



MERCY COMPANIONS: CLAIMING OUR IDENTITY

Mercy Ministry
Companions

CONFERENCE 2023

9 - 10 October 2023 | Catholic Leadership Centre, East Melbourne

DAY 1: MONDAY 9 OCTOBER

8:30	CELTIC HALL	Registration Opens
9:30	CELTIC HALL	Welcome to Country
9:50	CELTIC HALL	Welcome Margaret Bounader, Chair, Mercy Ministry Companions
10:05	CELTIC HALL	Opening Liturgy

10:30 MORNING TEA

11:00	CELTIC HALL	Launch of MMC's Identity Statements Gabrielle McMullen AM Grounding our Identity Statements in our Wisdom Traditions Elizabeth Dowling RSM
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12:30 LUNCH

1:30	CELTIC HALL	Panel: Exploring aspects of MMC's emerging identity Stephen Reid, Jemima Welsh and Dr Dan Fleming Listener: Claire Victory
3:10	CELTIC HALL	Launch of Middle Leaders Program Annette Schneider RSM

3:30 AFTERNOON TEA





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4:00	CELTIC HALL	Identity and ethics: Meeting our moment with courage and clarity Dr Dan Fleming
	STUDIO 1	Present realities in a changing Australia: Understanding the current context of the Catholic Church in Australia and exploring what it means to be Church in the future Stephen Reid
WORKSHOPS	STUDIO 6	Modern Mercy Leadership: Shaping our global identity Jemima Welsh
	STUDIO 8	Shaping MacKillop's work and identity: listening to the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people Robyn Miller & Esmail Manahan
	STUDIO 9	Bringing your social impact framework to life! Trent Dean & Caroline Cummins
5:15	CELTIC HALL	Concluding reflection on the day

5:45PM PRE-DINNER DRINKS

DINNER WILL CONCLUDE BY 9:00PM





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DAY 2: TUESDAY 10 OCTOBER

8:30	CELTIC HALL	Reflection
8:45	CELTIC HALL	Our values and their biblical contexts Elizabeth Dowling RSM
10:05	CELTIC HALL	Identity statement resource materials Annette Schneider RSM
10:20 MORNING TEA		
10:40	CELTIC HALL	Panel: Exploring values-enlivened ministry Virginia Bourke, Gaby Kinsman, Chris Bence
11:50	CELTIC HALL	Charting the course with emerging leaders in changing times Gaby Kinsman
WORKSHOPS	STUDIO 1	Mercy education: Communities of Need Project Chris Bence, Judy Sailors & Judy Young
	STUDIO 6	Ministerial PJPs: Their development and emerging contribution to the life of the Church Gabrielle McMullen
	STUDIO 8	Could we or should we? The ethical overlay to our decision making Virginia Bourke
	STUDIO 9	Hope in an increasingly divisive world Tony Bidstrup
1:05	CELTIC HALL	Closing ritual Formal Close

1:30 LUNCH

Opportunity for any informal cross ministry connections, meeting rooms available on request.





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SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP PRESENTERS

Elizabeth Dowling RSM

Elizabeth Dowling RSM is a member of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea and lives in Ballarat, Victoria. She is a biblical scholar who has decades of experience in education across secondary, tertiary and adult education areas. After completing her doctoral studies in 2005, Liz lectured in Biblical Studies at Australian Catholic University for more than ten years. She has presented biblical workshops across Australia and internationally. Liz is the author of a monograph as well as numerous journal articles and book chapters. She enjoys reading and exploring the biblical text with others.



MODERN MERCY LEADERSHIP: SHAPING OUR GLOBAL IDENTITY

Presented by Jemima Welsh

In this workshop, Jemima will expand on the ways in which our growing MMC network can contribute to the global Mercy family. There will be a particular focus on the evolving nature of modern Mercy leadership: what it looks like and how we can learn from the experiences of our global Mercy community in shaping our own practices of leadership when facing local and regional challenges. Participants will be invited to contribute to the practical research of Mercy Global Action's upcoming position paper on Mercy leadership.



Jemima Welsh is a Women's Leadership Development Associate at Mercy Global Action (the global justice advocacy arm of Mercy International Association) which is based at the United Nations in New York. In this role, she co-leads a project to promote and secure the sustainability of the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship, from which she graduated in 2021. Her final project, entitled 'Money as Mercy', was a guide for the global Mercy community on how to use capital in the spirit of Catherine McAuley.

Prior to this role with Mercy, Jemima worked in impact investing, impact measurement, philanthropy and profit-for-purpose business consulting. She was formerly Social Performance Lead for the Impact Fund, one of Australia's first impact investment venture capital funds dedicated to social and environmental outcomes. Jemima is a Director of All Hallows' School and is Secretariat for the Mercy Asia Pacific Forum. She has a Masters of Philosophy and Public Policy from the London School of Economics (LSE) and a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations from the University of Queensland.





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SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP PRESENTERS

PRESENT REALITIES IN A CHANGING AUSTRALIA: UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT CONTEXT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA AND EXPLORING WHAT IT MEANS TO BE CHURCH IN THE FUTURE

Presented by Stephen Reid

The recent past in Australia has been marked by significant change, both in the Catholic Church and in wider society. Changing attitudes to religion, the weakening of the role of religion in Australia and the decline in confidence in Christianity has meant the Church no longer has the moral and institutional authority it once had. What does it even mean to 'be church' in contemporary Australian society? How do we be a Church which remains Gospel-centred but adapts to this changing world around? How do the various ministries of Mercy Ministry Companions continue to fulfil the charisms of its founders in an ever-changing milieu? Using current relevant research data, this workshop will describe the present realities and explore these questions from both a theoretical and a practical perspective.

Stephen has worked as a researcher for the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) National Centre for Pastoral Research since 2007, and is currently the Senior Research Officer. He has had significant involvement with numerous ACBC projects, including the Plenary Council, Synod of Bishops, Catholic Youth Survey, Catholic Vocations Ministry, surveys of Catholic Religious Institutes and Building Stronger Parishes. Since that time he has also worked concurrently as a researcher with the Christian Research Association. Stephen has qualifications in Theology and Applied Social Research, and completed a Doctor of Ministry in 2022, investigating the roles and functions of Christian sports chaplains in Australia. He is an Honorary Research Fellow with Australian Catholic University and with Sports Chaplaincy Australia. He has been married to Jane for 25 years and has three children aged 22, 19 and 18.



IDENTITY AND ETHICS: MEETING OUR MOMENT WITH COURAGE AND CLARITY

Presented by Dr Dan Fleming

Our personal and professional lives are becoming more complex. How might the discipline of ethics help us to meet the moments we encounter each and every day with courage and clarity? In this workshop, Dr Dan Fleming will build on our conference focus on identity to help us think through this question and equip us with tools to help us in meeting each moment with integrity to support our ministry leadership.

Dr Dan Fleming is head of Ethics and Formation for St Vincent's Health Australia, a role which sees him leading ethics education, advice and strategy as well as supporting formation across the St Vincent's Health Australia network. Dan is also an Adjunct Professor of Ethics in the School of Medicine for the University of Notre Dame, Australia.





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SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP PRESENTERS

Claire Victory

Claire was recently appointed to the Formation Reference Group for Mercy Ministry Companions. Claire has lived her whole life on Kurna land (Adelaide). She has volunteered with the St Vincent de Paul Society since she was a child and has served in various leadership roles throughout her time with Vinnies, including as a member of National Council for almost 12 years (the final 4 years as National President) and a member of the international board. Claire is a lawyer by trade; after spending 14 years in private practice – specializing in employment and workers compensation law and associated fields such as personal injury, work health and safety and discrimination – she now leads the industrial team at a large union. She lives in the Adelaide Archdiocese and is a member of the Diocesan Pastoral Council, where she is helping the diocese to maintain the momentum developed throughout the Plenary Council process. Claire is passionate about building a more just and compassionate Australia. Guided and inspired by Catholic Social Teaching and the principles of servant leadership, she strives to make her community – within and beyond the church – more inclusive and welcoming.



CHARTING THE COURSE WITH EMERGING LEADERS IN CHANGING TIMES.

Presented by Gaby Kinsman

Participants will have the opportunity to explore changing and challenging leadership landscapes, engage in conversation around leading through values and consider strategies for empowering emerging leaders.

Gaby is the Young Mercy Links Coordinator for South Australia and a recent graduate of the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship program. Gaby is employed as the Marketing and Communications Coordinator at St Aloysius College, Adelaide and is a former student of the College.





SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP PRESENTERS

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Robyn Miller and Esmail Manahan

Shaping MacKillop's work and identity: listening to the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

In this workshop, Robyn and Esmail will share ways in which the work and identity of MacKillop Family Services is informed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voice.



Trent Dean and Caroline Cummins

Bringing your Social Impact Framework to life!

Trent Dean and Caroline Cummins will host an interactive workshop whereby participants will have the opportunity to draft their own Social Impact Framework aligned to their identity.



Virginia Bourke

Could we or should we? The ethical overlay to our decision making

Change is a constant in the governance of our ministries. Ethical issues are similarly dynamic, thrown up by fast moving development in many areas of our endeavour. This workshop will look at how our values inform our decision making? Is it possible to improve the way we collectively make decisions? What is the place of reflective practice in decision making?



Mercy Health

Care first

Chris Bence, Judy Sailors and Judy Young

Mercy Education - Communities of Need Project

This workshop will showcase with specific examples across Mercy Education where we outreach and serve communities of need within and outside our school communities. It will also provide some insight into how we address modern slavery issues in our operations.



Tony Bidstrup

Hope in an increasingly divisive world

In an increasing divisive world, whether it be 'The Voice' or transition to zero emissions, many issues seem to lack balance and a sense of hope. This workshop will explore how we as individuals and Ministries find hope and provide hope to the people we care about and serve.



Gabrielle McMullen AM

Ministerial PJP: Their Development and emerging contribution to the life of the Church

This workshop will explore new Church authorities, like Mercy Ministry Companions, which are titled Ministerial Public Juridic Persons (MPJPs). It will define what is MPJP is and explore the growing contribution of MPJPs to the life of the Church.



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