



# AMSSA

Australasian Mercy Secondary Schools Association

Email: [msea@mercy.org.au](mailto:msea@mercy.org.au)

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

## NEWSLETTER 01/07 FEBRUARY 2007

**Welcome to the MSEA Newsletter.**

**Scroll down to find these features:**

- 1. President's Report**
- 2. Feature Article: Mercy 5 – the Sydney Mercy Secondary Schools**
- 3. Lenten Prayer**
- 4. Resources**

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

#### **150 Years**

December 12 2006 was the one hundred and seventy fifth anniversary of the profession of Catherine McAuley, Mary Ann Doyle and Mary Elizabeth Harley, who each vowed "perpetual chastity, poverty and obedience, and to persevere until the end of my life in the Congregation called the Sisters of Mercy, established for the visitation of the sick poor, and charitable instruction of poor females". The celebrations around Australia in the various Mercy Congregations and establishments are testament to the power of this small beginning. Congratulations to all the Sisters of Mercy and those who continue and foster the work of mercy.

#### **Brisbane Conference**

The conference will commence on Wednesday August 15 and conclude at lunchtime on Saturday August 18. WE anticipate that the conference will enliven and enrich us as Mercy educators, so please mark the date in your diary and give thought to who on your staff will be able to come to Brisbane to take part. If you or one of your staff would be interested in conducting a workshop, please let me know.

## **World Youth Day**

The Mercy Sydney schools are readying themselves for this. The Opening Mass is scheduled for Tuesday July 15, with Catechesis and Youth Festivals running on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday July 16, 17 and 18. The papal welcome will be on Thursday July 17. The pilgrimage to the site of the final Mass will be on Saturday 19 July, and the week will conclude with the Final Mass on Sunday morning July 20.

At this stage the proposal is for a Mercy Gathering on the Monday July 14 (groups are scheduled to arrive on the Sunday evening). The hope is to offer young Mercy leaders a day where they experience the richness of Mercy spirituality as it is expressed in the Church and community today, through liturgical and communal experiences involving students, staff and ex-students. It is hoped to use Monte San' Angelo College for the day.

Accommodation will be at a premium, and the Sydney Mercy schools would like to give priority to other Mercy groups, and are hoping to be able to co-ordinate this with any of you who are considering sending a group from your school.

This newsletter and the invitation take advantage of the Mercy accommodation and to join in the Mercy Gathering is being circulated to the participants of last year's Dublin Mercy International Conference. We are also looking to the possibility of sponsoring some students from one of our Mercy schools which has no funds of its own to send them.

The Brisbane Conference will be an opportunity to make firmer plans with schools wanting to send groups of students to the World Youth Day week.

**Lee-Anne Perry (President)** [perry1@allhallows.qld.edu.au](mailto:perry1@allhallows.qld.edu.au)

***Thanks to Sister Leonie Martin for her account of her work among the Sydney Mercy Schools. This is an edited version: the full text is available from MSEA.***

**"MERCY 5"** Mercy **S**ydney **S**ister **S**econdary **S**chools,  
a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Relationship

The "MERCY 5" Sydney Sister Secondary Schools" is part of the living history of the Sisters of Mercy who were founded by Mother Catherine McAuley in 1831.

The participating schools are: Burraneer Our Lady of Mercy College, Chatswood Mercy Catholic College, North Sydney Monte Sant' Angelo, Parramatta Our Lady of Mercy College, Westmead Catherine McAuley High School.

My work over the last five years has been to establish the **Mercy Action Group (MAG)** in OLMC Burraneer; and the **"MERCY 5" Sydney Sister Secondary Schools** Relationship and to hold an annual gathering of the members.

This is my way of endeavouring to leave the legacy of a structure within our Mercy colleges to allow the Mercy spirit to continue to flourish.

### BACKGROUND

It occurred to me about five years ago, that at this point in our Mercy History, it may be good to establish closer relationships with our Mercy Sister Schools.

Since 2002 I had been the Campus Minister at Our Lady of Mercy College, Burraneer NSW. During my time here I worked in a counselling role, assisted with the liturgies and created and formed the **Mercy Action Group**.

The OLMC community supported and contributed to these new beginnings. I acknowledge Loreto McLeod RSM, for her encouragement and support to me in my project of the "Mercy Charism" within the College Community. Sr. Loreto was the final Mercy Sister Principal at OLMC Burraneer, completing her long and successful term in 2000.

### MERCY ACTION GROUP OLMC BURRANEER

As the last Sister of mercy at Burraneer, my goal was to endeavour to create a way to have "MERCY" visible and active within the school. As our **Mercy Action Group** developed, I realized that it would be good to record and create an ongoing structure, to assist the College Staff to sustain the function and essence of the **Mercy Action Group**. Doing so would ensure that the OLMC Community will rejoice in, and be guided by their Mercy heritage.

And so over two years, from our experiences at OLMC Burraneer, I wrote the MERCY CHARISM DOCUMENT. It came out of our lived experience and is still 'a work in progress'. However in 2005, the Principal, Miss Deslee Browne accepted it and this manuscript is now an official document of the School Policy within the OLMC Strategic Management Plan.

### **MERCY CHARISM DOCUMENT**

The Teachers and Students of  
Our Lady of Mercy College Burraneer;  
Are invited to embrace your Mercy Heritage,  
Mercy Values and Mercy Ethos.

## MERCY 5 SYDNEY SISTER SECONDARY SCHOOLS

### MAG MISSION STATEMENT

We, the "Mercy Action Group", will strive to make a  
Difference through working together:

By lending a hand,  
By being positive and kind,  
Having a cheerful persona, and by  
Creating a friendlier atmosphere through our  
attitude and action.

MERCY BEING SOMETHING THAT BLOSSOMS EVERY DAY

Composed in 2003 Burraneer MAG

Because of the developing relationship between the MERCY 5 Sydney Sister Secondary Schools, I decided to send copies of the MERCY CHARISM document to the other Sydney Sister Schools, with the idea of a possible structure on which to build their own Personal Charism Policy, or even a common policy between us.

The practical place to begin was The Sydney Sister Schools, and more specifically within each Mercy and Justice Group therein.

The MERCY 5 ANNUAL GATHERING was instituted and ten to twenty students from each school, with up to ten staff attend and participate. In 2003 the Coordinators of Mercy Action Groups of the five Sydney Mercy Colleges met. In 2004 the first Mercy 5 gathering was held at OLMC Parramatta. The students immediately established friendships and the bond of Mercy between them began to flourish. Their day was warmly enhanced by the input of the Catholic Mission Team with their vibrant presentation on Justice issues.

In 2005 the MERCY 5 Gathering was celebrated at Monte Sant' Angelo, North Sydney and at this successful and animated gathering we decided that the MERCY 5 "would work on a common goal during Terms 1 and 2 of 2006 i.e. the Australian doctors Catherine & Reg Hamlin's 'Fistula Hospital' in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in support of their work with abused and injured child mothers/child brides. Mrs. Maryanne Ayres, an ex-student of OLMC Burraneer, and dedicated worker for the Fistula Hospital, volunteered her services, to work with and coordinate the MERCY 5 Sisters Schools on this project. It is working very well and Maryanne's Mercy input is outstanding.

2006 THE MERCY 5 GATHERING AT OLMC BURRANEER 08.08.06

The theme for this gathering was LET MERCY WORK FOR MERCY and Mr. Ray Paxton, Principal of Mercy College Chatswood, was our guest speaker.

Our common Mercy and Justice action for 2007 and 2008 is towards our own Aboriginal Australian families - "*Making Indigenous Poverty History*". Our goal is to support a MERCY WORK involved with Aboriginal communities.

This *Annual Mercy Action Group Gathering* makes for a lively assembly of 90 to 100 Mercy Associates. The host school considers their Gathering to be a privilege and put their best into the creativity and hospitality of the day.

The MAG Coordinators for this year are:

Mrs. Carolyn Blinco, Burraneer; Ms. Veronica Vumbaca, Chatswood; Sr. Carmel McDonough RSM, & Ms. Julie Lange, North Sydney; Ms. Barbara McBride, Parramatta and Ms. Kylie Cogger, Westmead. Sr. Leonie Martin RSM, Facilitator of the "MERCY 5".

*Leonie Martin RSM, Parramatta Congregation, NSW, Australia.*

**A LENTEN PRAYER** (taken from *Morning and Evening Prayer of the Sisters of Mercy*)

Jesus, we recognize our own weakness,  
and we know that only through your mercy  
can we be merciful.

In time of trial,  
in the midst of our daily work,  
whenever we feel doubt or confusion,  
enlighten and strengthen us  
so that we may do your holy will.  
May our deeds of mercy  
express your mercy to a suffering world.  
We make this prayer with gratitude  
for your unfailing goodness to us. Amen.

## RESOURCES

1. DVD **Circle of Mercy**: a reflection on the works of the Sisters of Mercy throughout the world based on Jeannette Goglia's song Circle of Mercy, and produced to support **Mercy and Justice Shall Meet**.

Available from Fraynetwork. Email [contact@fraynetwork.com.au](mailto:contact@fraynetwork.com.au)

The following are available from Sisters of Mercy Melbourne Congregation PO Box 5067, Alphington 3078, Attention Sophie Fenaughty, fax 03 9499 3897, email [sophief@melbmercy.org.au](mailto:sophief@melbmercy.org.au)

2. DVD: **The Story of Ursula Frayne: a Woman of Mercy**, a docudrama by Sr Adele Howard, 1996. Running time 45'36"
3. **Reflection Resources** celebrating 150 years in Melbourne, designed for use by small groups of adults or senior secondary students to assist them to reflect on their local Mercy story. 5 themes: Ursula Frayne (you need the DVD); Call, Journey, Mission, Community.
4. Story book: **The Story of Ursula Frayne: a Woman of Mercy**, by Anne Walsh, published 1997, 63 pages with illustrations

### Secondary Teaching materials by Anne Walsh:

5. Teacher Text **The Story of Ursula Frayne: a Woman of Mercy** published 1997, 56 pages
6. Themes and Resources **The Story of Ursula Frayne: a Woman of Mercy**, 1996, 48 pages
7. Extension activities for **The Story of Ursula Frayne: a Woman of Mercy**, 1997, 58 pages.

### Primary Teaching Resource

8. **Know, live and celebrate Mercy** – relating the 150 years of Mercy to the RE Curriculum Frameworks.
9. **2007 Mercy Ministry Calendar** with photos of Mercy ministry and Sister Clare Agnew's drawings of the Works of Mercy as the basis of the design for each month.
10. **The Life and Legacy of Catherine McAuley**  
Contact Eugene Lynch on Phone: +613 9499 1577 or email [elynch@melbmercy.org.au](mailto:elynch@melbmercy.org.au), or visit the Mercy International website for an order form.  
This four page A5 brochure captures the life and legacy of Catherine McAuley and her understanding of what is at the heart of a Mercy education.  
The text is by Mary C Sullivan rsm, author of the book, *Catherine McAuley and the Tradition of Mercy*. **Price:** 1.00Australian Dollars.