



# JOURNEYS

NEWSLETTER

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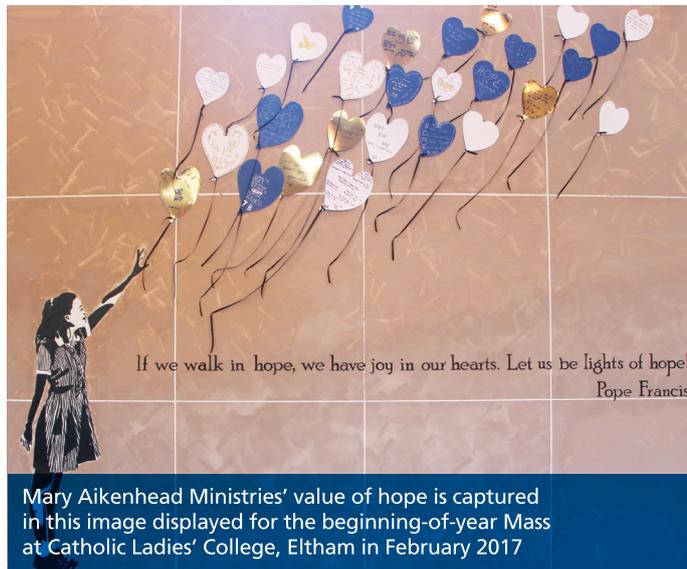
## HOPE FOR THE JOURNEY

A driving dynamic of Mary Aikenhead Ministries is hope – it is that spirit which holds us together; it is our energy, our sense of aliveness, indeed our sense of commitment and mission. If we had nothing to hope for, there would be no purpose for our ministries. The person of Jesus embodied forgiveness and generosity. A life of hope sees the good in others, is patient with their shortcomings and tenaciously envisions them at their best. Jesus proclaimed God's realm of love, justice, compassion and hope. No matter what role or position we hold, as hopeful people we maintain fairness, integrity and a passionate commitment to imagining new and creative ways to proclaim the vision and mission of Mary Aikenhead Ministries. Jesus exemplified hope that cultivates true interior freedom. To hope is to see with the eye of the heart. To hope is to make the heart the beginning and end of one's discernment.

Václav Havel served as the first President of the Czech Republic, and his name is associated with this quotation on hope:

*"Either we have hope within us or we don't; it is a dimension of the soul, and it's not dependent on some observation of the world. Hope is an orientation of the spirit, an orientation of the heart; it transcends the world that is immediately experienced, and is anchored somewhere beyond the horizons...Hope, above all, gives the strength to live and continually try new things."*

Václav Havel in *Disturbing the Peace*, Chapter 5, 1986, tr. 1990.



If we walk in hope, we have joy in our hearts. Let us be lights of hope!  
Pope Francis

Mary Aikenhead Ministries' value of hope is captured in this image displayed for the beginning-of-year Mass at Catholic Ladies' College, Eltham in February 2017

The mission of God beckons us to see in hope the 'now', empowering us to live in a new, even amazing and transformed way. We join our voices confidently and with conviction that, enlivened with the hope of the Gospel, we will continue to respond with creativity and imagination, with the touch of God's love, to the voices of the poor, vulnerable and marginalised.

### HOPE

*Risk to find hope*  
*Risk to live your dreams*  
*Risk to find the hope to believe.*  
*Risk to find the heart of hope*  
*Risk to find your vocation*  
*Risk to find the hope to love.*  
*Risk to believe in hope*  
*Risk to catch it before it fades away...*  
*Risk to imagine new possibilities...*  
*Risk to explore hope*  
*Risk to proclaim the mission*  
*Risk to live the present filled with hope.*

May we continue to be women and men of hope as we serve the poor and marginalised with love and compassion.

Linda Ferrington rsc  
Trustee of Mary Aikenhead Ministries

# HOPE IN ACTION

## SVHA IN PARTNERSHIP WELCOMES REFUGEES TO ELTHAM



Image above and right: The refurbished units at Eltham have been made homely and attractive with generous community donations



The number of displaced people around the globe is at its highest level ever and we are challenged by Pope Francis and others to “welcome the stranger”. St Vincent’s Health Australia (SVHA) has partnered with CatholicCare Melbourne and the wider community in Eltham to do just that.

In February 2015 SVHA took ownership of a residential aged care facility in Eltham, some 25 kilometres north-east of Melbourne and next door to Mary Aikenhead Ministries’ Catholic Ladies’ College. A number of units on the site had fallen into disrepair and were no longer fit for residential use. Later that year, when the Australian Government announced that it would make an extra 12,000 humanitarian places available for resettlement of Syrian refugees, the SVHA Board took the decision to refurbish these units and provide accommodation for such refugees. The Board approved expenditure of \$2.4 million for the renovation of 60 disused units with the aim of providing medium-term rental accommodation. These units are separate from the residential aged care and independent living facilities on the site so that there was no impact on the other residents.

SVHA, recognising that its expertise was not in providing services for refugees and asylum seekers, was pleased to advance the Eltham initiative in partnership with CatholicCare Melbourne. Together they are supporting refugees to adjust to their new home in Australia and establish positive links in the local community. At the same time the new arrivals build up a rental history, paying an affordable level of rent, in preparation for later moving into the private rental market.

CatholicCare has employed an on-site Case Manager and a part-time Tenancy Support Worker for the project, along with a volunteer live-in lead tenant. It has also received and coordinated support from other entities, including local parishes and community groups, which have donated their time, money, various household items, toys and toiletries to support the refugees. It is also understood that many donated items will remain with the refugees when they eventually move into more permanent accommodation. This collaborative project is expected to run for two years and then the accommodation will then be transitioned to affordable housing for seniors.

Neighbouring Catholic Ladies’ College (CLC) also wanted to assist the project and it is no stranger when it comes to supporting refugees. Previously, it had employed a young refugee in the Maintenance Team and another as a soccer coach. Staff and students had been providing their time and expertise to teach English to local refugees as well as assisting refugee families with donations of goods and furniture. Further, members of CLC were spending time with these families doing anything from cleaning to mowing lawns to playing backyard cricket. When a very small pocket of locals voiced concerns to the Council about refugees being provided with accommodation in the Eltham area, many CLC staff and parents ensured Council officers were made aware of their support for SVHA’s initiative.

Whilst the plans to house refugees in the formerly disused section of the aged care facility were generally welcomed by the local community, this did not stop some anti-refugee protestors descending on Eltham at a protest rally in November 2016. What happened in response was nothing short of amazing – a group of wise locals banded together and set up a support group entitled “Welcome to Eltham”. Inspired by a local species of butterfly, known as the Eltham Copper Butterfly and which was near extinction in the late 1980s, the group organised more than 6,000 welcoming paper butterfly images across the neighbourhood. Placed on trees and fences along with chalk-drawn butterflies on the footpaths and “Welcome to Eltham” signs, these images offered a means of peacefully responding to anti-refugee protestors during, what the mainstream media dubbed, the “Battle for Eltham”. Thankfully, the Police were satisfied with the way both groups conducted themselves on the occasion but the impact of the butterflies was huge. The “Welcome to Eltham” group has continued its support for the refugees by donations of household goods.

With the courage to lead and vision to work in collaboration with others with complementary skills, an important step has been taken by SVHA to assist refugees to rebuild a life for themselves and their children. Along the way others have heard the call and lent their support – this is hope in action.

**David Alcock**

*Trustee of Mary Aikenhead Ministries*

# ST VINCENT'S CARE SERVICES, BRONTE



Image above and below: Chair of the Trustees of Mary Aikenhead Ministries Dr Tessa Ho and Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP of Sydney at the facility opening in Bronte

St Vincent's Care Services in Bronte, a new residential aged care facility of St Vincent's Health Australia (SVHA), was blessed and opened on 13 February by Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP.

Also in attendance were Bishop Terry Brady, Trustees of Mary Aikenhead Ministries Dr Tessa Ho, Sr Helen Clarke rsc, Sr Linda Ferrington rsc and Mr David Robinson, SVHA CEO Mr Toby Hall, SVHA Aged Care and Shared Services Division CEO Mr John Leahy, SVHA Director of Business and Service Development Aged Care (NSW) Ms Helen Miller, other senior SVHA staff, Facility Chaplain Fr Peter Clifford OFM, representatives of the Franciscan Order, the Sisters of Charity and Poor Clare Sisters, residents and their families.

Following the Chapel service and plaque unveiling, guests and residents were offered refreshments and an opportunity to mingle in the new Wellness Centre. Some guests then took a look over the beautiful new facility and explored services that are being offered to residents, such as the Library and Learning Centre, the Beauty and Hairdressing Centre and the on-site cafe.

## Helen Clarke rsc

Trustee of Mary Aikenhead Ministries



# A NEW PRINCIPAL IN BRISBANE

At the Opening Eucharist for 2017 celebrated by Fr Peter Brannelly of Jubilee Parish, Mt St Michael's College commissioned its new Principal, Ms Sharon Volp. After nine years as Principal of Chanel College in Gladstone, Sharon has taken on the role of third lay Principal of Mt St Michael's College.

The commissioning ceremony involved contributions by representatives from all strands of the Mt St Michael's community: Sisters of Charity, Mary Aikenhead Ministries' Trustees, Mary Aikenhead Education Australia and Queensland Catholic Education Commission representatives, the Presidents of the College Alumni and the Parents and Friends Association, and Year 12 Student Leaders. Personal friends of Sharon were also able to participate in this moving occasion.

The College's Opening Eucharist had a particular focus on the theme of Hope, which is the shared 2017 theme across the four Colleges within Mary Aikenhead Ministries. In addition to Ms Volp's commissioning, the Student Leadership Team for 2017 and all of the Year 12 cohort were also commissioned to their respective roles.



Principal Sharon Volp and Mt St Michael's College students

Sharon has had a busy start to her time at Mt St Michael's College. Her other special events have included hosting the annual Father-Daughter breakfast and welcoming all new Year 7 parents to an evening function at the College.

**Stephen Campion**

*Deputy Principal Mission, Mt St Michael's College*

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## STEWARDSHIP VISIT TO ST VINCENT'S CLINIC

On 21 February, the Trustees of Mary Aikenhead Ministries conducted one of their regular stewardship visits to St Vincent's Clinic. Located adjacent to St Vincent's Private Hospital in Darlinghurst and part of St Vincent's Health Australia (SVHA), the Clinic serves people in need by its ministries of multidisciplinary healthcare, compassionate community services, teaching and research. It is well-known for its comprehensive range of investigative, diagnostic and therapeutic services for patients, for its sponsorship of a SVHA community service – the Sisters of Charity Outreach, and for research and other projects funded through the St Vincent's Clinic Foundation.



Attendees at the stewardship visit to St Vincent's Clinic

During the visit the Trustees met with Directors of the Clinic Board, Foundation Trustees, Outreach Committee members, Ms Michelle Wilson, Executive Director of the Clinic and Mr Gary Sillett, General Manager of Outreach. Presentations were made on the Clinic's role in healthcare for the Asylum Seekers Centre and the

Solomon Islands. Later in the year the Trustees have also planned a stewardship visit to Outreach.

**Professor Gabrielle McMullen AM**

*Trustee of Mary Aikenhead Ministries*



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