

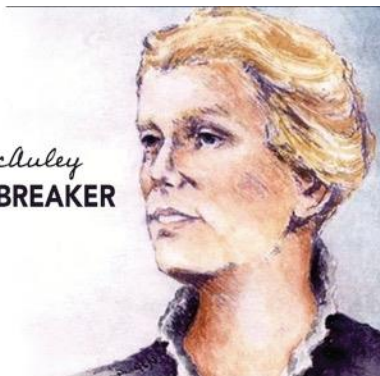


Reflection: Celebrating small acts from a generous heart, mind and spirit

On September 24 we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Mercy. For all ministries with a Mercy heritage, 'Mercy Day' or 'Mercy Week' is a special time, marked by opportunities to come together for prayer and reflection, for special activities and companionship, often over 'a comfortable cup of tea' and refreshments. These events have as their foundation the recognition that God's mercy and compassion are revealed in small acts which flow from a generous heart, mind and spirit.

The network of relationships we are developing within Mercy Ministry Companions calls us to an expansive hospitality of heart, mind and spirit where we welcome each person's talents, ideas, questions and uncertainties. We also express our gratitude for each one's contribution within our healthcare, education and community service ministries.

Mercy International Association (MIA)'s theme for the feast of Our Lady of Mercy in 2022 is **Catherine McAuley: Boundary breaker**. This year's theme highlights the commitment of our global Mercy community to breaking boundaries in order to create a more just and merciful world for all. During Mercy Week, MIA will host virtual dialogues, hold Mass at Baggot Street, and participate in Dublin's Culture Night on 23 September.



Catherine McAuley
BOUNDARY BREAKER
Mercy Day 2022

The three virtual dialogue experiences will explore how Catherine broke boundaries, how we in Mercy continue to break boundaries today, and how we are called to break boundaries in the future. Sessions will be hosted via Zoom at 9pm (Dublin) for 1.5 hours in both English and Spanish. If you would like to participate, [click here](#) or visit the mercyworld.org website for further information.

Mercy Day celebrations, as do all Founders' day celebrations, remind us of **why we do what we do** in our space and place of ministry. Our challenge is to ensure there is a little bit of 'Mercy Day' happening where we are, no matter what day it is!

As you prepare for your local 'Mercy Day' or 'Mercy Week', find some space and time, either by yourself or with some colleagues, to reflect on these prayers written especially for the feast [adapted from Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, 2009, *Intercessions of Mercy* Skokie, IL: ACTA Publications, p. 292]

- For those most vulnerable to oppression and neglect, we pray:
Response: *Compassionate God, pour out your mercy upon them.*
- For those who seek a kind word, a gentle, compassionate look or the patient hearing of their sorrows, we pray: **Response.**
- For those who are poor, sick or lacking the knowledge they need, we pray: **Response.**
- For those who need safe shelter, clothing or nourishing food, we pray: **Response.**
- For those struggling to be forgiven or to forgive, we pray: **Response.**
- For those seeking justice for themselves or for others, we pray: **Response.**
- For those suffering as a result of the degradation of earth, our common home, we pray: **Response.**
- For those who serve others through the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, we pray: **Response.**

Gently rain down your love on us, O God of Mercy, and fill us with your spirit of compassion and justice. Guide us to act in merciful ways. Enable us, with Mary, Our Lady of Mercy, to be 'boundary breakers' through our generous hospitality and the quality of our presence to those in need of mercy, **Amen.**

Annette Schneider RSM

MMC Trustee Directors' first annual retreat and visit to Perth

In late August, MMC Trustee Directors travelled to Perth for their first annual retreat. The three-day retreat was hosted by the Salvatorian Spirituality Centre in Currambine and was facilitated by Father Ed Nixon CSsR, who encouraged the group to take time for prayer, reflection and sharing.

Following the retreat, Trustee Directors held their monthly meeting, visited three schools which are part of Mercy Education in Perth, and enjoyed a dinner with guests Georgina Smith, Chair, Mercy Education Ltd; Rev Dr Joseph Parkinson, Deputy Chair, St John of God; Jennifer Stratton, Chair, MercyCare; Anne Pitos, Deputy Chair, MercyCare; Daniel Lynch, Executive Director to the Archbishop of Perth; Fr Vincent Glynn, Vicar for Education; and Jeff Thorne, Director, Mercy Education Ltd.



(R to L) Tony Goad, MMC Trustee Director; Georgina Smith, MEL Chair; Fr Vincent Glynn, Vicar for Education; Margaret Bounader, MMC Chair; Daniel Lynch, Executive Director to the Archbishop of Perth; Margery Jackman, MMC Trustee Director; Jeff Thorne, MEL Director; Anthony Loschiavo, MMC Executive Officer; Gabrielle McMullen, MMC Trustee Director; Rev Dr Joseph Parkinson, Deputy Chair, St John of God; Carmel Ross, MMC Trustee Director; Jennifer Stratton, Chair, MercyCare; Des Powell, MMC Trustee Director; Anne Pitos, Deputy Chair, MercyCare.

School visits

On the Monday morning, the Trustee Directors and Georgina Smith travelled to Santa Maria College Attadale, where Principal Jen Oaten and the student leaders organised a beautiful ceremony with an Acknowledgement of Country, prayer, recognition of heritage and a site tour. Morning tea was attended by Sr Breda O'Reilly RSM and several teachers.



Trustee Directors with Georgina Smith and Principal Jen Oaten.



Morning tea at Santa Maria with Sr Breda O'Reilly RSM and Margaret Bounader.

The group then visited St Brigid's College Lesmurdie, where Principal Veronica Parker and senior staff provided a tour of the College. Lunch with the College Executive Team followed and was joined by Community Leader, Sr Carmel Daley RSM, and some of the sisters based in Perth.



Touring St Brigid's College with Principal Veronica Parker.



*Lunch with some of the sisters based in Perth.
(L-R) Sr Janina Pascoe RSM, Sr Mary O'Connor RSM, Sr Catherine O'Connor RSM, Georgina Smith and Sr Joan Kelleher RSM.*



Left to right Sr Perpetua Della Marta RSM, Gabrielle McMullen, Sr Jilyan Dingle RSM.



Sr Marie Fitzgerald RSM and Des Powell.

On the Tuesday, the group visited Mercedes College Perth where Principal Kerrie Fraser welcomed the visitors with an Acknowledgment of Country and a prayer service. This was followed by a tour of the former convent and school site conducted by Vedette Lendich which ended with a morning tea with senior staff.

Thank you to all those involved in organising and hosting the retreat and ministry visits.



A warm welcome to Mercedes College by Principal Kerrie Fraser.



Trustee Directors and Ursula Frayne at Mercedes College.



Touring Mercedes College and the convent site.

Newly appointed Directors induction

On 2 September, MMC welcomed recently appointed Board Directors and a new Company Secretary to an induction seminar at the Dawson Street office.

The seminar provided attendees John Ballard MEL, Elizabeth Clear MFS, Karen Jongebloed MEL, Shoba Martin MCSAL, and Faten Awad, General Counsel at McKillop Family Services and MCSAL Company Secretary, with an opportunity to engage with colleagues from across Mercy Ministry Companions.

The seminar covered topics including:

- Introduction to Mercy Ministry Companions, its ministries and people
- Governance of Catholic organisations and responsibilities of ministerial PJPs within the Church
- Civil responsibilities of Directors within MMC
- Supporting Directors through ongoing formation for mission opportunities
- Current developments and priorities for MMC Trustee Directors, including embedding synodality in relationships with ministry boards and senior leaders.

The seminar also included opportunities for prayer and reflection, small-group conversations, questions and answers. Presenters included the MMC officers Margaret Bounader, Trustee Director Chair; Gabrielle McMullen, Trustee Director; Anthony Loschiavo, Executive Officer; and Annette Schneider RSM, Formation Coordinator.

MMC Executives join AMPJPs' AGM

On Sunday 21 August, the Association of Ministerial Public Juridic Persons (AMPJPs) held its AGM and dinner in Brisbane.



Margaret Bounader (MMC Chair) and Adj Prof. Susan Pascoe AM (MHA Director).

Attendees at the AGM included Margaret Bounader, Chair of the Trustee Directors; Gabrielle McMullen AM, Trustee Director; and Anthony Loschiavo, Executive Officer; as well as 55 MPJP stewards and 8 MPJP executive officers. Special guests included: David Miller, Member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council; Br Peter Carroll FMS, CRA President; Anne Walker, CRA National Executive Director; Archbishop of Perth Timothy Costelloe SDB, ACBC President; and Rev Dr Stephen Hackett MSC, ACBC General Secretary.

The meeting was followed by a dinner with Archbishop of Brisbane Mark Coleridge. During dinner, guests enjoyed a lively panel discussion between Eva Skira AM, Br Peter Carroll and Archbishop Timothy Costelloe and facilitated by Moira Najdecki, incoming AMPJP Chair. [Click here to see more pictures from this event.](#)

Association of Ministerial PJP's Forum

The Association of Ministerial Public Juridic Persons (AMPJP) Forum was held on 22 August and was the first in-person Forum to be held since 2019.

There was a strong turnout with 51 of the 77 MPJP stewards (Trustees) from the 12 member MPJPs in attendance, as well as Executive Officers from 10 MPJPs, each of whom was participating in the Forum for the first time.



Moira Najdecki in background presenting to the group, with Margaret Bounader and Gabrielle McMullen in foreground.

The day began and ended with significant periods of prayer and included three workshops, led by guest speakers:

1. Synodal Leaders – on synodality and MPJP governance, led by Adj. Prof. Susan Pascoe AM
2. MPJP Leaders Sustaining the Mission, led by Dr Maeve Heaney VDMF
3. Exploring how to describe the role “So, you want to be a MPJP Steward?”, led by David Penny and Dr Peter Steane MSC.

The forum was also used to launch two short, three-minute animations which explain Ministerial PJP's and the AMPJP to the wider Church.

[Click here to watch the Association of Ministerial PJP's animation.](#)

[Click here to watch the Ministerial PJP's animation.](#)

Catholic Health Australia Conference

In August, MMC Trustee Directors Margaret Bounader (Chair), Gabrielle McMullen AM and Rowena McNally joined 270 delegates from the Catholic health sector in Brisbane for Catholic Health Australia's (CHA) national conference, the first in three years. The theme of this year's conference was 'Facing the Future Together', and delegates enjoyed presentations from guest speakers and joined discussions on a range of topics.

Guest speakers included:

- Disability advocate Dinesh Palipan, who delivered a moving account of his journey from war-torn Sri Lanka to become a lawyer and doctor in Australia.
- Dr Kate Charlesworth, who challenged the health sector to reduce emissions.
- Bishops' Conference President, Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB, who emphasised the importance of the Word of God as central to the life of the Church.
- St Vincent's Health Chair, Paul McClintock AO, who issued an invitation to other Catholic health providers for shared discernment on the future of our ministry of health in Australia.
- Former Prime Minister, John Howard OM AC SSI, who encouraged delegates to continue with their mission in the face of rising secularism.



Dinner on day two of the conference, was a welcome opportunity for delegates to socialise and to honour the recipients of CHA's awards, including a lifetime contribution award to Sr Clare Nolan RSC.

You can watch some of the CHA presentations [here](#).

Supporting mothers in the workplace

MacKillop Family Services, in partnership with CRE HiPP researchers and The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre, has launched a new online portal to support employees during pregnancy and motherhood.

The online Health in Preconception, Pregnancy and Postpartum (HiPPP) Portal provides workplaces with a one-stop shop for resources and information about pregnancy and having a baby. It aims to also help both staff and managers navigate and manage any workplace challenges that may arise.



Dr Robyn Miller, MacKillop CEO, launching the HiPPP Portal.

According to Dr Briony Hill, project lead and NHMRC Early Career Fellow at CRE HiPP, "This is believed to be the first workplace portal globally that has been co-developed with researchers to support the wellbeing needs of women during pregnancy planning, pregnancy, postpartum and the return to work."

The portal has been up and running at MacKillop Family Services since March this year. To find out more about this portal [click here](#).

[Click here](#) to watch Robyn Miller, MacKillop CEO, launch the HiPPP Portal.

Mercy Community Services Board Meeting

Mercy Connect welcomed Mercy Community Services Australia (MCSAL) Directors and other Ministry CEOs to their St John's Campus in Albury, where they hosted the monthly MCSAL Board Meeting on 6 September.



MCSAL Board Meeting.

Attendees enjoyed a reflective walk to the heritage-listed cemetery, and site visits to the construction site of the new transition and assessment facility (Basil House), and to the proposed site of a planned Community Inclusion facility. They then had the opportunity to visit the newest accommodation facilities at Waratah Place and Acacia House, where they met with Mercy Connect staff and residents.



Attendees enjoyed a reflective walk to the heritage-listed cemetery.

Later, the group returned to attend the official opening of the new Art Gallery Corridor at Mercy Connect's Corporate Office, which hosts original artworks designed by artists from Mercy Connect's community inclusion art programs. Two commissioned artworks by local Wiradjuri artist, Julie Evans, were unveiled on the day and these will soon be on display at the Albury and Orange offices.

It was a wonderful opportunity to showcase the great service, programs and facilities delivered by the Mercy Connect family.



Local Wiradjuri artist, Julie Evans at the unveiling of her two artworks.

Werribee Mercy Hospital Short Stay Unit



Earlier this month, Mercy Ministry Companions Trustee Director Tony Goad and Executive Officer Anthony Loschiavo were invited to tour the Werribee Mercy Hospital Short Stay Unit with Mercy Health Chair, Virginia Bourke, before it opened to the public.

The Unit cares for patients who have arrived via the Emergency Department and require a short admission for extended observation or treatment and aims to lessen the pressure on Emergency Department facilities.

(L-R) Virginia Bourke, Chair, Mercy Health Australia; Tony Goad, MMC Trustee Director; Matthew Posar, MHA Interim Group CEO; Robyn Cooke, Chief Operating Officer – Health Services; Brad Van Ooi, Program Director, Medicine, Subacute and Palliative Care Services.



The corridor of the short stay unit is a stunning 90metres in length.



(L-R) Tony Goad, Robynne Cooke and Virginia Bourke.

Safe at Home: Preventing homelessness after family violence

Concern about the increased risk of homelessness and poverty for those fleeing family violence, is behind the growth of a new knowledge bank on the viability of victim-survivors remaining in their homes.

Since the beginning of 2021, McAuley Community Services for Women has been leading the Safe at Home project, an approach which focuses on enabling victims of family violence to stay in their homes, while perpetrators must leave.

The project has been motivated by the high number of victim-survivors facing homelessness, despite recognition by the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence in 2016, that 'homelessness and housing systems cannot guarantee a safe place to stay or a permanent home that is affordable'.

To learn more about how McAuley Community Services for Women are dealing with this issue [click here](#).

Special thanks to Stephen Cornelissen



Virginia Bourke, Margaret Bounader, Stephen Cornelissen and Felix Pintado.

Former Mercy Health CEO, Stephen Cornelissen, stepped down from his role in May this year to take up a new position at the Australian Red Cross Lifeblood.

On September 1 a tree planting ceremony was held at Mercy Place Residential Aged Care Facility in Ballarat, to thank Stephen for his contribution to Mercy Health over his 17 years of service. A tree, a gift from Mercy Ministry Companions to acknowledge Stephen's contribution, was planted with the help of Margaret Bounader, MMC Chair, Virginia Bourke, Mercy Health Chair, and Adjunct Associate Professor Felix Pintado, Mercy Health's Chief Executive Residential Aged Care, Home Care and Seniors Living.

"It has been a privilege to be part of this wonderful organisation and to have worked with so many dedicated and committed people," said Stephen.

A fresh face for our MMC Update

There has been a slight delay in the revamping of our MMC Update, as we continue to work on the MMC website. We hope that our next edition will find its way into your inbox in a new, interactive, email format. We will continue to share your exciting achievements and updates from across our ministries and we encourage you to share these with us by emailing mmc@mercyministrycompanions.org.au.