



# JOURNEYS

NEWSLETTER

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## HOPE

In a secular sense hope is a healer, it whispers things will get better. Hope can show us how to act. While not tied to a particular outcome, we are more likely to see the opportunities that come our way. Hope can be a motivator, a source of energy. Hope is the opposite to despair. At a time of crisis, Captain Sir Tom Moore became an unlikely national hero that provided the UK and indeed the whole world with a great deal of hope.

Victor Frankl in his acclaimed book 'Mans Search for Meaning', observed that prisoners in the German concentration camp were less likely to survive when they found their suffering meaningless and so succumbed to hopelessness. He noted that the one thing we always possess regardless of external circumstances, is our freedom to choose how we respond to any given situation.

In the Bible, faith and hope often seem to be interchangeable. Pope Benedict in his encyclical 'Spe Salvi', observed that we need the greater and lesser hopes that keep us going day by day. But these are not enough without the great hope which must surpass everything else. This great hope can only be God. The fact that it comes to us as a gift is part of hope. God is the foundation of hope.

As we begin this new year, so mindful of the impact the pandemic has had on people's lives and livelihoods, we look to the future with hope. Hope is one of the cornerstone values of Mary Aikenhead Ministries and at this point in time, it seems so essential to highlight it as central to our wellbeing as Christians and as human beings.

We describe hope in our values statement as a light in the darkness, the door that opens onto the future. Hope is neither a denial of suffering,

nor a resigned acceptance of fate. Hope arises from the wellsprings of purpose and orients the human spirit towards the possibility of new life. As Christians we are motivated by Jesus's promise of a future that is in loving hands.

Over the past 12 months I have been inspired and humbled by the response of everyone in our ministries to the COVID-19 crisis. It has filled me with both pride and hope. Our mission is to bring the healing ministry of Jesus to our community, especially the marginalized and vulnerable. The actions of our frontline health workers in hospitals and aged care facilities, our researchers, our outreach personnel, our teachers, all the support teams, have given powerful witness to this mission. The support and leadership given by our Boards and their executive teams cannot be underestimated. Lay ecclesial leadership is alive and well in our ministries. When the 5 Sisters of Charity set out for Australia from Dunleary harbor in 1838, I am sure that they were somewhat anxious about what lay ahead but also filled with hope and confidence in divine providence. Some 180 years later our people serving in our ministries faced monumental challenges navigating uncharted waters- but with the same heart, same mission.

My prayerful hope is that our mission, so beautifully established by Venerable Mary Aikenhead and the Sisters of Charity, will continue into the future.

This hope has been very much nourished by the example of everyone in our ministries over the past 12 months.

God bless you all.

*Mr Gary Humphrys  
Trustee, Mary Aikenhead Ministries*

# INTRODUCING THE BOARD OF MARY AIKENHEAD EDUCATION LTD

In response to several recommendations which arose from the governance review commissioned by the Trustees in 2019, the role of Directors of Mary Aikenhead Education has been separated from the role of Trustees and at the end of 2020 a recruitment process was completed to appoint an independent Mary Aikenhead Education Limited Board. There was an overwhelming response to our advertisement.

The Trustees are delighted to share with our communities a brief background on each of the outstanding professionals appointed to our new Board and we thank them for their willingness to contribute their considerable expertise and commitment to our Mary Aikenhead Ministries' community.

As with St Vincent's Health Australia, the role of Mary Aikenhead Education Limited (MAEL) is to support the Trustees of Mary Aikenhead Ministries in their governance, discernment and decision-making in relation to stewardship of our ministries. The education ministry consists of four girls' secondary Colleges across three States: Mt St Michael's College, Ashgrove in Queensland, St Vincent's College, Potts Point in New South Wales, Catholic Ladies' College, Eltham and St Columba's College, Essendon in Victoria, each of which have their own incorporated College Board.

*We welcome:*

## BOARD CHAIR: PROFESSOR MARIE EMMITT

Professor Marie has spent a lifetime in education. She commenced her professional life as a classroom teacher and then spent many years in teacher education. She took on numerous leadership roles at Deakin University before being appointed as Executive Dean of the multi campus Faculty of Education at the Australian Catholic University. Marie was Dean for ten years and on retirement became an Emeritus Professor of the University. Marie's area of expertise was language and literacy education, teacher education and international education. During her time at Australian Catholic University, she contributed to research and curriculum development in the emerging area of identity and curriculum in Catholic education. In addition, Marie has been involved in teacher education internationally, most recently in East Timor and Cambodia with the Jesuits and at the Divine Word University in Papua New Guinea.

Throughout her career Marie maintained close contact with schools and was active on state and national curriculum bodies including being a member of the National Curriculum Board and national president of the Australian Literacy Educators' Association. Marie is also a Fellow of the Australian College of Educators and was awarded Life membership.



Marie has had considerable experience with school and system governance. She was a member of the Xavier College Council in Melbourne and St Ignatius College Council in Sydney; a member of the Jesuit Schools Commission, chair of St Mary's Parish Primary School, East St Kilda, chair of the Nazareth Parish Education Board and previously deputy chair of the former Mary Aikenhead Ministries Education Advisory Council. Currently she chairs the FCJ Education Board Australia and is member of the St Ignatius College Board, Geelong.

Marie is married and now living in Breamlea, Victoria.

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## BOARD DIRECTOR: MR DAVID ROBINSON

David is a former legal counsel and company secretary of a leading listed financial services company and is now a non-executive director. Past directorships include investment management, private equity and superannuation companies in the AMP and CBA Groups. He has been a past deputy Chair of Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College Limited. David is currently Chair of Catholic Healthcare Limited and is a member of St. Vincent de Paul Society – Terrigal Conference.

David has a strong corporate governance background in both the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors



## BOARD DIRECTOR: MS HILARY JOHNSTON-CROKE

Hilary was born and educated in the UK, and taught in the UK, US and Australia.

She has an extensive background in education and governance, from early childhood to tertiary. A scientist by training, she is a highly respected and experienced educator with over 23 years as a Principal. She was Principal and CEO/Executive Director Kincoppal-Rose Bay School Board, at one of Australia's leading independent schools, School of the Sacred Heart, and Principal at Catherine McAuley, Westmead.

Hilary is highly skilled and experienced in corporate governance, financial management, strategic thinking and leadership mentoring, more recently lending her expertise and guidance to several boards as a non-executive director, including the University of Notre Dame, Australia, The Infants Home Child and Family Services, the Alannah and Madeleine Foundation and Mary Mackillop Today.

Hilary also currently works with school leaders in Mentoring and Leadership Development.



Hilary has held many leadership appointments throughout her career including - President of the Secondary Principals' Association of the Diocese of Parramatta, Member of the Parramatta Diocesan Schools Board, Executive Member of the NSW Association of Catholic School Principals and Deputy President of the Association of Independent Girls Schools (NSW). She was recently honored by Pope Francis with the Award of Dame of the Order of St Gregory for her services to education in Australia.

Hilary is married and is the mother of 2 adult children and grandmother to 3 young children.

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## BOARD DIRECTOR: MR IAN GIBSON

Ian Gibson has over 35 years' experience in business and information technology from roles as chair, director, business and IT executive and consulting partner. He brings a strong understanding of the challenges of leadership, strategy, independent thinking and personal commitment and engagement.

Ian is passionate about the transformative power of education as it provides individuals, irrespective of their socio-economic, ethnic or cultural background, with the ability to be whatever they have the desire and potential to be.

He currently chairs the superannuation Gateway Operators' association, GATE; is a Non-executive director of the Australia Business Software Industry Association (ABSIA); and a Non-executive director of the Gateway Network Governance Body (GNGB).

Ian was a Partner with Accenture, an international consulting firm, where he focused on business and IT-enabled strategy and organisational design. He worked with senior executives and directors from some of the largest organisations in the world and across countries including Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, and the USA. He has also held several senior executive and Chief Information Officer roles.



Ian has a BSc degree in Computer Science and Mathematics and a Master's in Business Administration. He is also a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Ian is married to Roslyn and they have two adult sons. His leisure activities include basketball, chess, fitness, food and wine (with a keen interest in Sake), collecting and reading books, and an emerging interest in mountaineering! In 2012, Ian attempted to summit Aconcagua, the highest mountain in the southern hemisphere, and also attempted Mt Cook in 2016; he summited Kilimanjaro and Mt Meru in 2018 and climbed the top 10 summits in Australia in 2019 and then again in 2020!

## BOARD DIRECTOR: MS LEESA JEFFCOAT

Leesa Jeffcoat has extensive experience as an educator and administrator in Catholic and independent schools. Leesa holds a Diploma of Teaching (Primary), a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Education (Hons), a Masters in Educational Administration as well as letters in Speech and Drama and Music. Leesa also holds fellowships with the Australian College of Educators and the Australian College of Educational Leaders and is a member of both the Australian Institute of Management and the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

In 2013 Leesa was awarded the honour of Member of the Order of Australia in the General Division in recognition of her leadership in the areas of education, especially in rural and remote areas, and her work in Catholic health governance.

Leesa was appointed to the role of Diocesan Director of Catholic Education (Diocese of Rockhampton) in 2001. Prior to this she taught in both primary and secondary schools and held senior leadership roles within Catholic Education (Diocese of Rockhampton). Leesa has a particular interest in teaching and learning and the promotion of educational opportunities in rural and regional settings. As Director, Leesa has introduced Kindergarten education to Catholic Education commencing 10 new centres to date, as well as opened 4 new Catholic Primary schools and a Secondary college and has also overseen an extensive Capital Works Program comprising significant upgrades of infrastructure, facilities and resources at all Catholic schools and colleges in the Diocese.

Most notably, Leesa has had the care and protection of the children enrolled in Catholic schools and colleges in the Diocese as her highest priority. To that end, Leesa



has overseen the development and implementation of stringent and best practice Student Protection Policies and Processes.

In addition to her role as Director of Catholic Education, Leesa was the Chairman of Mercy Health and Aged Care Central Queensland Limited which operates three (3) Mater hospitals and three (3) Residential Aged Care Facilities in Central Queensland. Leesa concluded this role in 2018.

Over several years, Leesa also held positions with the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (including the role of Chair) and made significant contributions to English and Literature curriculum development during this time.

Leesa is the immediate past Chair of CEnet, a not-for-profit company that provides Information Technology (IT) services for 16 member Dioceses across Australia.

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## BOARD DIRECTOR: PROFESSOR RENEE KOHLER-RYAN

Professor Renée Köhler-Ryan earned a Bachelor of Liberal Arts in the USA and a Masters and PhD in Philosophy at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven before becoming a Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Notre Dame Australia.

Based in Sydney with her growing family, she is now the acting national Head of School for the School of Philosophy and Theology at the same University. Passionate about Catholic education and the Catholic Liberal Arts Tradition, Renée helped to design the Studies in Catholic Thought curriculum for Stage Six students in NSW.

She serves as a consultant for various dioceses in Australia, on issues ranging from liturgical art and architecture to religious education and teacher formation. She was the Chair for one of the Discernment and Writing Groups for the Plenary



Council of Australia and is a newly appointed member of the Sydney Catholic Schools Catholic Mission and Identity Committee. Her research and teaching areas include religious education, teacher formation, and the Catholic Intellectual Tradition.

# ST VINCENT'S PRIVATE HOSPITAL MELBOURNE

## LITTLE BLUE TOWELS

### Common Care for Our Common Earth

*"Teach us to discover the worth of each thing"*  
(A Prayer for the Earth, Pope Francis)

Across Mary Aikenhead Ministries there is an ever-increasing focus on "placing Care of the Earth at the heart of all we do". Each of us do it in our own ways and often those actions may go untold. The Little Blue Towels program is one such action and shows the impact of redesigning, recycling, collaborating and discovering the worth of each thing...in new ways.

The Little Blue Towels are used in theatres for drying the hands of surgeons, anaesthetists and nurses. Normally they are used once and then discarded. Dr David Hays, an anaesthetist at St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne, realised the possibility of redesigning and recycling the towels. His idea gives new life to the towels, and new possibilities to others. As part of the Little Blue Towels initiative they are now collected, laundered and packaged by people living with disability in country Victoria, providing valuable employment.

The towels are then sold as travel or golf towels with all income generated donated to the OTIS Foundation which provides a network of free retreat accommodation to people living with the challenges of breast cancer and their family and friends.

The OTIS Foundation is the legacy of Judy Burley who throughout her own battle with breast cancer found great comfort in natural settings, including her rural Victorian property. Her vision was to provide a sanctuary to others facing similar challenges so that they could benefit from the nurturing, comforting and restorative power of nature while living with serious illness.

Little Blue Towels now operates in 18 hospitals across Victoria, collecting over 400,000 towels a year, and saving 20 tonnes of used towels from ending up in landfill. With caring thoughtfulness and ingenuity the Little Blue Towels initiative cares for the Earth, strengthens the worth of people and provides a financial resource for the supportive care of those living with serious illness.



Visit [www.littlebluetowels.com.au](http://www.littlebluetowels.com.au) for more information on the project. Thank you for your support.

Assoc. Prof. Peter Howard  
Trustee, Mary Aikenhead Ministries

*"May we ever in heart and soul say Amen!"*  
(Venerable Mary Aikenhead)

# A MAM BABY SHOWER

On Thursday 18 February 2021 the MAM office, together with special guests Dr Tessa Ho and Sr Linda Ferrington, hosted a baby shower high tea for our resident "foodie" and accountant Ms Amy Pei!

It was a joyous occasion coming together to celebrate with Amy after much time spent physically apart during the last 12 months.

Congratulations to Amy and Patrick, we wish them all the very best for the impending and safe arrival of their baby boy in March. We hope they enjoy their journey into parenthood and look forward to meeting bub soon!

Ms Angela Thomas

Operations Manager, Mary Aikenhead Ministries



## Conference Postponement Notice

We wish to advise that the August 2021 Mary Aikenhead Ministries' Conference has been rescheduled to 4 & 5 August 2022.

The health and well-being of the people in our ministries and associates is important to all of us. The continued uncertainty and concern around the

COVID-19 pandemic, especially in respect of large indoor gatherings, has forced the Trustees to reconsider the timing of the conference.

We hope that the situation will improve greatly over the coming months and allow us to host the conference next year.



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