



# AMSSA

AUSTRALASIAN MERCY SECONDARY SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

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## Newsletter November 2008 No. 04/08

Welcome to the AMSSA Newsletter.

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### A Message from AMSSA President, Jane Holloway

Our 2009 conference, in Perth, from July 1 – 4, is taking shape and promises to be a wonderful Mercy experience, as you can see from the conference information on page 2. There has already been overwhelming support and admiration for the work of the Conference Planning Committee, who are developing a vibrant and challenging program for us.

In this issue of our newsletter is an article from Townsville about a fundraiser for the Mercy Sisters in the Sudan. You will also find timely contributions for Term 4: about Advent and the induction of new student leaders.

**Jane Holloway, Saint Catherine's College Kilbirnie** [janeh@stcatherinescollege.school.nz](mailto:janeh@stcatherinescollege.school.nz)

# 10th AMSSA Biennial Conference

1 – 4 July 2009

Perth, Western Australia

*The blessing of unity dwelling amongst us  
is the true spirit of Mercy flowing on us*

Mark your diaries and prepare for an array of presentations from International and Australian guest speakers including Sr. Mary Duffy, Sr. Sophie McGrath, Sr. Mary Reynolds, Anne Kelleher and Professor Celia Hammond.

A broad range of topics will be covered over the three day conference, among them:

- Leadership & women
- Mercy works in action
- Risk & accountability in schools
- Men in Mercy education
- Spirituality in the progressive world.

Each participating Mercy School will also be invited to bring up to two student representatives, as part of their leadership skills development.

There will also be many opportunities to meet and network with those from Mercy schools around Australia.

*Look out for your conference information flyer, which will arrive via email towards the end of November 2008.*

## **St Patrick's College, Townsville goes Country! Wednesday 15 October 2008**

It was denim and checked shirts, cowboy hats and boots. It was Country music and songs, line dancing and whip cracking for the day.

The school held a fund- raiser for the day, seeking to raise money to support the work of the Sisters of Mercy in rebuilding schools in war-torn Sudan. After twenty-five years of destruction, educational facilities are severely restricted and a day at school can mean a classroom is a shady tree, a chair is a rock under that tree and a library is a dozen books. So financial support is paramount in improving educational opportunities for Sudan youth. As well, in Religious Education, Grade 10 students have recently completed studies in social action, identifying the needs of other people in a global world. Having seen a Powerpoint presentation on conditions in Sudan, they were keen to make a difference.

At Recess, the school was entertained by talented songsters from both staff and students. Ashlee Rieck, a Grade 11 student, who has recently secured a recording contract, presented one of her favourite songs. Ms Rachel Cairns, a staff member and well-known local talent who was the vocal director of NQOMT's recent production of "Hot Shoe Shuffle", teamed with Mr Jason Fichera, another staffer and a keen professional musician, to really get everyone's feet tapping! Natalie Hook and Sarah Amos sang a duet. Both students have great voices and are budding artists.

A \$2 Lucky Dip was held at lunchtime, with items donated by Grade 10 and the staff. But the Line Dancing was the biggest attraction for the day. Students (and the staff team) had been preparing for several weeks and it would appear that staff needed many more weeks to get the steps correct! But it was all in good fun. The students competed in House teams with senior students leading the way. How wonderful they looked as they boot-scooted their routines! Principalities House was the winning team, showing well rehearsed steps and wonderful costumes.

A taste of real whip cracking added a touch of country life. As well, the normal bells that ring to signify the beginning and end of lessons, were replaced with Country favourites belting out over the intercom. So students and staff strutted and boot-scooted their way through the day!

The day has generated \$500 which we know will be well received by the Sisters of Mercy and will go some way in helping them to continue their successful, challenging work in Sudan.

# **Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta**

## **Senior Leaders' Induction**

### **Order of Ceremony**

**Welcome**

**Presentation of Certificates to 2008 Leaders**

**Induction Ceremony: Introduction**

**Reading**

**Address**

**Blessing of badges**

**Presentation of badges**

**Leaders' Pledge**

**Blessing of new Leaders**

**Final Address**

**Response**

### **LEADERS' INDUCTION CEREMONY 2008**

#### **LEADERSHIP TEAM 2008**

##### **Entrance**

*Current Head Girl and Assistant Head Girl process in carrying the Mercy Candle, followed by Principal and Assistant Principal. All proceed to the stage and take their seats. Head Girl and Assistant Head Girl place the Mercy Candle on the table with the other candles and sit on the opposite side to the lectern. The rest of the team is already sitting on the stage (lectern side).*

##### **Welcome      Year 11 Coordinator**

'I would like to welcome you all today to the Leadership Induction ceremony for the College Leadership Team of 2009.

A particular welcome is extended to the parents, grandparents and friends of our new leaders who have joined us on this very special occasion.

To the leaders of 2009: it is a great honour to be chosen to be of service to your school. In this position, you will have the opportunity to make an impact on our college community.

This role that you will take upon yourselves today brings with it great responsibility, and we hope that you will honour your positions, making your family, your peers and teachers, as well as yourselves, proud. Always remember that you will prove your worth by your actions. So, lead by example at all times.

I would like to call the Year 12 Coordinator to acknowledge the work of the 2008 Leaders.

Presentation of Certificates: **Year 12 Coordinator**

*Leaders in portfolios receive their certificates. Four executive Leaders last. As the Principal presents certificates, Leaders go back to their seats.*

**Induction Ceremony of Leaders begins**

**Head Girl**

"We are gathered today to celebrate a rite of passage in the life of our College. As Year 12 Leaders, we are acutely aware that our days here are drawing to an end, but for our friends in Year 11, a new and wonderful experience is just about to begin. So, it is with a sense of happiness, mingled with a feeling of great sadness, that we hand over the reins of leadership to them as of this moment."

**Assistant Head Girl**

"The Year 11 students are called upon to become the new Leaders of Our Lady of Mercy College, Parramatta to work alongside the members of staff in serving the entire school Community. Share wisely and generously of your time, talents and energy to keep alive our great school spirit and our sense of unity."

**Head Girl**

"You are to lead by example in the rich Mercy tradition, attending to the needs of those around you in the spirit of Catherine McAuley. You are part of the wider Mercy community too and are asked to support the efforts of the parents, ex-students and the wider community who contribute so generously to the life of our College. We will now hear a reading from the Gospel. This passage illustrates the spirit of "service" which the new Leadership team espouses".

## Reading Assistant Principal

"Jesus and his disciples were at supper and he rose from the table, took off his outer garment and tied a towel around his waist. Then, he poured some water in a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet and to dry them with the towel around his waist. He came to Simon Peter who said to him: "*Are you going to wash my feet, Lord?*" Jesus answered him: "*You do not understand now what I am doing, but you will understand later.*"

Peter declared: "Never, at any time, will you wash my feet!" "If I do not wash your feet," Jesus answered, "you will no longer be my disciple." Simon Peter answered: "Lord, do not wash only my feet, then! Wash my hands too!" After Jesus had washed their feet, he put his outer garment back on and returned to his place at the table. "Do you understand what I have just done to you?" he asked. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord', and it is right that you do so, because that is what I am. I, your Lord and Teacher, have just washed your feet. You, then, should wash one another's feet. I have set an example for you so that you will do just what I have done for you!"

**Address** **Principal** - includes history of medals

**Blessing / Reflection      Director of Mission**

<b>Presentation of medals, badges &amp; pledges</b>	<b>Principal and Assistant Principal</b>
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*Leaders receive their medals / badges. The new Leaders will make their way to the stage as their names are called by the Year 11 Coordinator*  
*“Welcome and congratulations to our 2009 College Leaders”.*

**Head Girl:** (Head Girl 2008 hands medal to HG 2009)

**Assistant Head Girl:** (AHG 2008 hands over medal to AHG 2009)

**SRC President:** (President 2008 hands over medal to President 2009))

**SRC Vice-President:** (VP 2008 hands over medal to VP 2009)

*The new Executive Leaders sit with the current Executive Leaders. The rest of the Leaders are called by portfolio. The Principal presents badges and the Assistant Principal hands a candle to the new leaders. The Leaders are welcomed by their present counterparts who then go to the seats left vacant by the new leaders in the body of the Hall. (The Leader's pledge is on the seat)*

**Assembly:**  
**Creative & Performing Arts:**  
**Debating & Public Speaking**  
**Executive Support:**  
**House Leaders:**  
**Liturgy:**  
**Mercy Action:**  
**Sport:**  
**SRC Liaison:**

**Lighting of candles / Pledges:**

"I would now ask HG 2008 and AHG 2008 if they would light the candles of HG 2009 and AHG 2009 who will then light the candles of the other leaders to symbolise the passing on of the leadership spirit"

*HG and AHG 2008 light candles belonging to HG and AHG 2009 and they, in turn, light the candles at the end of each row of Leaders.*

*"I would now ask the 2009 Leaders to stand and to read the Leaders' pledge together."*

**Blessing of Leaders**

*The Year 11 Coordinator leads the assembly in the blessing. This blessing can be found on your chairs. The Assembly stands and all extend their arms in a blessing.*

**Blessing:**

**Year 11 Co-ordinator:** "In blessing these leaders we pray..."

**All:** "May the love of our faithful creator, God, the peace of our Brother and Healer, Jesus, and the joy and wisdom of the Holy Spirit, the guidance of Mary, Our Lady of Mercy, surround and encourage each of you as you now commit yourselves to serve our school community in a spirit of Mercy."

**New Leaders:** "Amen"

**Final Address:** Head Girl 2008

**Response:** Head Girl 2009

**Closing:**

Year 12 Coordinator

OLMC is a College of many traditions and this ceremony is among the more moving ones.

I hope that all of you, students of the junior school, have been inspired by what you have seen this morning to work towards holding a leadership role one day within the school.

Thank you to the Principal, Assistant Principal and the Director of Mission for their contribution to the ceremony.

I now invite the new Leaders to exit the Hall with the Official Party and ask our guests to follow them to the Heritage Room for morning tea.





## AN ADVENT PRAYER

*(Adapted from Morning and Evening  
Prayer of the Sisters of Mercy)*

### Greeting:

Spirit of the living God, come,  
fill us with your wisdom.  
Mary, woman of the word,  
teach us to listen with open hearts.

### Reading: John 1: 6- 8, 19 – 28

#### (Gospel of the Third Sunday in Advent)

A man came, sent by God.  
His name was John.  
He came as a witness,  
to bear witness to the light,  
so that everyone might believe through him.  
He was not the light;  
he was to bear witness to the light.

This was the witness of John, when the Jews  
sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem  
to ask him, 'Who are you?' He declared, he did  
not deny but declared, 'I am not the Christ.' So  
they asked, 'Then are you Elijah?' He replied, 'I  
am not.' So they said to him, 'Who are you?  
We must take back an answer to those who  
sent us. What have you to say about yourself?'  
So he said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:  
*A voice of one that cries out in the desert:  
Prepare a way for the Lord.  
Make his paths straight!*'

Now those who had been sent were Pharisees,  
and they put this question to him, 'Why are you  
baptizing if you are not the Christ, and not  
Elijah, and not the prophet?' John answered  
them, 'I baptize with water, but standing among  
you – unknown to you – is the one who is  
coming after me; and I am not fit to undo the  
strap of his sandal.'

### Intercessions

John came as a messenger, heralding the  
coming of Christ, and so we pray:

❖ *Help us to be messengers  
of the Good News to all the world.*

That we may recognize our responsibility to  
those whose lives we touch, we pray:

❖ *Help us to be messengers  
of the Good News to all the world.*

That our preparation for Christmas may radiate  
peace and prayer to a world filled with unrest  
and distraction, we pray:

❖ *Help us to be messengers  
of the Good News to all the world.*

That we may remember, especially during this  
holy season, those who are poor, sick and  
uneducated, we pray:

❖ *Help us to be messengers  
of the Good News to all the world.*

That our schools and works of mercy may  
model the respect due to our Mother Earth, we  
pray:

❖ *Help us to be messengers  
of the Good News to all the world.*

### Prayer

Jesus, John was a voice in the wilderness; you  
are the Word. John prepared the way; you are  
the Way. Through his example, may we come to  
know more clearly the role each of us is to play  
in your plan for salvation. May we be grateful  
for our own gifts, using them fully for the  
coming of your kingdom; may we rejoice when  
the gifts of others further your designs. We ask  
this, knowing that you hear and answer our  
prayers.

Amen.

### Blessing

Bless us, O God, with faith.

Bless us, O God, with mercy.

Bless us, O God, with the energy and vision  
of the gospel. Amen.

## LITURGY RESOURCES FOR ADVENT

There are two books of Mercy prayers, which are most likely already in your school:

**Sandy Flaherty** **A Reflection of Mercy – Prayer Services, Liturgies and Resources for Mercy Schools and Communities**

There are two Advent/Christmas liturgies:

***What Child is This?***

***Angels We Have Heard on High***

**Margaret Abbott** **Igniting Sparks of Reconciliation and Compassion – Prayer and Ritual for Staff Gatherings in Catholic Schools Today**

There are four Advent Liturgies, one for each week of Advent.

## MERCY SISTERS IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The Sisters of Mercy, Papua New Guinea Region are preparing to reprint "**Crossings in Mercy**" which commemorates fifty years of the Sisters of Mercy in Papua New Guinea (1956 - 2006).

Written in a readable style by Sister Teresa Flaherty RSM, who served in PNG herself, the book of 339 pages is illustrated with accompanying photos, and is highly recommended as a useful resource for those interested in the Church's overseas missionary endeavours among our nearest northern neighbours.

The book covers:

- \* The beginnings of the pioneer sisters from Australia and the growing ministries in education, health care, and pastoral and social ministry,
- \* The part the Australian Sisters played in building up an emerging local church and contributing to a country rapidly moving towards, and consolidating, political independence (1975),
- \* The role of young indigenous women who joined the Sisters, working side by side with them in mission and gradually assuming more leadership as the number of Australian Sisters decreased,
- \* The celebration of the Jubilee season (2006/07) as the indigenous Sisters took leadership of the autonomous region of the Sisters of Mercy-PNG, on an equal footing with the seventeen Congregations forming the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia.

**The actual number of books for the reprint will depend on the number of order forms received by Monday, 22nd December, 2008. There is a flyer attached to this newsletter with more information, and the order form is reprinted here.**

### Order Form: (please print)

#### CROSSINGS IN MERCY - THE STORY OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY PAPUA NEW GUINEA 1956-2006

Teresa A. Flaherty rsm

Title ..... First Name ..... Surname .....

Ph Number ..... Email .....

Organization .....

Postal Address: (No. and Street/Box) ..... Suburb .....

State ..... Post Code ..... Country .....

I would like to order ..... copy (copies)

Signature ..... Date .....

#### **Please Post or Email by Monday 22nd December 2008 to:**

The Co-ordinator - Crossings in Mercy  
Adelaide Mercy Congregation Office  
Mile End SA 5031 Email:

Phone: (08) 8150 4900 Fax (08) 8150 4999  
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