



# PRESENTERS

## Keynote Presenter

**Dr Celia Deane-Drummond**



**Laudato Si'**  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

**Director of the *Laudato Si'* Research Institute, Campion Hall.** Before taking up her current position, Celia was Director of the Center for Theology, Science and Human Flourishing at the University of Notre Dame, USA. She is a theologian who has professional experience in academic science and has two doctorates in plant physiology and systematic theology. She has a well-

established track record in publishing in science, theology, environmental ethics and at the intersection between theology and the natural sciences.

Celia has also served as Chair of the European Forum for the Study of Religion and Environment from 2011-2018. The present focus for Laudato Si' Research Institute (LSRI) is on different research elements relevant for Pope Francis' call for an 'integral ecology', including building credible multidisciplinary hubs of research that are relevant for the pressing ecological and environmental issues of our time.

Celia also holds the following positions: Senior Research Fellow in Theology, Campion Hall, Visiting Professor in Theology and Science, CCS, Durham University and Adjunct Professor in Theology, University of Notre Dame, USA. Her most recent books include *A Primer in Ecotheology: Theology for a Fragile Earth* (2017), *Theology and Ecology Across the Disciplines: On Care for Our Common Home* (2018), and *Evolution of Wisdom Volume One: Theological Ethics Through a Multispecies Lens* (2019).

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## Session Presenters

**Rev Dr Peter Loy Chong, Archbishop of Suva, Fiji.**



**President of the Federation of Bishops' Conferences of Oceania.** Archbishop Peter Loy Chong was awarded his Doctorate in Theology at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley in 2012. Ordained Bishop in June 2013 he was then appointed as Archbishop of Suva, Fiji. Archbishop Peter Loy Chong was elected as President of the Federation of Bishops' Conferences of Oceania in April 2018. He has spoken publicly and powerfully about the devastating effects of climate change on the ecosystems of the ocean and surrounding islands, particularly in the Oceania Region.

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**Sr Adele Howard RSM**



**ISMAPNG Mercy Global Presence Co-ordinator and PhD Candidate in Theology at Australian Catholic University.** Adele is an adviser in communications and works in digital media and visual story-telling, particularly to support organisational change in the not-for-profit community sector. Adele has become a regular presenter at national and international conferences, and has been an invited participant to several international Laudato Si' Conferences since 2015. Her recent responsibilities have included coordination of the Mercy International Association's theological reflection process on 'The Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor' across the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea. ([www.mirpprocess.org](http://www.mirpprocess.org)). Adele's Doctoral work is in the development of a Theology of the natural world in the light of Laudato Si'.

**Dr Brenda Peddigrew RSM (NL)**



**Sister of Mercy and Doctor of Philosophy with a specialty in Transformative Learning at California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco.** Brenda has been a Sister of Mercy of Newfoundland and Labrador in Canada for fifty-two years. She has worked as a high school teacher, a vocation director, Archdiocesan Director of Adult Faith Development, Retreat Leader and Facilitator of Chapters and Assemblies of Religious Communities of women and men for over

twenty-five years, in many parts of the world, including Ireland, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Nicaragua, many of the United States, and Canada. Presently she lives in northern Ontario, on a river in a forest - writing, guiding religious congregations online, leading retreats in Ontario, and daily grounding in the seasons natural world.

Brenda has published four books of poetry: *When the Bones Find Their Singing Place* (Palabras Press, 2005), *SoulWinds: poems of transformation* (Palabras Press, 2008), *Quicksilver of the Heart* (iUniverse, 2010), *A Shadow of Bells: poems of losing and finding* (TellWell Press, 2016). As well as a book of essays: *Finding the Line: Ordinary Encounters in Nature's Mirror* (iUniverse, 2010). Brenda has also published her doctoral thesis, which became *Original Fire: the Hidden Heart of Religious Women* (introduction by Diarmuid O'Murchu) CreateSpace Publishing, 2008.

In 2018 Brenda's most recent book *The Luminous Ordinary: Catherine McAuley's Living Presence of Love* was published by iUniverse. All books except the first two are available from amazon.

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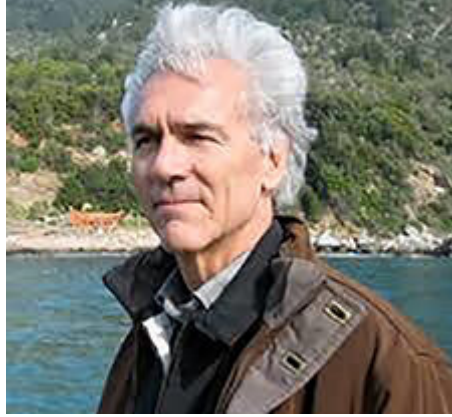
### **Dr Gillian Ross**



**A leader and teacher in exploring the evolving human consciousness grappling with its responsibility for what seems to be our rapidly-approaching global catastrophe.** Gillian could be described as a Christian, Buddhist Yogi and Mystic with a penchant for Taoism. The author of four books, she originally studied behavioural science and philosophy before training as a Shiatsu massage practitioner and yoga teacher. Her audio recordings of guided meditations and Yoga Nidra put out by the ABC have been embraced by many. Gillian now runs "Pemavalley", a mediation and retreat Centre in the Nimbin Valley of NSW.

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### **Professor Brian Thomas Swimme**



**Director of the Center for the Story of the Universe and Professor at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco.** Brian received his PhD from the Department of Mathematics at the University of Oregon in 1978 for work in gravitational dynamics. He brings the context of story to our understanding of the 13.7 billion year trajectory of the universe. Such a story, he feels, will assist in the emergence of a flourishing Earth community.

Swimme is the author of *The Hidden Heart of the Cosmos* and *The Universe is a Green Dragon*. He is co-author of *The Universe Story*, which is the result of a ten-year collaboration with cultural historian, Thomas Berry. Swimme is also the creator of three educational video series: [Canticle to the Cosmos](#), [The Earth's Imagination](#), and [The Powers of the Universe](#). Most recently he co-wrote and hosted the 60-minute film [Journey of the Universe](#), broadcast on PBS television stations nationwide.

He lectures widely and has presented at conferences sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, The World Bank, UNESCO, The United Nations Millennium Peace Summit, and the American Museum of Natural History.

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## Conference Facilitator

Sr Margie Abbott RSM



**National and International facilitator, group worker and Laudato Si' animator.** Margie is a Sister of Mercy based in Geelong. With qualifications in education, spirituality, theology, facilitation and psychodrama. Margie highly values inner independence and the Contemplative Stance in her life and work. In 2020 she published her book of rituals based on Laudato Si' called *Cosmic Sparks: Igniting a Re-Enchantment with the Sacred*.

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## Conference Committee

**Sr Margie Abbott RSM** - Conference Facilitator

**Sue Martin** – Reconciliation with Creation Project Officer, Australian Jesuits

**Sally Neaves** – Conference Administration. Integral Ecology Animator, Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea

**Professor Dermot Nestor** - Executive Dean of Theology and Philosophy, Australian Catholic University

**Sr Patricia Powell RSM** – Founding member and manager of the former Rahamim Ecology Centre, Bathurst NSW

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