Catholic Schools Week Celebrations

Annual Diocesan Education Mass

A special Event

More than 700 people gathered at the Co-Cathedral at St John Vianney's, Fairy Meadow, for the Annual Diocesan Education Mass to celebrate Catholic Education in our Diocese. Bishop Peter Ingham celebrated the Mass and he was joined by 9 of his brother priests from across the Diocese.

Held during Catholic Schools Week, the theme of this year’s Mass was ‘Every Child Counts’ and in his homily, Bishop Peter, spoke of the profound role of those who work in Catholic schools. He emphasised the importance of Catholic Education to benefit and develop young people to grow and live fulfilling, faith-filled lives.

Two new Principals, Tina Murray (St John’s Primary, Campbelltown) and Peter Dempsey (Nazareth Primary, Shellharbour City) were commissioned at the Mass with student leaders from their school standing by their side, as they pledged their commitment as the leaders of their Catholic school community. All new staff in the Diocese and beginning teachers were also formally welcomed and blessed by Bishop Peter.

In his address, Director of Schools, Peter Turner, stated that 2013 would be a year of challenge, opportunity and growth. He stressed that those in attendance at the Mass were part of a practical expression of unity and support for Bishop Peter. The applause and affirmation for the Bishop was a very special moment during the celebration.

A wonderful spirit was evident amongst the group and there were emotions of joy and pride during the Thanksgiving Reflection when many inspiring images of our kids and staff in our schools were displayed. The music and singing were a real highlight of the Mass.

In closing, Peter expressed his gratitude for the many people, particularly members of the CLARE team and a number of teachers, support staff, musicians and singers, for their efforts in organising the celebration. Fr Ron Peters, Principal John Walsh and the staff and parents of Good Samaritan Primary were warm and generous hosts.

Sincere thanks are extended to all who attended and participated in the celebration of this important annual gathering of our Diocesan Education community.
The first school in the Illawarra with no bullies! This was the challenge Senior Constable Ben Walsh presented to the Stella Maris Catholic Primary School community on 14 March 2013. Constable Walsh and Noel Henry, Head of School Service were invited to launch the anti-bullying plan and procedures that ‘won’t just sit on the shelf’ but, be a living document that the community can aspire to.

The children raised their hands to support this vision of the first school with no bullying behaviour. Principal Paul Brady explained how the plan and procedures will help students, parents and staff identify behaviours and actions to promote safe and happy children. The launch of the Plan was one of many activities held at Stella Maris during Catholic Schools Week.

Celebrations continued after the official launch with each class performing for parents, friends and official guests including Noel Henry, Head of School Service, Fr Geoff Allen, Gail Tarrant from the Catholic Education Office, P & F President Tracey Lockeridge and Vice-President Zann Kesby. The big smiles from each student on stage showcased the fun and vibrancy in the school’s community.

Young Mary McKillop proclaimed “Every Child Counts”

St John’s Catholic Parish Primary School, Dapto brought young Mary McKillop to the school in the form of the Troubadour Theatre production "Young Mary". This was a special celebration for the school in Catholic Schools Week. Students found the play, ‘funny and entertaining’, the actors involved students in the dramatisation of Mary’s early adventures and how Catholic Schools began in Australia. It was a great insight into the early life of Australia and the challenges Mary experienced as part of the history of Catholic education and how different life is for students today.
Circular to Schools CS 4 2013

CS 4 2013.1

Condolences
Deepest sympathies are extended to the family of Therry (Terry) White. We are deeply saddened by the news of Terry’s death and convey our heartfelt condolences to all of Terry’s family and friends. Terry was the Director of Schools in the Diocese of Wollongong for 22 years, after which he retired enjoying travel with his wife Pat. When Pat became ill, Terry took on the role of her carer. Pat died in 2003. Terry is survived by his seven children: Julie, Brian, Jocelyn, Bridget, Cathie, Leoni and Verlie; 14 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren. Our prayers and thoughts are with Terry’s family at this time. A Requiem Mass for Terry will be held on Tuesday 26 March at St Columbkille’s Parish Church, Corrimal at 11.30am.

CS 4 2013.2

NSW Board of Studies Bulletin
Principals are advised that teaching staff in schools should make arrangements to receive and read the NSW Board of Studies Bulletin issued each fortnight. Teaching staff in schools need to be familiar with BOS Official Notices, decisions, news and important dates. Staff can subscribe to the Bulletin by email or by RSS feed. Further details at www.boardofstudies.nsw.gov.au

It is more important than ever that the Board of Studies communicates with Primary schools now that the BOS is the Test Administration Authority for NAPLAN. The Board Bulletin is a pivotal point for communication with schools about NAPLAN key dates and required actions.

CS 4 2013.3

CSSA Forum - 27 May 2013
Changing Syllabus, Assessment & Teaching Expectations across Years 7 - 11
Register by 15 May 2013
The first CSSA Forum for 2013 will be held on Monday 27 May 2013 at the Masonic Centre (66 Goulburn Street, Sydney) and will coincide with the CSSA AGM. The May forum will focus on: New K-10 Syllabuses and related implementation issues; ROSA implementation issues; Teacher Accreditation issues and The Great Teaching Inspired Learning Action Plan. An opening address will be given by the NSW Minister for Education, Adrian Piccoli.
Catholic Secondary Schools are invited to nominate up to three (3) participants. Registration fee is $80 per person. Please see attached correspondence for more information and the agenda. Register online at http://stage.cecnswnsw.catholic.edu.au/2013/cssa270513.asp by Wednesday 15 May 2013.

CS 4 2013.4

Bulletin Notice for Schools - Parishes Working Together, Regional Consultations April 2013
Principals are asked to include the attached information notice about the upcoming Regional Consultations for the Diocesan Pastoral Plan into their next school newsletter. Please insert the relevant local consultation date(s) and venue(s) as appropriate for your school community.

CS 4 2013.5

Catholic Schools Week 2013 Survey
Principals are asked to include the attached CSW survey advertisement in their school newsletter inviting parents and school staff to complete a short online survey regarding the recent Catholic Schools Week initiative. All feedback helps planning and strategy for future programs and those who complete the survey have a chance to win 1 of 6 $150 grocery gift vouchers. The survey can be accessed via www.catholicschools.nsw.edu.au or directly at http://ceosdyney.ckbxap.com/Survey.aspx?s=109ddf7d0817419da36e2b8905d12d01

CS 4 2013.6

Catholic Mission and Caritas Offices have now relocated
Schools are advised that Catholic Mission and Caritas have now relocated to the new Xavier Centre in Harbour St Wollongong. Contact via the Xavier Centre Reception number 4222 2400 or on Direct lines Catholic Mission - Mike Deasy 4222 2482, Mary Hiscox 4222 2483; Caritas – Tom Van Kints 4222 2480.

CS 4 2013.7

Dharawal Memorial Ceremony - Sunday 14 April
A special ceremony to remember the Dharawal people killed in the massacre of 1816 will be held at Cataract Dam picnic area on Sunday, 14 April from 12noon – 3.30pm. A sausage sizzle lunch will be provided. Please note that the ceremony involves a short walk to the site. Appropriate footwear, hats, sunscreen and bottled water are highly recommended. As the site has limited seating available, feel free to bring your own fold-up chairs. The event will take place regardless of weather conditions.

CS 4 2013.8

Topics Magazine
Primary Principals are advised that the latest issue of Topics will be sent to you by post this week.
**Claim the Date**

**Peter Fogarty’s Retirement Dinner**

You are invited to celebrate Peter’s significant contribution of over 30 years to Catholic Education

Please join Peter Turner and staff to thank and farewell Peter Fogarty

**Friday 14 June 2013**

**The Cube**

**Campbelltown Catholic Club**

**Invitations to be sent by the end of April**

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**Key Dates**

**March**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs 28</td>
<td>Holy Thursday</td>
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<td>Fri 29</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
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<td>Sun 30</td>
<td>Easter Sunday</td>
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**April**

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<td>Mon 1</td>
<td>Easter Monday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 3 - Fri 5</td>
<td>ACU Symposium - Religious Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 12</td>
<td>Last Day Term 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 29</td>
<td>First Day Term 2</td>
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Schools are asked to regularly check the CEO Website or InfoPoint for updated calendar information
What makes a great vision? What makes a great school? St Michael’s Catholic Parish Primary School, Thirroul led by Principal Danny Sykes, worked together identifying the main areas of the school’s vision and just how they were going to ‘live out’ that vision with their Mission Statement.

To promote this Vision and Mission, the school launched their aspiration and outlined how they plan to promote it. This included the implementation of ‘The Leader In Me’ program to inspire students and staff to achieve excellence in leading, learning and living the faith.

Launched during Catholic Schools Week - technologically gifted students worked behind the scenes to showcase two short films “St Michael’s is a great school because....” and “Inspiring Excellence in Learning, Leading and Living the Faith”. Other senior students successfully led the launch with the Principal, Assistant Principal and the Technology Coordinator. Fr Ken spoke of his support for the school and how the seven habits based on The Leader In Me program align beautifully with our Catholic faith and teachings.

The launch captured the imagination of students and clearly communicated the schools vision, using promotional packages designed for the present school community, prospective parents and future community school partners.

If the launch is anything to go by, the school already shows excellence in working together as a unified faith community!

St Brigid’s is one of the many Australian schools that have embraced the The Leader In Me and 7 Habits leadership models. These models support the staff of St Brigid’s in their aim to empower students to be the best they can be and do the best they can do, while developing essential life skills and leadership characteristics in students, so that they can thrive now and in the future.

The 120 visitors, including staff and students from other schools, other dioceses, the CEO and local businesses, were impressed by the way that the 7 Habits are not only integrated into the curriculum, but the traditions, systems and culture of St Brigid’s, Gwynneville.
On Monday, 11 March St Benedict’s Catholic College and St Justin’s Catholic Parish Primary School, Oran Park invited the Australian Communication Media Authority (ACMA) to speak to students, teachers and parents. The events were hosted in St Justin’s new, state-of-the-art resource centre.

Mrs Naddezna Wilkins from ACMA engaged in discussion about broad ranging cybersafety issues with students in Years 3 - 6 from St Justin’s and Years 7 and 9 from St Benedict’s. She also made teachers aware of some of the newest internet trends and their implications. Finally, Mrs Wilkins led a thought provoking forum for parents regarding cybersafety and what parents could do to provide a safer online environment for their children. The event was a good beginning for Catholic Schools Week festivities in both schools.

Holy Spirit College Bellambi, hosted their ‘Sharing Indigenous Culture’ day for the second year.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous students from local Catholic primary schools were invited to join the Indigenous students at Holy Spirit College. They were treated to a Bush Tucker morning tea, and a day full of informative fun.

Sessions on the day included, a presentation from the Australian War Memorial about Indigenous soldiers in the war; Cultural Awareness by Kellie Evans and Painting with Uncle Kev Butler.
Holy Cross Catholic Parish Primary School Helensburgh School Fete on the 16 March. Holy Cross held it as their major Catholic Schools Week event this year. Slides, games, music, face painting plus more made for a great day!
19 March 2013  (Ref: 53/13 )

MEMORANDUM TO: Diocesan Directors, CSSA Executive Principals of all Secondary Catholic Schools NSW EDPOL

FROM: Ian Baker

SUBJECT: CSSA Forum 27 May 2013 “Changing Syllabus, Assessment and Teaching Expectations Across 7 to 11” and AGM. Registration Process: Register by 15th May 2013

The first CSSA Forum for 2013 will be held on Monday 27th May 2013 at the Masonic Centre (66 Goulburn Street, Sydney) and will coincide with the CSSA AGM. The 27th May 2013 forum will focus on:

- New K-10 Syllabuses and related implementation issues
- ROSA implementation issues
- Teacher Accreditation issues
- The Great Teaching Inspired Learning Action Plan.

An opening address will be given by the NSW Minister for Education, Adrian Piccoli.

Diocesan Offices and all Catholic Secondary Schools are invited to nominate up to three (3) participants. Registration fees are $80.00 per person for members of the NON-GST Catholic sector Religious Group.


Please complete your registration online and then make payment by the following options:

Direct Deposit the amount payable with Your School/Diocese name as reference to

Catholic Secondary Schools Association
Commonwealth Bank
BSB: 062028 Account Number: 00906225

***PLEASE NOTE THIS IS NOT THE SAME BANK DETAILS AS THE CSSA Trial Exams Division***

OR Send a cheque for the amount payable to CSSA and remember to register online:

Mr Ian Baker
Secretary, Catholic Secondary Schools Association
C/- Catholic Education Commission NSW
PO Box A169 Sydney South NSW 1235

NO RECEIPT WILL BE ISSUED. PLEASE RETAIN A COPY OF THE CONFIRMATION OF SUBSCRIPTION FOR YOUR RECORDS.

Registration is required by Wednesday 15 May 2013.

Draft agenda for the CSSA Forum is attached. For further advice contact Erica Boundy erica.boundy@cecnsw.catholic.edu.au
## Changing Syllabus, Assessment and Teaching Expectations Across 7 to 11

**Location:** The Masonic Centre (66 Goulburn Street Sydney NSW)

**MONDAY 27 MAY 2013 | AGENDA**

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Session Leader</th>
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<td>8.30 – 8.45</td>
<td>Registrations</td>
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<td>8.45 – 9.00</td>
<td>Welcome and Prayer</td>
<td>Santo Passarello</td>
<td>Chairperson, CSSA</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.00 – 9.30</td>
<td>Opening Comments</td>
<td>Minister Piccoli</td>
<td>NSW Minister for Education</td>
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<td>9.30 – 11.15</td>
<td>Planning for 2014 K-10 Syllabuses Implementation</td>
<td>Paul Hewitt</td>
<td>Director, Curriculum and Assessment Board Of Studies</td>
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<td>Carol Taylor</td>
<td>Chief Executive, Board Of Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.15 – 11.45</td>
<td>Morning Tea</td>
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<td>11.45 – 12.30</td>
<td>ROSA Issues and new Grading requirements for Year 11. ROSA Literacy and Numeracy tests</td>
<td>Carol Taylor</td>
<td>Chief Executive, NSW Board of Studies</td>
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<td>12.30 – 1.00</td>
<td>CSSA Trial Exams: Issues and Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Amanda Whitfield</td>
<td>Head, CSSA Exams Trial Division</td>
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<td>1.00 – 2.00</td>
<td>Lunch and AGM</td>
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<td>2.00 – 3.00</td>
<td>Great Teaching, Inspired Learning: Policy Directions</td>
<td>Tom Alegounarias</td>
<td>President, NSW Board of Studies</td>
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<td>Kate O’Donnell</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer, NSW Institute of Teachers</td>
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<td>3.00 to 3.30</td>
<td>Current Institute of Teacher Accreditation practice issues for schools and Teachers</td>
<td>Robyn Mamouney</td>
<td>Manager – Standards and Accreditation, NSW Institute of Teachers</td>
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<td>3.30 to 4.00</td>
<td>Plenary Panel Q+A Identify issues for clarification</td>
<td>BOS</td>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers CEC (TBA)</td>
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<td>4.00</td>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>Santo Passarello</td>
<td>Chairperson, CSSA</td>
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Bulletin Notice for Schools

Parishes Working Together

Regional Consultations

April 2013

In February this year all households were provided with a Workbook called ‘Parishes Working Together’. Parishioners then had the opportunity to discuss the issues raised in the Workbook at Parish Education Sessions. Across the Diocese more than 1000 people participated in these sessions and gave their initial feedback about possible changes in the Diocese.

In April parishes will combine with neighbouring parishes in their region to give more particular feedback about:

• Parish boundaries and configurations
• Rationalising mass times in some parishes to free up priests to serve in new locations of the Diocese
• Sharing ministries across parishes to use limited resources more efficiently
• Additional lay roles to collaborate with the clergy to meet the pastoral needs of faith communities.

These are big questions and Bishop Peter would like as many people as possible to be involved in the April regional consultations. At the Regional Consultations parishioners will receive models for discussion about what parishes might be grouped together in the coming years and in what ways parishes might work together.

All people in The Diocese need to have the opportunity to put forward their views and hear what other people might be proposing for their parishes. The Regional Consultation for this region will be held on (insert date, time and venue). Don’t miss out on this opportunity to have your say; we want school families to be part of the planning process for future change! For catering and organisation purposes please email: jane.edwards@dow.org.au or ring 42222404 to indicate your attendance.

Remember: change happens when ordinary people get involved!

Shoalhaven 2 April, St Michael’s Hall, Nowra, 7.00pm – 9.00pm
• Southern Illawarra 4 April, All Saints Parish Hall, 19 College Ave, Shellharbour City
(Parking in Church grounds with access to hall through the Church carpark), 7.30pm – 9.30pm
• Central Illawarra 9 April, Xavier Centre, Wollongong, 7.30pm – 9.30pm
• Northern Illawarra 11 April, St Joseph’s Church, Bulli, 7.00pm – 9.00pm
• Southern Highlands 16 April, St Thomas Aquinas Hall, Bowral, 7.00pm – 9.30pm
• Eastern Macarthur 18 April, St John’s Hall, Campbelltown, 7.30pm – 9.30pm
• Western Macarthur 23 April, St Paul’s Hall, Camden, 7.00pm – 9.00pm
• Can’t make your regional time? 24 April, Xavier Centre, Wollongong, 7.30pm – 9.30pm
Tell us what you think for your chance to WIN 1 of 6 $150 grocery vouchers!

Catholic schools week

SURVEY 2013

www.catholicschools.nsw.edu.au
Higher standards for teacher training courses

The Australian Government wants to introduce new, more rigorous standards for teacher training courses, as part of the National Plan for School Improvement.

This will help make sure that all new teachers have the skills and experience they need before entering the classroom. It will mean principals will have confidence in the abilities of their new staff, and parents can be confident that every teacher has gone through a rigorous selection and training process.

And it will build on the steps we’ve already taken to boost quality teaching in every school.

A more targeted admissions process for teaching courses

The Government wants a new national approach for admission into teaching courses that recognises the personal qualities needed for teaching in addition to academic achievement. This will help make sure only people who have the passion and attributes needed for teaching enter these courses.

This could include:

- Interviews to ensure students have the emotional intelligence, resilience and commitment to teaching
- A portfolio of activities like sport coaching or community involvement, to demonstrate values and aptitude
- A written statement outlining why the applicant wants to be a teacher.

While some universities already use these types of processes, they are not consistently applied. They are more often used for mature age students and other applicants who don’t apply through a tertiary admissions centre.

We want a national agreement in place so that all universities use a more comprehensive admissions process for all applicants.

This is common in other degrees such as medicine and psychology. Given the national importance of quality teaching, the Australian Government believes teaching should use the same approach.

The Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) will work with universities and school education authorities to develop the guidelines.

Literacy and numeracy tests before teachers can graduate

Under the National Plan for School Improvement, teaching students must demonstrate that they are in the top 30 per cent of the population for literacy and numeracy by the time they graduate from university.

We are now proposing a national literacy and numeracy assessment that each teaching student will have to pass before they can graduate. The test will be part of their coursework and will take place early enough in the course to allow students to improve their skills before graduation if needed.

This is the best way to ensure that every single new teacher has the reading, writing and maths skills they need to be effective teachers and positive role models, regardless of which subject or year group they teach.
A national approach to teacher practicum

Teacher practicum is the best way to make sure that all new teachers have the skills, personal capacity and practical experience they need to do well when they start their careers.

At the moment there is no agreement on what aspiring teachers should learn while on practicum placements. So we are proposing a new national approach for all teaching students to ensure that every new teacher has a high quality practical learning experience.

This will include:

- An agreed practicum structure which clearly sets out the qualities and skills students must demonstrate in order to be allowed to continue their course.
- Requirements for supervising teachers to ensure they have the right training and experience. Over time, all supervising teachers will need to have reached ‘Highly Accomplished’ or ‘Lead’ teacher accreditation.
- A common assessment framework so that all teaching students are assessed against the graduate level of the national teaching standards before they start their first teaching job.

Funding agreements between the Australian Government and universities will be amended to require universities to ensure that suitable practicum placements are available to all students who are offered a place in an initial teacher education course.

A review of teaching courses

We will ask the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) to review all teaching courses from next year. This could focus on issues such as assessment of students, the student admissions process, and the quality of academic staff.

It will also look at the quality of the curriculum and teaching methods.

Once the review is complete the results will help improve the current accreditation standards for teaching courses.

Helping every teacher at every stage of their careers

This plan will build on the steps the Australian Government has already taken to support teachers and make sure we get the best and brightest people running our schools and teaching in our classrooms.

We’ve already announced that under the National Plan for School Improvement:

- All teaching students will have to meet a minimum practicum of 80 hours before they can graduate from bachelor level courses.
- New teachers will have a dedicated mentor and extra support for their first two years on the job.
- Every teacher will have an annual performance review and access to ongoing professional development and support at every stage of their career.

We’ve also:

- Developed the first ever Australian Professional Standards for teachers and for principals.
- Established the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).
- Invested $550 million in the Teacher Quality National Partnership.

What happens now?

The Australian Government is now discussing with states, territories and education authorities the National Plan for School Improvement including changes to teacher training. We want to reach agreement on the plan at the first Council of Australian Governments of 2013.

The Australian Education Bill will be updated as negotiations progress, and will come into effect on 1 January 2014. The National Plan for School Improvement will be phased in over six years to give schools time to prepare and adjust.

More information

For more information about our plan visit www.betterschools.gov.au

Facebook www.facebook.com/BetterSchoolsAU
Twitter www.twitter.com/BetterSchoolsAU
Youtube www.youtube.com/user/BetterSchoolsAU
Catholic Religious Australia in conjunction with Catholic Mission are convening the Mission: one heart many voices conference. If your organisation would like to support this event, please contact the conference organisers.

“As it is there are many members, yet one body”
(1 Cor: 12:20)
Join us for the
Mission: one heart many voices
conference this April/May as we celebrate and identify the graces, the inspiration and the challenges of living and leading mission in Australia and globally. This conference is set within the spiritual context of the Year of Grace, the Year of Faith and the New Evangelisation.

Mission: one heart many voices is for those who are inspired to strive creatively for justice, truth, peace, freedom, reconciliation and the Reign of God in Australia and globally. It is a unique opportunity to listen, converse and experience the many and diverse voices that are an expression of the one heart of mission. The conference will explore the complexity and issues surrounding formation, theology, leadership and practice of mission.

We invite all those passionate about mission and in leadership roles in parishes, communities, organisations and agencies to come together and join the conversation that will enable us all to live and lead mission better.

Over three days Mission: one heart many voices will be home to some of the many voices of mission with the hope to empower participants with a vision of mission that is scriptural and theological, enabling, encouraging and inspiring us all.

Conference highlights

- International and local speakers, expert in their field, with broad lived and practical experience including:

  Fr Stephen Bevans SVD: one of the leading missiologists in the English speaking world

  Dr Gemma Tulud Cruz: expert theologian of migration

  Archbishop Mark Coleridge: Archbishop of Brisbane and biblical scholar

  Sr Maureen McBride RNDM: Congregational Leader for Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions

  Mrs Kath Evans: healing from cancer attributed to St. Mary MacKillop

  H.E. Jose Ramos-Horta: Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and ex-President of Timor-Leste

“Mission is a single but complex reality, and it develops in a variety of ways.”

(Redemptoris Missio #41)
‘Everything that happens to you is your teacher….
....the secret is to sit at the feet of your own life and be taught by it.’

Polly Berends

_Courage to Be_ is time to step aside from the daily in order to reignite the quest for life. It is designed to support people in their journey to reclaim and deepen their professional identity and their vocational integrity by rekindling a sense of purpose and passion for what they do. This work is based on the Circle of Trust® approach that has been developed by Parker Palmer and the Centre for Courage & Renewal over many years. Working initially with teachers and leaders, Courage & Renewal retreats now reach out to people in all walks of life. In large groups, small groups, and solitary settings we will have the opportunity for individual and shared exploration of our inner and outer lives making use of stories from our own journeys, reflection on professional practice, and insights from poets, storytellers, and various wisdom traditions. Visit [http://www.couragerenewal.org/](http://www.couragerenewal.org/) for further insights into the work of the Centre of Courage and Renewal®

Two questions shape this quest:

- What aspects of your identity and integrity feel most supported and engaged by the work you do?
- What aspects of your identity and integrity feel most threatened or endangered by your work?

Such questions evoke reflection upon and exploration of our personal giftedness and our capacity to engage effectively in our work, our ministry.

By participating in the program it is hoped participants will

- rekindle passion for their vocation
- reclaim the deep wells of their calling
- explore the heart of the teacher, the professional, the parent
- build their capacity for connectedness
- reconnect soul and role – their identity and profession
- rediscover and celebrate their unique giftedness
- strengthen commitment to their work and their life’s longings

The program provides a balance of solitude and community. It aims to develop within the group an intellectual, emotional, and spiritual space in which participants listen and respond to each other with encouragement and compassion. In such a circle of trust, participants are enabled to ‘let their lives speak.’ The cycle of the seasons is one way we can evoke reflection on the cycle of our lives. One participant in a recent retreat commented that ‘this is the most profound experience of personal and professional formation in my twenty five years of teaching.’
The Seasons and Our Lives….

In his book, *Let your Life Speak*, Parker Palmer says, 'Seasons is a wise metaphor for the movement of life… It suggests that life is neither a battlefield nor a game of chance but something infinitely richer, more promising, more real. The notion that our lives are like the eternal cycle of the seasons does not deny the struggle or the joy, the loss or the gain, the darkness or the light, but encourages us to embrace it all – to find in all of it the opportunities for growth…. We are participants in a vast communion of being, and if we open ourselves to its guidance, we can learn anew how to live in this great and gracious community of truth…'

Each season has its unique gift and work….

Discerning Light in Darkness – the Gift of Winter…..

Winter is a demanding season. And yet the rigours of winter, like the diminishments of autumn, are accompanied by amazing gifts. One is the beauty of hushed stillness. Another is the reminder that times of dormancy and deep rest are essential to all living things. Our inward winters take many forms – failure, betrayal, depression, and death. Until we enter boldly into the fears we most want to avoid, those fears will dominate our lives. But when we walk into them we can learn from what they have to teach us. The winter retreat themes of darkness, dormancy, and death provide a context to talk about seasons of grief and loss in our lives and in our teaching.

The retreat provides an opportunity for ‘the beauty of hushed stillness’ amidst the demands of everyday life that provide too little time for silence, solitude or stillness. In such a setting we can listen to the whisperings and longings within our own being and allow them to shape our becoming. Margaret Wheatley has a beautiful phrase, ‘becoming becoming’, and this retreat experience invites us to participate in this becoming with greater awareness and intention.

Facilitator: Leone Pallisier
Leone Pallisier, an Ursuline sister, has been involved in Catholic Education for many years. As principal of St Ursula’s College in Kingsgrove and Toowoomba she saw staff formation, both spiritual and professional, as her key responsibility. She believes well formed and informed staff create vibrant communities where students learn well and are nurtured in faith. She has been working with Parker Palmer’s retreat process since 2001 and is currently a Courage and Renewal® Facilitator-in-preparation, undertaking preparation through the Center for Courage and Renewal. She sees bringing the sacred and secular into conversation in the personal and professional lives of people as a major challenge for all if we are to address the major issues facing society today.

Program Cost: $450 (GST will be added if applicable)

Venue:  The Hermitage
Old South Road
MITTAGONG NSW
This is in the Southern Highlands, about an hours drive from Sydney. For more information visit:www.thehermitage.org.au/

Feel free to contact Leone on 9798 5188 or 0410 220 432 if you would like to have some conversation about this retreat or Email:leonepallisier@gmail.com

To register complete the registration form.

Tell me what it is you plan to do with your one, wild and precious life.

*Mary Oliver – The Summer Day*