



MARY AIKENHEAD MINISTRIES

JOURNEYS

NEWSLETTER

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HOPE



HOPE

Pope Francis has spoken extensively about the virtue of hope throughout his papacy. He emphasises that hope is a fundamental aspect of the Christian faith and that it is necessary for people to be able to overcome difficulties and challenges in life. Hope is not just a feeling, but an action, it's not just an emotion but a decision. Hope is closely tied to the belief in eternal life and salvation, and that it gives us the motivation to lead a virtuous life and to strive for holiness.

Pope Francis encourages people to have hope for the future, even in difficult times, and to not give up. He reminds us that hope is a virtue that is not dependent on circumstances, but on the promises of God. He encourages people to be a sign of hope for others, particularly for those who are most in need, to be the light that shines in the darkness. Hope is the light that guides us in the darkness, it helps us to see the good in everything, and it gives us the strength and courage to persevere.

The Saints have also reminded us of the importance of having hope in our lives:

- Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta: *"Hope and joy are the most contagious of all. They are the most powerful weapons against the forces of darkness. They are the light that dispels the darkness and the warmth that melts the ice of apathy and indifference."*
- Saint Pope John Paul II: *"Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song."*
- Saint Faustina Kowalska: *"Hope is like a beam of light shining in the darkness; it is like a tiny spark that can set a great fire burning. Hope is the strength that enables us to hold on in difficult times and to persevere in the face of adversity."*
- Saint Thomas Aquinas: *"Hope is the virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit."*

Venerable Mary Aikenhead saw hope as an important aspect of her work as a religious leader and founder of the Sisters of Charity. She believed that hope was essential for the poor and marginalised people they served, as it gave them the strength and courage to overcome the difficulties they faced. Mother Mary saw her work as an opportunity to bring hope to those in need, and to help them see a better future for themselves.

But how can we practically live out the theological virtue of hope? Perhaps we could consider incorporating it into our daily lives through a number of ways:

- Praying: We can practice hope by regularly praying and asking God for the gift of hope. We can also meditate on Bible verses that speak of hope, such as Romans 15:13, *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."*
- Trusting in God: Practicing hope means trusting in God's plan for our lives, even when things are difficult. This means accepting that God is in control and that He has a purpose for everything that happens in our lives.
- Helping others: Practicing hope also means helping others, especially those who are in need. Our amazing ministries across health and education do this daily by serving the poor and vulnerable in our community.
- Practicing forgiveness: Practicing hope means forgiving others and letting go of grudges. Holding on to anger and resentment only brings despair and takes away hope.
- Living in the present: Practicing hope means living in the present, not dwelling on the past or worrying about the future. Hope helps us to live in the present, to be grateful for what we have, and to look forward to the future with confidence.
- Being hopeful: Finally, living out the virtue of hope means to be hopeful, no matter what happens. Hope gives us the ability to see the good in everything, even in the darkest of times.

In our tradition, hope is considered one of the three theological virtues along with faith and charity. When our hope is tested, we can strengthen and maintain our hope by praying, seeking support, reflecting on God's faithfulness, practicing gratitude, remembering that hope is not dependent on circumstances, getting involved in helping others, being patient, and, for the sake of all those we serve across Mary Aikenhead Ministries, to not give up.

[Prof. Michael Drew](#)

Trustee

Mary Aikenhead Ministries

CATHOLIC LADIES' COLLEGE, ELTHAM

Catholic Ladies' College's (CLC) Opening Mass was held on 23 February 2023.

The college theme this year, *'Love one another'* was beautifully captured in a life size artwork depicting a CLC student reaching out to others as the cloth she is holding with the words *'Love one another'* floats across the wall. The power of this scriptural quote was the focus of the readings, prayers, music and homily. Principal, Mrs Stephanie Evans reminded and challenged the young women of the college to stay true to the message of the gospel throughout the year.

The presence of Sisters Libbey Byrne, Margaret Sapsford and Joan Stapleton were celebrated and acknowledged by Stephanie Evans and the students. Also present were Mr Chris Blake (CLC Board Chair), five college Board directors, Mr Peter Kelly, Ministry Leader and Mr Paul Fumei, Mission Formation Leader representing Mary Aikenhead Education Limited.

At the conclusion of the Mass the 2023 student leaders were blessed and commissioned for their respective 2023 leadership roles.

There was a real sense of reverence and recognition of the sacred evident amongst the students throughout the liturgy. Whilst always hard to measure, I experienced the mission alive in the welcome, mass, prayers and hospitality. It was both a delight and privilege to attend.

Ms Margaret McKenna
Trustee
Mary Aikenhead Ministries



Fr Martin Tanti SDB saying mass



L to R: Joan Stapleton rsc, Ms Stephanie Evans (Principal CLC), Margaret Sapsford rsc



L to R: Mr Peter Kelly (Ministry Leader MAEL), Ms Stephanie Evans (Principal CLC), Ms Margaret McKenna (Trustee MAM), Mr Chris Blake (Chair CLC)

HOBART PILGRIMAGE MARCH 2023

What a delight it was to meet other members of the Mary Aikenhead Ministries family and hear their stories, share in their context and journey with them through the historical and prayerful footsteps of our Sisters.

Personally, being only in my second year at St Columba's College, I was filled with a sense of pride and enlightenment for the charism of Mary Aikenhead as it has been lived out by the Religious Sisters of Charity, which I have been teaching my Year 7s about in Religious Education.

It's one thing to hear about or read about the courage and dedication of these women, way before our time but quite another to be standing on the docks of Macquarie Wharf, imagining convict women and children being separated, never to see each other again and know that our Sisters did everything in their power to care for those children and comfort those women. I confess to my naivety that it was in that moment that I better understood prison ministry and the work that the Sisters did in the Female Factories in Cascades. At least part of it was bringing word that the womens' children who were likely to be at the Sisters' orphanage or school, were alive and well.



Pilgrims standing in what was once the solitary confinement cells and below at the chapel at the Cascades Female Factory



Pilgrims gathered at Franklin wharf listening to the story of the Sisters' arrival into Hobart

As a father of young children myself, I may have read or heard that before, but I had never felt it like I did standing there in prayer that day. Then to take a few steps to look out over the mouth of the River Derwent and imagine the "Louisa" coming to rest in the windless Hobart waters, waiting to deliver three women who will have such a profound and lasting impact on the people of Hobart for years to come. It was a moving experience to say the least.

My highlight, perhaps due to my educational background, was Mount Carmel College, for two reasons; One aspect I loved was seeing another school who clearly love the Sisters like we at Columba do. To see the beautiful murals, the artwork of the Sisters' journey from Ireland to Australia, as well as walking through the buildings named after them filled me not only with comfortable familiarity like retuning home, but with pride for how far reaching their impact still is, to this day.

Secondly, the absolute privilege of being taken on this journey by Sr Maria Wheeler who shared her own personal stories of her connection to the College and the work that she shared in. I want to thank Sr Maria and Angela for their efforts to make a pilgrimage such as this a reality for so many of us.

I can't wait to bring my family to Hobart and share my experience with them.



Pilgrims pictured with Bradley Canning (Deputy Principal) [far left] and Andrea Reece, Head of Early Years and Birth 4 Coordinator [far right] at St Aloysius Catholic College, Kingston



Pilgrims gathered in prayer at the Sisters' graves at Cornelian Bay cemetery

Mr Lance Jilbert
Head of Faith and Mission
St Columba's College



Pilgrims pictured at the Jesus at the Well installation at Mount Carmel College, Sandy Bay

THE CHARACTERS OF THE EASTER STORY: SOMEONE FOR EVERYONE

The Easter story is one of the best told stories. Not only is it a foundational story in our faith life. It is also a highly engaging narrative piece. It has drama, action, deception, fear, confusion, joy, hope, and love. There are two significant points that I wish to make about this. The first, is that because it is a busy story with many themes and events, it engages more readers (the young, the old, the faithful, the doubtful, the desolate, the joyous, women, men, and children); and thus it becomes a widely known and accessed piece of scripture.

The second significant point is that I find each Easter, I hear or note different things that I did not seem to notice in previous Easter seasons. I find one year my focus will be on a particular event within the story, and the next it is on a particular character, and the next year it is on particular dialogue. Because there is so much happening within the Easter story, it enables us to treat it anew each year.

I thought I would take a few spaces on the page to share with you some of the key characters that I believe exist within the pages of this narrative, in the hope that you might find them anew this coming Easter.

Mary of Magdala. The witness.

Companion and friend of Jesus, who didn't run away at the foot of the cross. Mary of Magdala, woman disciple has a fundamental place in this story. She is first at the tomb in all four accounts of the gospels, first to witness the risen Christ, and Apostle to the Apostles. Mary Magdalene is the Easter reminder that we can witness Christ in the world each day. She inspires us to seek him out in the world, or more specifically, to open our eyes to his presence – for Christ is already here amongst us. He is ever-present in the world, the people we serve, the life we live. The Easter story and Mary of Magdala's part is a reminder for us to witness Christ in the world each day.

Thomas. The realist.

I often have reflected that Thomas is hard done by. That he is depicted as flawed as a disciple because he doubts the resurrection. But I believe he is the most like us. He is the realist, the one who tells it how it is, the one who needs to see to believe. He is some of my extended family, and half of my friends. There are Thomas' all around us. The Thomas of the gospels is a reminder to us to accept our faith journey for where it is, but to always be open to encountering Christ. When we embrace our doubts and uncertainties we embrace our humanity, our flaws, and our unbelief's. Thomas in the Easter story is confident in his conclusion but isn't rigid either, he is amenable. Thomas gives me a sense of hope and possibility.



Peter. The repairer.

Peter is so full of promise throughout the gospels, his names speak to some of that promise: the rock, the gate-keeper, the first disciple, and the fisherman. But Peter chokes when the time comes for him to step up. Maybe out of fear, uncertainty, or not feeling ready, he isn't there for the others, and most of all he isn't there for Jesus when he is needed. Peter, though in true leadership form, rights his wrongs. Maybe not right away, but we know that Peter fulfils the (aforementioned) promises bestowed on him by being one of the founding figures of our church's history. Peter is a reminder to us that we are not measured by the mistakes we make and the wrongs we do but by how we emerge on the other side of it. Peter in the Easter story assures us that God's love and acceptance of us is infinite. He is the comfort we need to accept that our brokenness is a part of our humanity. Peter is consolation and solace in a disciple, but for all times.

There are many more characters that I haven't explored. Maybe they are the ones that prick your ears or open your hearts at Easter time. Joseph of Arimathea, Pontius Pilate, Veronica, Judas, Mary Mother of God, John to name a few.

I welcome any sharing over email (louwana.saba@maministries.com.au) you wish to make with me during this holy time of Lent. If there is a character you go to in the Easter story, I would be happy to hear of it.

The characters within the Easter story make it better accessible and relevant to more of us today. I am thankful that they were there for Christ in his time and world; and that they are here for us in our time and world.

I pray that one of the people listed above resonate with you this Easter season. I pray that you hear the Easter story anew this year. And most of all I pray that you continue to be open to the encounter of Christ in the world.

Wishing you a blessed Easter.

Mrs Louwana Saba
Mission & Formation Director
Mary Aikenhead Ministries

BRISBANE MASS & GATHERING AND MT ST MICHAEL'S COLLEGE STEWARDSHIP VISIT

The Trustees gathered in Brisbane over 20-21 February 2023. In addition to holding their regular meeting, the Trustees joined with staff from St Vincent's Health Australia and Mt St Michael's College at Mass celebrated by Bishop Ken Howell at the Cathedral of St Stephen in Brisbane (and a special thanks to the choir from MSM who sang so beautifully at the Cathedral).

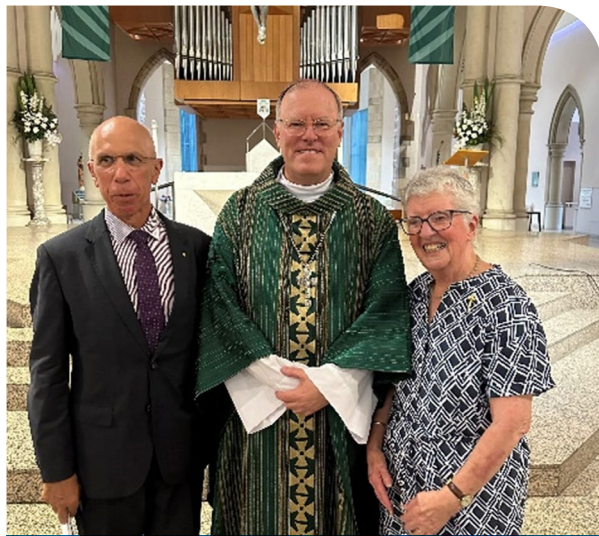
At the Mass, the board and executive of St Vincent's Foundation Queensland were blessed and commissioned, followed by an informal gathering of people from the various ministries where everyone had the opportunity to share their stories and journey.

On the final day, the Trustees undertook a stewardship visit to Mt St Michael's College (MSM) to meet with the College Leadership Team, student leaders, and staff. It was a great opportunity to hear more about the positive education program, formation across the year levels, and the new masterplan. The Trustees left MSM with a clear sense that the College is continuing the strong Catholic tradition and charism of Venerable Mary Aikenhead and her Sisters of Charity.

Prof. Michael Drew

Trustee

Mary Aikenhead Ministries



L to R: Mr Richard Haddock AO (Chair, MAM), Bishop Kenneth Howell VG PP SLL, Clare Nolan rsc



The Board and Executive of St Vincent's Foundation Queensland pictured with Trustee Prof. Michael Drew and Bishop Kenneth Howell



College Captains Emily Ford (left) and Breeze Kruisdyk (right) pictured with MAM Trustees by the statues portraying a Sister of Charity and a Mt St Michael's student

NEW CEO ANNOUNCEMENT

After nearly 6 years as the Executive Officer of Mary Aikenhead Ministries (MAM), Chris Raeside has decided to step down to pursue some external interests, away from the office. Fortunately, Chris is not planning on leaving MAM altogether but instead will continue with Mary Aikenhead Ministries in a part time capacity, the details of which will be finalised soon. The Trustees would like to extend their gratitude to Chris for her professionalism and the important work that she and her team have achieved whilst being Executive Officer. The Trustees look forward to continuing to work with Chris in this next chapter of MAM.

As a result of Chris' decision, the Trustees recently finalised the recruitment process for a new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). I am pleased to announce the appointment of Marita Winters as the new CEO of the Trustees of Mary Aikenhead Ministries, commencing on 3 April 2023. Marita comes to us from Dominican Education Australia (PJP), where she held the position of CEO. Marita has a background in communications and public relations and has previously worked for the Archdiocese in Sydney and the National Office for Evangelisation. Marita also holds a Masters of Philosophy (Theology) from the University of Notre Dame Australia.

The CEO has carriage and oversight of the Trustees strategic and operational directions and holds a significant role in fostering stakeholder relationships and engagement across Mary Aikenhead Ministries.

Please join me in welcoming Marita as our new CEO.

Mr Richard Haddock AO
Chair
Mary Aikenhead Ministries



Ms Christine Raeside
Executive Officer



Mrs Marita Winters
Chief Executive Officer



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