from the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research show that since the laws came into effect, assaults have fallen by 32% in Kings Cross and 40% in Sydney's CBD, making a profound difference to the cases presenting to the emergency department of St Vincent's Darlinghurst. As we advocate for the existing law to remain in place and look at its expansion across other regions, it is an important part of our mission and work in health and education to promote a culture of responsible drinking while continuing to care for people without judgment.

In the fourth scenario, Ms Gemma Sisia, CEO of the *School of St Jude in Tanzania*, and former student of St Vincent's College in Sydney, shared her story of growing a school from a handful of sponsored students in 2002 to over 1,900 students across three campuses. 95% of students at St Jude's receive free education

at primary and secondary levels and support comes via sponsorship from individuals, families, service clubs and schools around the world. St Jude's also provides employment to over 350 local Tanzanian staff, including three sets of local headmasters and their academic teams.

The fifth scenario on *Exemplary Dementia Care* by Mr Paul Hurst personally resonated with Ian. Paul is a Pastoral Carer at St Joseph's Village Aged Care Facility in Sydney and runs a program with dementia residents focusing on storytelling and imagination. Paul shared a video showing a group of seven dementia residents; some had not talked to their family in years. The residents were shown a picture of a woman and asked "What do you see?" The residents did not rely on their memory to describe the picture, but instead relied on their imagination. Their responses were later collated into storybooks for their family. The program supports the idea of living in a vibrant community instead of classifying dementia as being the end of one's life. For those of us with family members facing dementia, it was very powerful to witness the difference between working with imagination and enjoying our time together versus the anguish of trying to recall memory.



John Slattery, Trustee Michele Hugonet, Fr Stephen Bevans SVD and Trustee David Alcock

During the closing session of the conference the 2015 pilgrims were missioned in a special ceremony where they received a journey stone for the pilgrimage and conference participants wrote letters to be taken with the pilgrims with the blessing of the conference.

The conference celebrated with joy the service of our people in the education, health, research and social services of Mary Aikenhead Ministries.

Dr Tessa Ho
Trustee of Mary Aikenhead Ministries

RECENT VISITS

TO THE MINISTRIES

During May the Trustees of Mary Aikenhead Ministries visited three of the research institutes associated with St Vincent's Health Australia as well as Catholic Ladies' College and St Columba's College for their annual general meetings.

The College annual general meetings took place when the Trustees were in Melbourne for their May meeting. During their visit to Catholic Ladies' College in Eltham on 18 May, the Trustees toured the recently refurbished Year 7 facilities and Currajeen classrooms. The next day at St Columba's College in Essendon, the Trustees inspected the new state-of-the-art learning centre in the former College library.

The Trustees took part in the annual general meetings of the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute on 23 April, the Garvan Institute on 12 May and the St Vincent's Institute of Medical Research on 25 May. On each occasion, the Trustees drew attention to the vision of the Sisters of Charity in establishing research institutes in Sydney and Melbourne as part of their service of the poor and vulnerable. At the conclusion of the three annual general meetings, the Trustees presented the respective institute with its bronze plaque recognising the 175 year anniversary of the Sisters of Charity in Australia and the role of the Congregation in founding the research institute.

There was particular significance in the St Vincent's Institute annual general meeting, which was the first major gathering since the merger on 30 April 2015 of the O'Brien Institute, another Melbourne-based research institute founded by the Sisters of Charity, with neighbouring St Vincent's Institute.

The amalgamation is a significant step in the journey towards the Aikenhead Centre for Medical Discovery, which will see a bioengineering research and education hub established on the Fitzroy campus of St Vincent's Health Australia. The annual general meeting was followed by the St Vincent's Institute Forum 2015, *Beyond Pills – The Therapeutic Revolution* with local and international speakers and chaired by Sir Gustav Nossal.

In reflections prepared for the research institute annual general meetings, the Trustees noted that Pope Francis' general prayer intention for March 2015 had been for researchers – "that those involved in scientific research may serve the wellbeing of the whole human person".



Trustee Sr Helen Clarke rsc presenting the 175 year plaque to Executive Director of the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute Professor Bob Graham AO

As a tribute to those in St Vincent's Health Australia, the Trustees also highlighted the following from an address by Pope Francis in April 2014:

"Scientific research has increased the possibilities for prevention and care; it has discovered therapies to treat a wide variety of diseases. You have also worked for this most worthy commitment: to respond to the needs and hopes of the sick throughout the world".

Professor Gabrielle McMullen AM
Trustee of Mary Aikenhead Ministries

CELEBRATIONS

200 YEARS OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY



The Trustees of Mary Aikenhead Ministries are honouring the Sisters of Charity this year by presenting each Sister with a gift of a framed photograph of Mary Aikenhead and her grave in Donnybrook to mark

the 200 years of the founding of the Religious Sisters of Charity in Dublin (pictured above).

Most gifts are being presented at a morning or afternoon tea within each State, when Trustees are able to interact with the Sisters and to acknowledge some of the wonderful achievements of the last 200 years. Less mobile Sisters have been visited individually.

The gift ceremonies also provide an opportunity for the Trustees to acknowledge the elevation of Mary Aikenhead to Venerable by Pope Francis.

Sr Helen Clarke rsc

Trustee of Mary Aikenhead Ministries



Sisters of Charity with Trustees of Mary Aikenhead Ministries at the Darlinghurst afternoon tea

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE, KINGAROY

In 2015, St Mary's Catholic College celebrates the combined anniversaries of St Mary's Convent School established in 1929, St Mary's Secondary School in 1965 and South Burnett Catholic College in 1990. Major festivities were held on the weekend of 30-31 May in Kingaroy.

On behalf of the Trustees, Dr Tessa Ho attended the combined anniversaries' Mass and dinner, joining about 300 guests who included past principals, students, their families and distinguished guests. In her address, Ms Pam Betts, Executive Director of Brisbane Catholic Education, expressed gratitude for the contribution the Sisters of Charity had made to the establishment of a Catholic school in Kingaroy 86 years ago and paid tribute to their remarkable and extraordinary commitment to Catholic education in Queensland.

Dr Ho presented a plaque to the College Principal commemorating 175 years since the arrival of the first Sisters of Charity in Australia and recalling how four Sisters of Charity commenced the school in 1929, with 30 students, in a single room of their convent.

The Sisters continued in their education ministry in Kingaroy until 1934 when teaching was taken over by the Sisters of the Good Samaritan. It was particularly moving to meet two past students of the Sisters of Charity: Mr Kevin Schultz who was one of the original class of 1929, and Mr Douglas Smith who was in the class of 1934.

Dr Tessa Ho

Trustee of Mary Aikenhead Ministries



Mr Michael Naylor, Principal (left) and Mr Douglas Smith (right) with Trustee Dr Tessa Ho



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