



JOURNEYS

NEWSLETTER

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*Jesus asked, "Do you know what I have done to you?
You call me teacher and Lord – and you are right,
for that is what I am.*

*So, if I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet,
you also ought to wash one another's feet.*

*For I have set you an example, that you also should do
as I have done to you".*

(John 13:12-15)

This act of Jesus (washing of the disciples' feet) is a symbolic and real expression of love and service. It was a practised and acceptable custom of his time. What does it mean for us in our time? How might we interpret Jesus' action? How might we "wash each other's feet?" What figurative interpretation can we make of this action and this imperative from Jesus?

At the time of the writing of this article, the world has just learned of the death of Jean Vanier a great humanitarian, philosopher and theologian. He was able to wash the feet of others and helped many to do the same by creating communities of love and service. So, who was he, what did he do, what can we learn?

Vanier founded the L'Arche Communities which are currently in 35 countries with 147 communities supporting and living with people with disabilities.

Vanier was a wonderfully committed human being whose mission in life in simple terms was to love and help others to know they are loved.

The L'Arche motto is 'changing the world one heart at a time.'

'His love for Christ overflowed into every relationship with abundant grace. To meet him was to love him, to be loved – and in turn to love all others he loved. Such a luminous goodness was combined with humour, wisdom and practicality'.

In reflecting on Jean Vanier's life, his ministry and its far-reaching extent into so many countries throughout the world, I found myself reflecting on all that occurs in Mary Aikenhead Ministries with its extensive ministerial involvement in Australia's eastern states. On a daily basis thousands of people are served and loved in the way of Jesus.

Perhaps the line in the scripture passage chosen for us: *I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you*, is a potent reminder of why we do what we do.

The multiple ways in which we care for the sick and frail aged, assist the learning and development of young women, provide suitable care, support and outreach for those in need, celebrate the wonderful initiatives

and learnings from our research institutes, are all manifestations of doing as Jesus has done. Love in action.

Giving love expression is a foundation value in Mary Aikenhead Ministries.

We learn from Jesus but we can also learn from others, including Jean Vanier, an inspiring individual in our own time who encourages all to:

- let go of expectations
- recognize and respect every individual
- realize that every act of kindness is offered and freely given
- work with people of vision
- learn and keep being challenged no matter what

What is the challenge in this?

Love needs to be given and received for human relationships to thrive. Does this mean we have to do the extraordinary all the time? No. The simplest act of a smile, a question that says 'can I help you?', do you know where to go to find that?, or let me do that for you can be so significant for someone in need.

Another line in scripture occurs to me in relation to this: *Jesus looked at him and loved him*. Sometimes it's as simple as that!

Vanier's life was a reflection of his own words:

'To love someone is to show them their beauty, their worth and their importance', and 'Many people are good at talking about what they are doing, but in fact do little. Others do a lot but don't talk about it, they are the ones who make a community live'.

Thank you for each and every act of love and service which you give so generously each and every day.

May you know that you are appreciated and that what you are doing and giving is a gift of God to make our world a better place.

Laureen Dixon rsc
Trustee, Mary Aikenhead Ministries



INTRODUCING OUR NEW TRUSTEES

It is with great pleasure that I introduce four new Trustees who commenced their appointments on 1 May 2019.

Sr Laureen Dixon is a Sister of Charity who was the Chair of the Prophetic Culture Taskforce in 2006 and joint coordinator for the process to petition the Holy See for the establishment of Mary Aikenhead Ministries as a public juridic person in 2007. In September 2008, Sr Laureen was appointed Project Manager for the Implementation Phase of Mary Aikenhead Ministries.

Prof. Michael Drew was a Non-Executive Director of Holy Spirit Northside Private Hospital from January 2010 to December 2015 and is a current Board Member of St Laurence's College, Brisbane. Michael is a financial economist specialising in the areas of investment governance, asset allocation and portfolio design. Michael is Managing Partner of Stonechat Capital, a Director of Drew, Walk & Co., and a Professor of Finance at Griffith University.

Associate Professor Peter Howard is an Associate Professor and National Leader, Clemente Australia, within the Directorate, First Peoples and Equity Pathways of Australian Catholic University (ACU) with a background in leadership, change management, community engagement, research, consultancy, teaching and consultancy. As National Leader of Clemente Australia, Peter was key in establishing, maintaining and consolidating the program which brings together available resources and expertise in innovative ways to support the marginalised and isolation.

Ms Penny Wright is a solicitor, a Board member of the Sisters of Charity Foundation until 2018 and a current Board member of Waverley College. Penny has a background in corporate law and funds management, and is currently enrolled in a Masters of Law Program.

Dr Tessa Ho

Chair & Trustee, Mary Aikenhead Ministries



Top: Ms Penny Wright, Prof. Michael Drew.
Bottom: Assoc. Prof. Peter Howard, Laureen Dixon rsc

STEWARDSHIP VISIT TO MATER HOSPITAL

APRIL 2019

On 8 April 2019 the Trustees visited the Mater Hospital in North Sydney. The Trustees met with the recently appointed Chief Executive Officer, Heidi Bayliss and her executive team. During their discussion the executive provided an overview of the social responsibility programs currently available including:

- the Cana Farm project
- Mary's House, supporting women who experience domestic violence
- indigenous programs
- staff formation activities
- pastoral care support care within the hospital

In addition, the nursing excellence initiatives and pet therapy programs were explained and how important these initiatives are in supporting staff and patients at the hospital. The Trustees were very impressed during a tour of the maternity suites which provided insight into the wonderful care and support shown by the nursing staff to patients (mothers and babies), particularly those experiencing hardship through illness.

The Trustees are grateful for the care and kindness shown to all patients and their families and the wonderful ongoing work provided by all who work at and support the Mater Hospital, North Sydney.

[Ms Christine Raeside](#)

Executive Officer, Mary Aikenhead Ministries



The Trustees of Mary Aikenhead Ministries and Executive Team of the Mater Hospital

THANK YOU

If you listen enough to the media you will begin to develop a particular view of young people as self-absorbed, technologically obsessed and voracious followers and consumers of celebrity and fashion. Coupled with this is the perception that they have very short attention spans; a lack of concern for our communal future and a craving for quick solutions to complex issues and problems. So to be involved in the education of young people at this time might seem to be a very difficult task, given our strong commitment to the Mary Aikenhead Ministry values of love, hope, compassion and justice.

Each year in our four Colleges we award the Mary Aikenhead Ministries Social Justice Award to acknowledge the outstanding leadership of a young woman who has 'turned the tables' on the expectations of her generation and provided each of us with an example of inspiring commitment to the power of love and compassion in bringing forth just action and hope in our world.

In January this year I received a letter from Grace Hayes, recipient of the St Vincent's College MAM Social Justice Award thanking me for the opportunity to attend

two of our Colleges for her secondary education; Catholic Ladies' College and St Vincent's College.

What is most notable about Grace's letter is her deep sense of gratitude for the culture of the schools she attended, one that was transparent and consistent across both settings. I am sure that, like me, as you read Grace's letter (on page 4) you will feel humbled by the way she has enlivened and lived our values within and beyond their College community, and her commitment to continue do so in the future. Here is a young woman of passion and energy, who in her own words draws from the 'wisdom, courage and love' of Mary Aikenhead in embarking on the next stage of her life journey.

It is at times such as these that I am privileged to be the Mary Aikenhead Education Australia Ministry Leader, to have contact with such remarkable schools who support and encourage such remarkable young women to continue to tell and live such a remarkable story in such a prophetic and transformational way.

[Mr Peter Kelly](#)

Ministry Leader, Mary Aikenhead Education Australia

THANK YOU LETTER FROM MISS GRACE HAYES

Dear Mr Peter Kelly,

My name is Grace Hayes, and I attended both Catholic Ladies' College and St Vincent's College for my high school education, and was the recipient of the Mary Aikenhead Ministry's Award for St Vincent's College 2018. I wanted to thank you for the opportunity to attend such incredible schools, and for the award.

I attended Catholic Ladies' College (CLC) from Year 7 until the middle of Year 11. CLC taught me how to appreciate every opportunity given to me, acting with forgiveness, care and kindness in all of my actions. The fundamental support and guidance I received at that school set the foundation for the way in which I now interact with the wider community. It has always been the Sisters of Charity's fourth vow that guided my school life, Service to the Poor, and it was CLC that instilled such a sense of justice.

I moved to St Vincent's College (SVC) at the beginning of Term 3 Year 11, starting as a boarder. It was difficult, however because the school was also under Mary Aikenhead Ministries, I felt incredibly at ease. As you know, SVC highlights the importance of justice, hope and compassion for all. They provided me with incredible opportunities academically and pastorally. I loved every minute at the school, and being in boarding made everything better. It allowed me to go beyond my comfort zone, and made me have stronger resilience and determination.

Boarding also allowed me to meet girls from all over Australia, and the world. It exposed me to situations which I would not have been a part of in any other school, and has led me to create life-long friends. It was the best decision I could've made. It is with such an education and opportunities that I now go out into the world with a motivation to live justly and have confidence and integrity.

SVC guided me through the toughest year of them all, Year 12. My teachers created a Year 12 experience like no other, where I was supported academically and pastorally, allowing for me and the rest of year level to reach their full potential. My year level was incredible as well, with girls from diverse backgrounds, making the last year of school unique. The HSC process was made - if possible - a little bit easier with the help of both the school leadership team and my teachers.

Therefore, without the help from my schools, and Mary Aikenhead Ministries, I wouldn't have been able to secure my spot at Strathallan School in Perthshire, Scotland, working as a Gap Assistant for my gap year. It was SVC that inspired and nurtured my passion for education, as I witness many great teachers lead the next generation. Such teachers gifted me with the ability to stretch my horizons, hence the move to Scotland. Without their guidance and support I wouldn't of had this opportunity.

I look forward to visiting Donnybrook, Ireland to see Mary Aikenhead's house and grave, and pay my respects to a woman who has guided my life so profoundly. It is in her wisdom, courage and love that I embark on this journey.

Thank you again,

Kind Regards,
Grace Hayes

Celebrating 10 Years



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