



Mercy Ministry
Companions

Connections

The Newsletter of Mercy Ministry Companions

July 2025



Reflection: Possibilities and Promise – shaping our future.

Paul Linossier, Trustee Director

Last week I sat in on part of Module 3 of the Mercy Leadership Program and Dublin Pilgrimage (MLPDP). The Pilgrims had returned from Dublin and had regrouped to consolidate their learning, reminisce and resolve how the experience might shape their own mercy leadership journey going forward. There was friendship and a great camaraderie in the room and a genuine appreciation for what they had experienced.

Sr Annette Schneider facilitated the afternoon and, drawing upon Caroline Thompson's 'Be as shining lamps' (2022), helped us to unpack our own spirituality and posed the challenge to be 'intentional in what we attend to in our lives'. Twelve months earlier I had been in the room as a returning pilgrim – I found myself reflecting upon what had changed in my life and the world since that time and my own 'intentionality'. I realised that I find 'hope' increasingly elusive...

[Read more](#)



Celebrate the feast day of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop this 8 August

The feast day of Australia's first canonised saint, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, is celebrated on 8 August each year. This day is a special one for MacKillop Family Services, the name given to the new agency formed when the Community Services ministries of the Sisters of St Joseph, the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of Mercy came together on 1 July, 1997. All within MMC give thanks for the ministry of MacKillop Family Services and ask God's blessing on the MacKillop family as you celebrate one of your founders. Ministries may like to celebrate this special Australian woman and can access a [range of resources here](#).

Mercy Education



St Aloysius College students shine in production of Grease

MMC Trustee Directors Paul Linossier and Gabrielle McMullen were delighted to attend St Aloysius College's production of Grease on Saturday, 28 June. The drama, singing and dancing talent of the students performing was outstanding and reflected the giftedness of the staff who accompanied them in the preparations for and delivery of the production. Students and staff also supported the production with their expertise in sound and lighting, make-up, and costume, set and prop design. Congratulations to St Aloysius on bringing such a fine production of Grease to North Melbourne.

Mercy Community Services



Mercy Connect Finalists in the Albury Wodonga Business Awards

Mercy Connect is proud to have been selected as a finalist in two categories at the Albury Wodonga Business Awards: Excellence in Healthcare, Disability and Social Care and Outstanding Community Organisation. These awards celebrate the contributions made by local businesses, leaders and community groups and Mercy Connect is honoured to be recognised among such an inspiring array of local organisations.



NAIDOC Week at Mercy Connect

This year NAIDOC Week was celebrated from 6-13 July and encouraged a celebration and championing of the voices of the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – the emerging leaders, changemakers, artists and storytellers who carry the strength of their ancestors and the vision to shape a better future.

Mercy Connect showed their support in various ways throughout the week, with staff hosting a morning tea, viewing a collection of indigenous short films and documentaries, and enjoying a special lunch menu featuring traditional foods that paid tribute to Indigenous culinary heritage.



MacKillop launches third Reconciliation Action Plan

MacKillop is proud to have launched its third Reconciliation Action Plan, a significant milestone in the organisation's ongoing commitment to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The RAP builds on the foundation of its two previous RAPs and was developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, MacKillop employees (both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous), service partners, and stakeholders. The plan was launched at the Aborigines Advancement League in Thornbury, Wurundjeri Country.

[Read more](#)



MacKillop opens fifth specialist school

MacKillop Family Services has opened its fifth specialist school, MacKillop Education Clifton Hill in inner Melbourne, to meet the growing need for education settings that support students with complex learning and emotional needs.

The new school, located on the site of the former St John's Primary School in Clifton Hill, welcomed both primary and secondary students at the beginning of Term 3 with plans to enrol an additional 40 students in 2026. This new campus joins MacKillop's existing schools in Maidstone, Caulfield, Geelong (VIC) and Waranara (NSW), which are already operating at capacity.

[Read more](#)



Help McAuley put a spotlight on women's homelessness

Every night, countless women across Victoria face an impossible choice: stay in a dangerous situation or leave with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Many end up sleeping in cars, couch surfing, or in shelters, searching for safety and stability.

Join the McAuley team on 16 October for the second annual Car Park sleepout at Melbourne Airport raise vital funds for Juno and McAuley, helping provide critical support to those experiencing homelessness across Melbourne.

[Register now](#)

Mercy Health



Mercy Health has unveiled plans for a contemporary retirement living community in Abbotsford. The design honours the site's unique history while addressing a growing need for senior housing in inner Melbourne.

The Clarke Street site has a storied history. Originally built in 1977 as a hostel for nuns from the

neighbouring Abbotsford Convent, it was acquired by Mercy Health in 2015 and transformed into an aged care facility. After nearly half a century of service to the Catholic mission, the building was permanently closed in 2023. The proposed transformation reflects Mercy Health's ambition to evolve alongside the needs of the community while respecting the legacy of those who came before.

With the proposal now progressing through the planning and heritage review process, Mercy Health remains optimistic that the Clarke Street redevelopment will become a valuable addition to the area — providing a new chapter in a long and evolving story of care, community and connection.

[Read more](#)



Treadmill challenge raises thousands for Mercy Perinatal

Melbourne mother and athlete Diana Nicholls started a remarkable 24-hour treadmill challenge at Mercy Hospital for Women to raise funds for Mercy Perinatal, a specialist service dedicated to improving outcomes for women experiencing high-risk pregnancies and their babies.

The fundraising event, held in June, was hosted in partnership with the Mercy Health Foundation and Banyule City Council and offered community members the opportunity to run, jog or walk alongside Diana. The event raised over \$32,000 for Mercy Perinatal and brought meaningful attention to their critical work.

[Read more](#)

From the Formation Coordinator

2025 Mercy Leadership Program and Dublin Pilgrimage (MLPDP) Module 3

Pilgrims gathered at the Catholic Leadership Centre in East Melbourne on 23 – 24 July for the final Module of this year's MLPDP. It provided pilgrims with a wonderful opportunity to reconnect and reflect more deeply on their Mercy leadership following their time together in Dublin. As participants are currently undertaking a project designed to implement their learning in the context of their ministry leadership, time was given to sharing updates on the progress of these projects.

As part of the concluding ritual, Trustee Director, Gabrielle McMullen, presented each pilgrim with a Certificate of Participation and a 'shining lamp', a symbol of their call to 'be as shining lamps' in their leadership as women and men of mercy. Words of thanks were also expressed to Program facilitators Sandra Harvey and Amanda Robertson for their leadership of the pilgrimage.



Middle Leaders' Program continues

In the consultation phase of the planning for this Program in 2023, potential participants identified the need for a mix of residential, face-to-face and online opportunities for Middle Leaders to gather. Similar to last year, following the two-day residential component in Part 1, Parts 2 and 3 have been offered via Zoom in two and a half hour sessions, approximately five weeks apart.

Part 2

Dr Frances Baker RSM explored '*Catholic Social Teaching and its relevance to our Mercy Ministry and Leadership.*' With a mix of input and small group conversation, Frances has enabled participants to reflect on their ministry and the call to underpin their leadership with the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. The cross-ministry experiences and the varied roles undertaken by the Middle Leaders provide a rich context for these online conversations.

Part 3

With a focus on '*Building Resilience as a Mercy Leader*', Dr Bern Nicholls has explored ways in which Middle Leaders can build their capacity for courageous and resilient leadership in their challenging roles. A mix of personal reflection and group discussion provides opportunities to share strategies for acting courageously and building resilience.

It is hoped that these topics provide some additional frameworks for understanding and tools for reflection to assist Middle Leaders as they undertake their mini-projects, focusing on an aspect of their current role.

Middle Leaders' Projects from the 2024 Cohort

Six Middle Leaders who completed the Program in 2024 have volunteered to provide a snapshot of their projects for readers of *Connections*. This month, we are delighted to share **Rosie Busuttil** and **Stephen Key's** projects.



Rosie Busuttil, Stakeholder Engagement and Intake Officer, Mercy Connect, Thurgoona

Last year, I was honoured to be nominated for the inaugural cohort of the Mercy Leadership: Empowering Middle Leaders program. This experience provided a unique opportunity to grow both personally and professionally, while deepening my understanding of value-based Mercy leadership. As part of the program, I developed a project that aligned with one of the program's core objectives:

“Develop a sense of belonging to MMC and of their contribution to its Vision, Mission and Values – enlivened ministry of service.”

My project focused on creating an ‘Annual Celebration’ agenda for team meetings...

[Read more](#)



Stephen Key, General Manager, Property and Fleet, MacKillop Family Services, South Melbourne

As a participant in the Mercy Ministry Companions Middle Leaders group, I have gained a greater appreciation not only for the founders and vision of MacKillop Family Services, but also for the wider Mercy Connection and our collective ongoing legacy.

The origins of MacKillop Family Services date back to 1854, involving The Sisters of Mercy, Christian Brothers, and Sisters of St. Joseph. These religious congregations came together in 1997 to form our organisation with the aim of providing care and support to children and families. **I selected this project because...**

[Read more](#)

Mercy News



Take part in Mercy Futures seminars

The Mercy Futures team is privileged to present Sr. Áine Barrins RSM all the way from Ireland, who will be joining the Sisters of Mercy Parramatta congregation in Parramatta to share her invaluable insights into *Catherine McAuley, Woman of Hope*. This is an unprecedented, two-part presentation which will take place over two sessions – 10 September and 5 November at 6.30pm (please note Daylight Saving Time on 5 November).

Mercy colleagues are invited to come along and bring a friend and be part of this unique presentation. Both sessions will also be livestreamed from 7pm, and the link will be provided closer to the date. [Click here for the promotional material.](#)

Please RSVP by 3 September (part 1) and 29 October (part 2).

The Mercy Futures Team includes Carol Harding, Patricia Bolster RSM, Mary-Louise Petro RSM, Gabby Scanlon, Erika Silk, Genevieve Banks, Marg Marriott, Ana Pintos.

RSVP now



Pathways of Mercy

At the request of the Institute Leadership Team, a group of sisters and Mercy people within ISMAPNG are exploring how people connected with Mercy might stay engaged, grow, and co-create new expressions of the charism gifted to the Mercy world by Catherine McAuley. To assist with their explorations, they have developed a survey and are inviting responses from those interested by Friday, 15 August. While they welcome participation in the survey from everyone, they would particularly like to hear from: current and former staff of Mercy ministries; current and former students of Mercy schools; and anyone else who may be inspired by Mercy.

Complete the survey

Global News



Save the dates for MELF Cohort 4 Research Presentations

MELF Cohort Four will present their research on Monday 1st September and Tuesday 2nd September 2025. The presentations will be made in person at Mercy International Centre in Dublin and will also be available for people to tune in to online via Zoom. Click the link below for Zoom and in person registrations.

[Find out more or register now](#)

Save the Date

4pm, Monday 15 Sept -

5pm, Tuesday 16 Sept

2025 MMC Conference

Catholic Leadership Centre, East Melbourne

The format will be similar to 2024, exploring in more depth our theme of '*Extending Horizons*'. We are very pleased that Angela Scaffidi has accepted the invitation to facilitate our time together.

Further details about the Conference Program and Registration process will be sent to ministries once they are confirmed.



Domestic Violence is not just a women's issue ... so why aren't more men joining the conversation?

The *Faith Hope Love Conference: a faithful church response to Domestic and Family Violence* is hosted by the Anglican Church of Australia's Families and Culture Commission and Common Grace. The conference is taking place at St Jude's Anglican Church, Carlton from 18-19 August. A *Men's Summit* will be held on Day 2 of the conference (9am-1pm, 19 August) and is an invitation to men of faith to respond to this challenge. Over a three-hour session we will explore why it is so important to be involved, how our faith inspires us to make a difference, and what practical steps we can start to take.

[Find out more or register now](#)

Please share this Mercy Ministry Companions Newsletter with your colleagues and [opt-in for further communications.](#)

In the spirit of reconciliation, Mercy Ministry Companions acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of the country where we live and work today.

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