



Many Paths

Newsletter of Mercy Associates of ISMAPNG

Issue 6, September 2018

Welcome ...

As this edition of *Many Paths* is being sent out, we are mindful that many Mercy Associates groups in New South Wales and Central Queensland are living with the dreadful presence of drought. Australia is a vast nation and drought is a recurring and often long-lasting event for those on the land in many regions. Our heartfelt prayers are with people in these locations. We hope nourishing rains will come over the next few months and that families will receive the support and encouragement they need to maintain their well-being during this period of extreme hardship. Sr Caroline Ryan, a member of the Institute Leadership Team has prepared a prayer: **God of All Seasons** (see page 2). Please include this prayer in your personal prayer and when your Mercy Associates group meets.

Season of Creation

While such a large part of Australia suffers drought, September is acknowledged as the **Season of Creation**. This 'season' was established by Patriarch Dimitrios in 1989. In 2015, Pope Francis called on Catholics to join 'together with all Christians' to pray for and act to protect creation. In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis calls upon all People of God to accept the challenge to 'protect our common home' and 'to bring the whole human family together' (#13). He reminds us, 'We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world, and that being good and decent are worth it' (#229). (above paragraph from NACAR newsletter, 1 Sep 2018).

Two **Season of Creation** resources from Mercy International Association are attached to this newsletter.

Draft Code of Conduct for ISMAPNG—including Associates

A most important item in this newsletter concerns the development of a new **Code of Conduct** for the Institute—a code which will apply to Mercy Associates as well as Sisters of Mercy and staff. On page 3 is a letter from Sr Eveline Crotty, Institute Leader, asking Mercy Associates groups to provide feedback on this by **28 September**. Please read Sr Eveline's letter and the attached draft Code of Conduct carefully. It would be great to have responses from Mercy Associates groups sent to the committee who have drafted this, so they can learn the perspective of Mercy Associates on the draft Code. You can access the draft code online using the link on page 3, and a PDF copy is attached to this newsletter.

Feast of Our Lady of Mercy

September is also the month in which we celebrate the feast of **Our Lady of Mercy** on September 24th, a special day for all Sisters of Mercy and those who associate with them. As the Mercy Partners website explains: *Venerable Catherine McAuley placed her community under the patronage of Our Lady of Mercy because Mary is the one who has the deepest knowledge of the mystery of God's mercy. Catherine sought to bring the mercy of God the Father to all those in need* (www.mercypartners.org.au/feastdays).

As your group prepares its own celebration, included in *Many Paths* is a moving poem by Sr Mary Wickham, entitled **Mercy Day**. Its contents are beautiful and might provide a stimulating reflection piece for your group as it ponders the gift and benefit of mercy in all of our lives. The article from the Timor Leste group also details the celebrations they have planned for Mercy Day, and their efforts may inspire your group's planning.

May you and your Mercy Associates group be renewed and inspired by your Mercy Day celebrations.

Carmel Ross, **Executive Officer**



This is your life, joys and sorrow mingled, one succeeding the other.

Letter to Frances Warde,
May 28, 1841

God of All Seasons

Caroline Ryan rsm

We ask for your loving care for
all who, in these days,
are suffering the effects of drought
throughout Australia:
the women, men and children,
the animals,
the vegetation, and
their parched mother, Earth.

We ask you now for
abundant rain
graced with your creative power
to give
new life to stations, farms and gardens;
new health to creatures great and small;
new hope to your people
anxious about today and fearful for tomorrow.

We pray this today, gracious God, with Confidence in your Mercy.

Amen



Ballarat—Prayer Ministry

The Prayer Ministry of the Ballarat Mercy Associates commenced two years ago in August 2016.

Sr. Brenda Dolphin rsm says that 'Prayer is a vitally important Ministry in the life of our Mercy family today. She goes on to say that action and contemplation are woven into the essence of who we are as women and men in Mercy....and that prayers for others have also been part of our lives. Sr. Brenda travels the world speaking to groups about the cause for canonisation of Catherine McAuley. She says that the Ministry of Prayer takes us into the lives of many people. Of course we don't know the effect or outcome of our prayer. What we do know though is that God receives all prayer. As we raise our hands and hearts to God in prayer for the person in need, we ourselves are drawn closer to God. No matter what our age or energy level our Ministry of Prayer can be like a lightning conductor of God's love in the world. (*Published in MercyNews, Issue 774 6 June 2018*).



Kathy Pollard

From the Institute Leader—new Draft Code of Conduct

Dear Colleagues,

Recently a project team consisting of sisters and Institute employees has been busy preparing a new **draft Code of Conduct** (Draft Code) in compliance with a requirement of the Royal Commission Into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and to the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards issued by Catholic Professional Standards Limited.

The Draft Code was presented at the last ILT meeting and before it is formally approved and adopted, we are now inviting sisters, staff, associates, volunteers and contractors of the Institute for preliminary reading of the document.

To assist this process, **attached to this newsletter is a copy of the Draft Code** and a link to an online survey that can be used to provide feedback. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KNVXSMN>

The survey will enable you, if you choose, to provide comments on the Draft Code and to request clarification with one of the contacts of the project team (Professional Standards Officer, Margery Jackman or Legal Counsel, Nicki Paten).

Please Note: This survey is anonymous unless you elect to give further feedback.

Please provide your feedback by completing this survey no later than Friday 28 September 2018.

Your careful consideration of this draft will satisfy the Institute's Professional Standards training requirements for 2018.

The Code of Conduct is an important document for the Institute and I thank you in advance for your participation and contribution in the survey to ensure that it reflects our Mercy charism, is relevant and practical.

If you would like to participate but for some reason do not receive the email to complete the survey, please contact Denise Fletcher at Stanmore – Denise.Fletcher@ismapng.org.au.

Yours sincerely,

Eveline Crotty RSM, Institute Leader



ISMAPNG CODE OF CONDUCT DRAFT SURVEY

The Code of Conduct (Code) is an attempt to articulate attitudes and values that are consistent with ISMAPNG's values and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

The Code Consultation Draft can be located here [Consultation Code](#). If you have trouble opening the Consultation Code, please contact the Institute Communication Team at communication@ismapng.org.au. As indicated above, a copy of the Draft Code of Conduct is included as an attachment to this edition of **Many Paths**.

We are now inviting all Sisters, Staff, Associates, Volunteers and Contractors to have input into the draft Code before it is formally approved.

Please provide your feedback by completing this survey no later than Friday 28 September 2018.

We acknowledge that there may be people responding to the consultation who are themselves victims. If this process becomes difficult for you, please seek immediate support through contacting your Network Facilitator (Anne Pate, Victoria, 0407 908729; Christine Convery, NSW, 0414 627226; Carmel Ross, WA, QLD, 0408 124404), the ISMAPNG Professional Standards Office on 1800 019 625 or Human Resources on 02 4964 640.



Extract from the Draft Code of Conduct for ISMAPNG—Our Commitments

1. I commit to behaving respectfully, justly, honestly and with integrity.
2. I commit to creating a supportive, safe and caring environment.
3. I commit to safeguarding all people, particularly children and vulnerable people.
4. I commit to acting within the law, carefully, diligently and as a good steward of resources.

Kunjingini, Papua New Guinea

Our Mercy Friends Group here at Kunjingini is almost three years old. This is our second newsletter article.

Firstly we the Mercy Friends are missing Sr Philomina Waira. Sr Philomina has left us and gone to a new community at Yrapos. Sr Philomina started the group and supported us very much with our spiritual life. We are happy to have Srs Margaret and Doris and Dorin to continue the work with us.

The Mercy friends here are actively involved in activities such as:

- ♦ Praying together for all Sisters of Mercy and doing works of Mercy to old, sick and dying.
- ♦ Teaching each other skills of sewing and cooking once a week.
- ♦ Cleaning the Mercy convent and pastoral centre.
- ♦ End of every month we come together to pray and have meetings.

Mercy Friends



Bathurst

The Bathurst group is a wonderful group of ladies. Their meeting was prayerful and well attended for such a cold winter's night. Their 'Face of Mercy' sharing is always such a joy to hear.

**Christine Convery,
NSW Network Facilitator**



What did Catherine McAuley look like?

Venerated and famous people who lived before the age of photography are often a mystery to us in terms of their appearance. This is the case with Catherine McAuley. There are no photographs of her. The original painting of Catherine was painted after her death, from the memory of the artist, Sr Mary Clare Augustine Moore (this is the painting on the lower right corner of the first page of *Many Paths*). Some of Catherine's early associates in Limerick "generally felt the original did not bear sufficient likeness to Catherine, and 'little if any improvement was made in the new ones, save a more intelligent expression!'" (Mary Reynolds, *The Path of Mercy*, p. 14).

Sr Mary Clare Augustine Moore, a skilled artist who produced many illuminated images for the Register of Sisters at Baggot Street in Dublin, considered Catherine's appearance, aged 50, with the eye of an artist, noting:

"She... looked at least 10 years younger. She was very fair with a brilliant colour on her cheeks, still not too red. Her

face was a short oval but the contour was perfect. Her lips were thin, and her mouth rather wide, yet there was so much play and expression about it that I remarked it as the next agreeable feature in (her) face. Her eyes were light blue and remarkably round with the brows and lashes colourless but they spoke. In repose they had a melancholy beseeching look; then (they) would light up expressive of really hearty fun, or if she disapproved of anything they could tell that too. Sometimes they had that strange expression of reading your thoughts, which made you feel that even your mind was in her power, and that you could not hide anything from her. Her nose was straight but thick. She wore bands made from her own back hair which were so well managed as to be quite free from the disagreeable look bands of the kind usually give. The colour was pale golden, not in the least sandy, very fine and silky. ... She had a good carriage, her hands were remarkably white but very clumsy, very large with broad square tips to the fingers and short square nails." (Reynolds, p. 14)

Mercy Works Visits Mercy Associates

Recently I had the great pleasure to meet many Mercy Associates on opposites sides of Australia. Firstly, Sister Beryl Amadee RSM invited me to Central Queensland to meet with the Associates in Gladstone and Rockhampton.

I spent a fruitful Saturday morning chatting with women in Gladstone. They shared some faith experiences of Mercy and I shared some stories about what we do at Mercy Works. And, of course, the morning started with Mass and the usual 'comfortable cup of tea'.

The next Sunday the Rockhampton Associates hosted an afternoon tea as a fundraiser for Mercy Works. 120 guests enjoyed beautiful food prepared by the chef at The Cathedral College. Students from the school assisted with the catering and entertained us with a ukelele band. Mercy Associate Ailsa McLaughlin coordinated the afternoon with many able assistants. There was a trivia quiz, plenty of fun and laughter and the mandatory raffle. To top off the afternoon, the assembled guests were delighted to know that \$2,000 was raised for Mercy Works.

Then it was over to the other side of Australia to meet up with the Mercy Associates in Perth. There, Jan O'Connor and the Tuart Hill Associates have held luncheons in aid of Mercy Works for many years. The Mercy Works Directors went to Perth to say 'thank you' to our supporters.

As it was Refugee Week we hosted a session giving information about the Perth Mercy Connect program. We run Mercy Connect in four cities in Australia. It is the mentoring program for refugee and asylum seekers in schools. In Perth itself, the program runs within 18 schools with as many as 40 volunteers. And, again, the 'comfortable cup of tea' was enjoyed by all.

Mercy Works is most grateful to our supporters amongst the Mercy Associates. We all share the same aspiration of Catherine McAuley's that we are motivated to make some lasting efforts for the relief of the suffering of the poor in our society.

Ailsa Mackinnon RSM, Executive Director



MercyWorks

SISTERS OF MERCY
IN AUSTRALIA & PAPUA NEW GUINEA



Executive of Mercy Associates Rockhampton: Jenny Loscher, Sr Beryl Amadee, Kath Maloney, Peter Maloney, Beryl Mills, Del Murphy, with Executive Director of MercyWorks Sr Ailsa McKinnon RSM



Presentation about the work of Mercy Connect in schools in Perth.

Rockhampton—More details of the above-mentioned Fundraising High Tea!

Much fun and fellowship was enjoyed by all who attended the Mercy Associates High Tea at 'Middle Hall' on the grounds of the Mercy Centre, Rockhampton on Sunday, 10 June.

The function was organised to raise money for Mercy Works, the development arm of the Sisters of Mercy. Sister Ailsa Mackinnon RSM AM, Executive Director of Mercy Works travelled from Sydney to be the guest speaker. Those present were informed of the work of the organisation which develops projects to improve health and social well-being; educational opportunities for all ages are created; aged care services also receive attention.

Projects include providing education support to refugee and indigenous students in Australia; providing clean water in remote communities in Papua New Guinea; reducing the rate of malnutrition in Timor-Leste and improving the lives of vulnerable people.

John Martin, Ewan Beattie, Angus McDonald and Owen Harrison (aka 'The Coconut Physics', *photo at right*), students from The Cathedral College, provided well received renditions of familiar tunes. Other TCC student volunteers were of invaluable assistance to the success of the event as they assisted with the hospitality side of the function.

During the social afternoon, a multi-draw of over 50 prizes was drawn. Following the event, a contribution of \$5000 was made to the works of Mercy Works.



Bronwyn Batley, Area Support Manager – North. *This article first appeared in Mercy Matters, July 2018*

Young—Visit from Hennessy Catholic College

The Mercy Associates from Young were delighted to welcome Christine Convery (Mercy Associates Network Facilitator, NSW) to their recent August meeting. Christine updated the Associates on the latest happenings with Mercy Associates including the upcoming NSW Mercy Associates gathering at Douglas Park next year.

Another highlight of the meeting was a presentation by the students from Hennessy Catholic College in Young on their recent Cambodian Immersion. The students presented a video and photos of their experiences; including their participation in the construction of a home for a family a few kilometres out of Phnom Penh. Of particular interest to the Associates was the visit to a Missionaries of Charity orphanage, where they presented a donation from the Young Mercy Associates. The students were able to fit in some sightseeing, including Angkor Wat.

The students spoke of the impact the experience had on their outlook on life and acknowledged how privileged they are to live in Australia. They told of the pleasures the children had from simple things like blowing bubbles and playing football and how the children generously shared the toys they received.

The Associates (*photo lower right*) were delighted to host the students to lunch after the presentation.

Ann Murphy

Griffith—interest building...

Christine Convery was here in Griffith on Friday and Saturday and left this morning. We had two gatherings, three women Friday evening and two yesterday afternoon. All are in the inquiry phase. Three had been to a few meetings previously. Two are new, and there are about another three who are interested but unable to come to the meeting this time. All women were very impressed with the DVD 'A Circle of Mercy'. It was very well received. We have been meeting about every three months.

Sr Theresa Foley, rsm

PS: A comment from Christine on Sr Theresa's hospitality: *Her hospitality was legendary and so very much appreciated by yours truly.*



Hennessey Catholic College students Pipi Coddington and Bridget Maloney addressing the Young group



Cody Edwards, Pipi Coddington, Zac Wark, Bridget Maloney, and Jess McInerney (teacher)



Below left: Odette Dotter, Sr. Theresa Foley, Maureen Burley and Margaret Polegato

Below right: Dawn McIntyre, Tricia Marin and Sr. Theresa Foley

Townsville

Townsville Mercy Associates and friends met in July in a twilight gathering for the second time. The fifteen present at the House of Prayer included two mentor Sisters of Mercy, Sr Catherine Cuddihy and Sr Marie Melville, as well as two visitors from Proserpine.

Trudy Clarke led the group in prayer, her focus being the hope and Mercy shown in the rescue of the Thai boys and their coach. Louise Doolan highlighted our role to be 'a shining lamp to all around us' by inviting all to hold and reflect on a lighted candle as we began our formation. Chapter 1 of the Formation booklet was covered in a creative way allowing us all to begin to get to know one another.



We continue to grow our database, sending *Many Paths* to those on email throughout the Diocese. Laurell Miller, Sr Catherine Cuddihy, Sheerah Tait and Loraine Peach generously offered to follow up those on the original list of Associates who might still be interested in staying connected, or who would like a printed newsletter or a newsletter posted. We wished our Proserpine visitors well; it is to be hoped a group will begin there shortly.

Marcia Chock Man

Rockhampton Mercy, Josephite and Presentation Associates Gather

The report below is about a quite special gathering—many other religious institutes also have an Associates movement—the Josephites, Presentations, Christian Brothers, and dozens of others who also see the benefit of inviting lay women and men to be nourished by their charism and express it in their own way in their own lives. This report covers a meeting of the three Associates groups mentioned in the title—a special gathering indeed! And indeed, there is a place for everyone at God's table...

How would you react if you were called 'Beloved' or 'Highly Favoured One'? Would you feel threatened by, uncomfortable with or unworthy of the obviously Biblical titles?

Gifted guest speaker, Jan Heath, lead Associates to embrace such titles after hearing, reflecting upon and praying selected Scripture passages. This was done in groups of four. After hearing a Biblical extract and a reflection, three of the group laid hands on the fourth member and prayed, invoking the Holy Spirit. The person was then given a title based on the Scripture passage. Titles given were: 'Highly Favoured One' (Luke 1:26-38); 'Beloved' (Luke 3:21-22); 'Fire' (Acts 2:1-4) and 'Joy' (Acts 9:10-19). WOW! Talk about the POWER of the Holy Spirit!

Those present were sent forth with the renewal of a desire to evangelise wherever they were, looking for opportunities to share God's love with others. Come, Holy Spirit.



And Mary said,
'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.
His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. (Luke 1:46-50)

Timor Leste—planning Mercy Day celebrations

Greetings to Mercy Associates and may your Mercy Day be joyous and blessed. Our celebrations this year will focus on Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation on the CALL TO HOLINESS IN TODAY'S WORLD. GAUDETE ET EXULTATE - REJOICE AND EXULT.

In GAUDETE ET EXULTATE we are invited to be most attentive to the beatitudes in our day to day living. The Beatitudes challenge us anew and they 'demand a real change in the way we live'.

Mary, Mother of Mercy lived the Beatitudes of Jesus 'like none other' always rejoicing and trusting in God. As the first and most perfect of disciples, Mary heard the call to holiness and lived it out in her specific moment of time. We too receive a mission in life and we are called to live that out, like Mary, joyfully opening ourselves to God in whatever situation we may find ourselves. As Pope

Francis remarks, 'The holiness to which God calls you will grow through small gestures'. Each of these moments is a step towards holiness.

During our Liturgy after the Proclamation of the Word, (Mt. 5: 3 - 12) the Associates will receive a Beatitude Candle. With time to reflect upon the particular Beatitude each has received the group members will then be invited to share how she/he sees the Beatitude as part of our path to holiness. Our Liturgy will conclude with the Magnificat.

After the Liturgy we will conclude with a 'Comfortable Cuppa'.

As you celebrate with Mary, Mother of Mercy we join with you in Gospel joy, love and peace.

Mary Anne Dwyer RSM

Blessed are you...

Mercy Day

Mary Wickham rsm

If we utter aloud the word *mercy*,
standing, each of us, by an open window
anywhere we are in the world,
then the word *mercy* will carry on the soundwaves
onwards and unceasing,
through the air of the wounded world.
And maybe, when it takes flight
into deed and kindness, justice and effort,
it will effect a healing, a hope and a blessing.
It may call the homeless home,
it may coax to hope the betrayed and broken,
it may ease the burdened earth.
Listen for it, the repeated word *mercy*, on this Mercy day,
Listen for its neighbourly dialects and global idiom.
Imagine those who, like you, are saying it aloud,
and those who need to hear it, today - the word - *mercy*.
One word, one deed of justice, one kind effort at a time.
Creator God, sustainer of life,
Jesus, our companion Word,
Spirit, who, like the air, inspires,
give us the simple daring this day
to say and to be Mercy.

Mercy

<http://marywickhamrsm.org.au/poem/mercy-day/>