



AMSSA

Australasian Mercy Secondary Schools Association

Email: msea@mercy.org.au

Web: <http://msea.mercy.org.au>

NEWSLETTER 02/06 MAY 2006

Welcome to the MSEA Newsletter.

Scroll down to find these features:

1. Vice President's Report
2. A Prayer for Pentecost
3. Using the CD rom "Mercy and Justice shall meet"
4. Helping Agnes Chauke, the South African student who contributed to "Mercy and Justice shall meet"
5. Are your staff and students ready for Mercy Day? Check that they have these resources.

VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The theme for this newsletter is the CD rom "**Mercy and justice shall meet**", which is already well used at St Catherine's, and which provides us with a great resource on mercy and the Sisters of Mercy for staff, students and parents, as you will read below. Thanks to the New Zealand Mercy schools who have offered us MAJSM resources they have developed. Please avail yourselves of their work! We hope to put the materials on the MSEA website, but in the meantime, simply email the attached request to the editor of this newsletter and Frances will email the materials to you.

You are reminded about a series of important upcoming events: you should have received your registration form for the **August 25 and 26 Pastoral Care Conference, *Caring for Students – the Mercy Way***. Early bird registrations will be accepted until May 31. The conference is a professional and collegial development opportunity for our staff in pastoral positions.

Over thirty staff from Mercy schools in Australia and New Zealand are going to the International Mercy Secondary Education Conference in Dublin on July 6 – 9 this year.

Our **Biennial MSEA Conference will be in Brisbane on August 16 – 18, 2007**. Please check that you have already put these dates in your diary.

Jane Holloway (Vice President) janeh@stcatherinescollege.school.nz.

PRAYER FOR PENTECOST

Jesus, you promised us the Spirit to be our advocate and guide. Recognizing your fidelity and our many needs, we pray:

- ❖ *Fill us with your Spirit, and send us out to serve you.*
That we may be renewed in heart and mind;
That we may see you in your people who are poor:
That we may speak the truth in love:
- ❖ *Fill us with your Spirit, and send us out to serve you.*
That we may make wise choices for the common good:
That we may work to bring about a new heaven and a new earth:
That we may be credible witnesses to your mercy:
- ❖ *Fill us with your Spirit, and send us out to serve you.*
(Adapted from Morning and Evening Prayer of the Sisters of Mercy)



MERCY
AND JUSTICE
SHALL MEET

**Making Use Of The Cd Rom
"Mercy And Justice Shall
Meet" (from St Catherine's
College Wellington NZ)**

This CD Rom continues to be a useful and versatile resource.

First it is professionally designed and edited (if that's the right expression). It tells powerful stories. It gives accurate information about the people and the lands it refers to. And so is a good research resource. It is very user friendly.

The resource has been used in a variety of ways so far:

§ The 'Intro' was used in a **liturgy on Mercy Day** as well as the stories

about domestic violence. It served the need to inform the students that while Mercy Day is a day of fun, we must not lose sight of the fact that the social injustice to which Catherine McAuley responded continues to be the work of the Sisters of Mercy.

§ To introduce **Year 9 students** to the work of the Sisters of Mercy, having explored the life and work of Catherine, it has been invaluable to show how her vision and vocation is still carried on all over the world.

§ In **Year 10 and 11**, it has been used as a one off example of social justice in action today, especially during Lent. It has also been used as an example for the unit Inspiring Men and Women.

§ Social Justice Units are part of the curriculum for **Years 9 and 10**. It is a good example of the injustices experienced by many in the world as well as the difference the work of the Sisters of Mercy has made to people's lives.

§ In **Year 12** it has been used extensively for the topic Commitment and Ministry.

At the moment, we only have a single user license. The intention is to purchase a site license so that all students can interact with the reflection exercises.

Other scopes for future development are to include its use with Provisionally Registered Teachers Program and staff new to the college as a way of exposing them to the work of the Sisters of Mercy.

Mercy and Justice Shall Meet Interactive CD Rom Senior Student Worksheets

A set of ten worksheets was initially developed in 2005 by
Anna Nicholls RSM St Mary's College, Auckland
Siobhan Lee St Mary's College, Auckland
Ann Dyer McAuley High School, Auckland
with further support from Ethel Bignell RSM, Teresa Anderson RSM and Anne Corry, to enable our students to access the wealth of the Interactive CD Rom **Mercy and Justice Shall Meet** produced by Fraynetwork Multimedia. We are grateful to St Mary's College, Auckland and McAuley High School, Auckland for providing the release time to do this.

Each of the worksheets has since been tested in our classrooms and rewritten. If you have suggestions for further improvements please

forward to ani@villa.school.nz so we can make these resources as user friendly as possible for students.

There are worksheets, as follows, for seven of the eight MAJSM sections:

MAJSM

"Ways to come home"

"Accepting difference"

"Violence to empowerment"

"Denial to healing"

"Building and Strengthening"

"Displacement to resettlement"

"Centres of support and skill"

WORKSHEET

Addiction (versions for Aust and NZ)

Difference

Economic violence

Violence (long and shorter versions)

Healing

Housing

Refugees

Te Waipuna Puawai

They are in Pdf format and are available from the editor of this newsletter.

We have not supplied answer sheets as it is essential that teachers work through the CD rom before using with students due to the content of some of the video clips.

We have devised a grid outlining some possible links for the worksheets to the NZ Religious Education Programme, Understanding Faith. ***This is available from the editor of this newsletter.***

Some suggestions for ease of use:

- Instruct students to read through the whole sheet before beginning the worksheet.
- We recommend using a data projector to outline the software for the students before beginning to demonstrate how to access the context, story, inspiration and action sections as well as the attached fact files. The help button on the programme gives a good overview.
- The worksheets can take up to two lessons to complete.
- Our students really like the use of the journal. They were instructed to create one, (if his has not already been done) using the user name Mercy and password Mercy.
- If a group of students are working individually on computers then headphones are necessary.

Anna Nicholls RSM May 2006 ***Villa Maria College, Christchurch, NZ***

STAFF RETREAT OR REFLECTION DAY

If you have a site license and staff have their own laptops or can access school PC's, why not build a technological staff reflection day around **Mercy and justice shall meet**? There are also many other websites to which you could direct staff, such as Daily Prayer online (www.pray.com.au), which has a "Quiet Space" with guided meditation.

At 9.00am (or whatever time the school day usually begins), assemble and create the expectation that there is to be a quiet atmosphere for the day with staff engaging the materials for perhaps two or three sessions, after which they could spend time alone or sharing in small groups. Give a time schedule for the day, including quiet times and times for morning tea and lunch. Then leave staff free to use the time themselves.

(Provide an appetizing morning tea and lunch [using the funds you would have spent on an outside facilitator if you are on a tight budget]!)

In the afternoon, a concluding liturgy can be either a simple eucharist, a liturgy prepared by the REC drawn from the Inspiration sections of MAJSM, prayers prepared by some staff following their engagement with the CD rom, or even, more adventurously, the combined result of a preparation time with all the staff having a role in preparing and running the liturgy.

Finish the day half an hour earlier than the school day usually finishes.

Note: Give staff plenty of advance notice about what will be happening on the day.

Please pass the article below on to the staff member who looks after the students' fundraising for charities and /or to your mission or service captains

Helping Agnes Chauke

Please give some thought to donating to Agnes (some Mercy schools in Australia have already done so – thank you!).

Have you seen Agnes reading "It's Alright"? on the Violence to Empowerment story on Mercy and Justice Shall Meet? Her reading gives us a window into the powerlessness of women in her culture.

You can send donations to help the Sisters pay for Agnes' education at the MSEA address at 185 Wakaden Street, Griffith 2680. These will be forwarded to the Sisters.

The Mercy Sisters in South Africa, from the Kenya Province of Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy Ireland, are continuing to try to give her some financial help for her university studies.

From the Sisters in Kenya:

"Agnes Chauke is furthering her studies at Pretoria University and she has to move into a hostel at Uni. if she is to get a chance to complete her degree and get out of her present situation.

Agnes Chauke has come out of a very difficult situation. She is intelligent and has a good appearance but we constantly worry that unless we keep in touch with her anything can happen.

We have a long established Sisters of Mercy Education Trust. These funds are administered by the Bank and this ensures that all monies are allocated to the specific project that it is meant for and no money is handled by us. But we do ensure that the money goes where it should go. Be assured that whatever you send will be highly appreciated by us and will ensure that Agnes will become a dignified and respected lady in society.

I feel that if between us we can ensure that she completes her studies, she will never look back and go astray.

Her fees for one year are

(i) Tuition and Computer and Registration	R16250.00 (3.375.17 AUD)
(ii) Residence and Meals	<u>R15000.00 (3115.24 AUD)</u>
	R31250.00

The Residence and Meals are expensive but absolutely necessary for Agnes to survive and complete her course. The home situation is not a solution as it is not conducive to study."

Agnes has written to the Mercy Sisters with thanks for their help:

Dear Sisters

I want to thank you for offering a hand in my school finances and helping me in going further with my studies. Your kindness is greatly appreciated and does not go unnoticed in my life, for your efforts have encouraged me in not giving up in my career, that I am pursuing and motivates me to strive for nothing but the best.

In life God gives us obstacles and tasks to overcome, and He does this for a reason. I really did not know where my family was going to get the money for the fees that were outstanding. I was about to give up, but

with God's grace and kindness, He brought you, the Sisters of Mercy to my aid.

I thank the Lord above for bringing our paths together. I thank him for all you have done, and thank you all for your kindness. My family and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts and we pray to God that he must not shorten your hands in helping but lengthen them and touch those who also need help like I do.

Let your kindness and goodness not stop by me, but let it spread. Thank you. Lord bless you all
Agnes.

Are your staff and students ready for Mercy Day next term?

1. Order your copy of "Mercy and Justice shall meet" from Fraynetwork Multimedia, 55 Barry Street Carlton, Victoria, 3053 Australia. Phone :: +61 3 9349 4696; Fax :: +61 9349 1604; email majsm@mercyworld.org.

2. Check our MSEA website [**http://www.msea.mercy.org.au**](http://www.msea.mercy.org.au) for a guide to websites about Catherine McAuley and the Mercy Sisters.

3. The March 2006 MSEA newsletter had info on these books and how to get them:

Beyond Catherine, Stories of Mercy Foundresses, by the Mercy Archivists – has stories of the first Sisters in the Americas, New Zealand, Australia, Britain, Ireland, Newfoundland and the Philippines.

A Reflection of Mercy, Prayer services, liturgies and resources for Mercy Schools and Communities, by Sandy Flaherty