



**Sisters of Charity**  
of Australia

# Congregational News - Special

Wednesday 31 May 2017

ISSUE 2: MAY 2017

## Implementation of 2014 Chapter Mandate Steering Committee (ICMSC)

Dear Sisters

The Weaving...Together Gatherings in Melbourne, Brisbane, and Sydney were wonderful occasions of conversation, information, and an opportunity for each Sister to speak from her own experience.

At our recent Steering Committee meeting we were confirmed in our approach by the supportive and affirming responses from many of you. We will continue to invite you into the next stage of the process and your participation and prayerful support underpins our ongoing engagement.

This is our journey towards the 25-28 June 2018 Gathering, we appreciate and encourage you to contact any member of the Steering Committee with your comments, suggestions and queries. The energy, direction and progress of the Sub-Committees is outlined below.

Together we will weave the steps along the way.

With gratitude for your confidence in us,

Linda Ferrington

On behalf of the Steering Committee

### The Steering Committee

Linda Ferrington      Chair, ICMSC

Colleen Jackson      Chair, "Ecological Conversion"

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Anne Mayberry      Chair, "Margins – Crossing Thresholds"

Helga Neidhart              Chair, "Revising Constitutions"

Teresita Marcelo      Chair, "Celebrating Life/Living as Religious Women"



## Reports from the Steering Committee's sub-committees

Margins Crossing Thresholds: Anne Mayberry, Karen Nguyen, Amanda Nguyen, Leone Wittmack, Anne Taylor, Libbey Byrne, Maureen Walters

The subcommittee for Margins Crossing Thresholds ( MCT), has met on two occasions. Unfortunately, we are yet to meet as a whole because of members' commitments.

Our task, as previously mentioned, is to discern where and what we are being called to in this ministry of MCT and thereby discern a NEW way forward, not invent a new ministry. But discovering ways in which we can make a difference in the lives of those who are marginalised.

Three areas of ministry which have so far been the focus of our meetings are:

\* Congregation - there may be Sisters who are being marginalised of their own doing or by other Sisters.

\* Indigenous Australians - we need a greater awareness of their cultural practices and causes of much of their suffering, e.g. exclusion in Church, unsuitable accommodation, continuous grief, violence, domestic

cruelty and now ICE. We can do something practical.

\* Asylum seekers - these people arrived here prior to the cessation of boats.

J.R.S. is endeavouring to assist them in many ways with two centres at Parramatta, but the cost of food, even though much is donated, is a problem for staff.

Government help is non-existent.

One of our members, recently attended the Mission Conference, and was most enthusiastic about the many ways in which aspects of our ministry were mentioned.

We agreed that Prayer is a great start to demonstrating our care and we will be sending out a prayer card as soon as we can.

We look forward to our next meeting on Friday, July 14 at Bondi Junction.

Celebrating life/living as religious women: Teresita Marcelo Margaret Valentine Pauline Staunton Regina Eileen Browne Millard Elizabeth Costigan

The Sub Committee on Celebrating Life and Religious Living met on May 14, 2017 after an earlier decision to listen and participate first on the State gatherings in their locations - Melbourne, Brisbane, and Sydney.

In our discussion covering a wide scope of the "how" of this Sub Committee's designated task, we remembered Mary Aikenhead's advice: "Our Heavenly Father knows what is best and may his most holy will be ours.... Think, and above all pray for right understanding and earnest courage."

At the present time, one of our focus points is our Chapter endorsement which will greatly assist us in our endeavours - "...considering and exploring new pathways to enrich our communal life".

We thank our Sisters who have begun communicating via phone call, email, and/or text, and we invite you to continue the dialogue with us.

Ecological Conversion: Colleen Jackson; Kathleen Doohan; Jeannie Johnston; Virginia Mahony; Elizabeth Dodds

The Ecological Conversion Sub-Committee met for the first time for the day on May 13. We spent time considering:

- What Global Ecological Conversion issues are beckoning our attention;
- Where we RSC's are at with respect to these issues - signs of hope, and challenges;
- What resources we have that can aid our engagement:

- What priorities present for our attention and what resources we need to proceed; and
- How can we invite any RSC who is interested, to advance our individual and collective learning and engagement.

We spent time viewing some short videos that address the compelling call of Pope Francis's in Laudato Si, and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, as expressed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Links for these are listed below – we encourage Sisters to take the time to view them.

YouTube links:

1. Laudato Si' animation | CAFOD (for children – but an informative little video):

<https://youtu.be/KOgF2Kgel6k?list=PLCtNheHTxMW-LqL-OVCMKXgZMulmPZAra>

2. The Sustainable Development Goals – Action Towards 2030 | CAFOD and SDGs: <https://youtu.be/g-xdy1Jr2eg?list=PLCtNheHTxMW-LqL-OVCMKXgZMulmPZAra>

3. Top 10 Things You Need to Know about Pope Francis' Laudato Si':

[https://youtu.be/a\\_lqFTYLC\\_4?list=PLCtNheHTxMW-LqL-OVCMKXgZMulmPZAra](https://youtu.be/a_lqFTYLC_4?list=PLCtNheHTxMW-LqL-OVCMKXgZMulmPZAra)

The time we spent in reflection, sharing and mutual learning and listening was really valuable - we especially appreciated the opportunity to spend such time with our own Sisters. We agreed that we would like to invite other RSC's into this same exploratory reflection and learning.

So we have planned some Ecological Conversion Circles to which you are invited:

Sydney – June 10, 10.00 - 12.00. RSVP by Monday 5 June

Melbourne – June 24, 10.00 – 12.00. RSVP by Monday 12 June

Brisbane – July 1, 10.00 - 12.00. RSVP by Monday 19 June

We ask any Sister who is interested to contact James Griffiths by the RSVP date. Once we know the level of interest and numbers we will confirm venues.

Sisters are invited to contact any of us if you have suggestions or questions about this topic and our engagement in it.

And some last words from Francis: "What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up? This question not only concerns the environment in isolation; the issue cannot be approached piecemeal." (Paragraph 160)



Revising Constitutions: Helga Neidhart; Jan O'Grady; Patricia Scully; Maryanne Confoy; Maureen Delaney

So far we have met twice in Melbourne. We are fortunate that only one of our members has to travel interstate, as this makes meeting less complex.

We commenced by clarifying our task and here the actual wording of the proposal document, put to the 2014 Chapter by Patricia S and Karan V, was very helpful. In brief, much about our world and our lives has changed in the last thirty years and, as the new Code of Canon Law was promulgated shortly after our current Constitutions were approved, we need to edit and update our Constitutions.

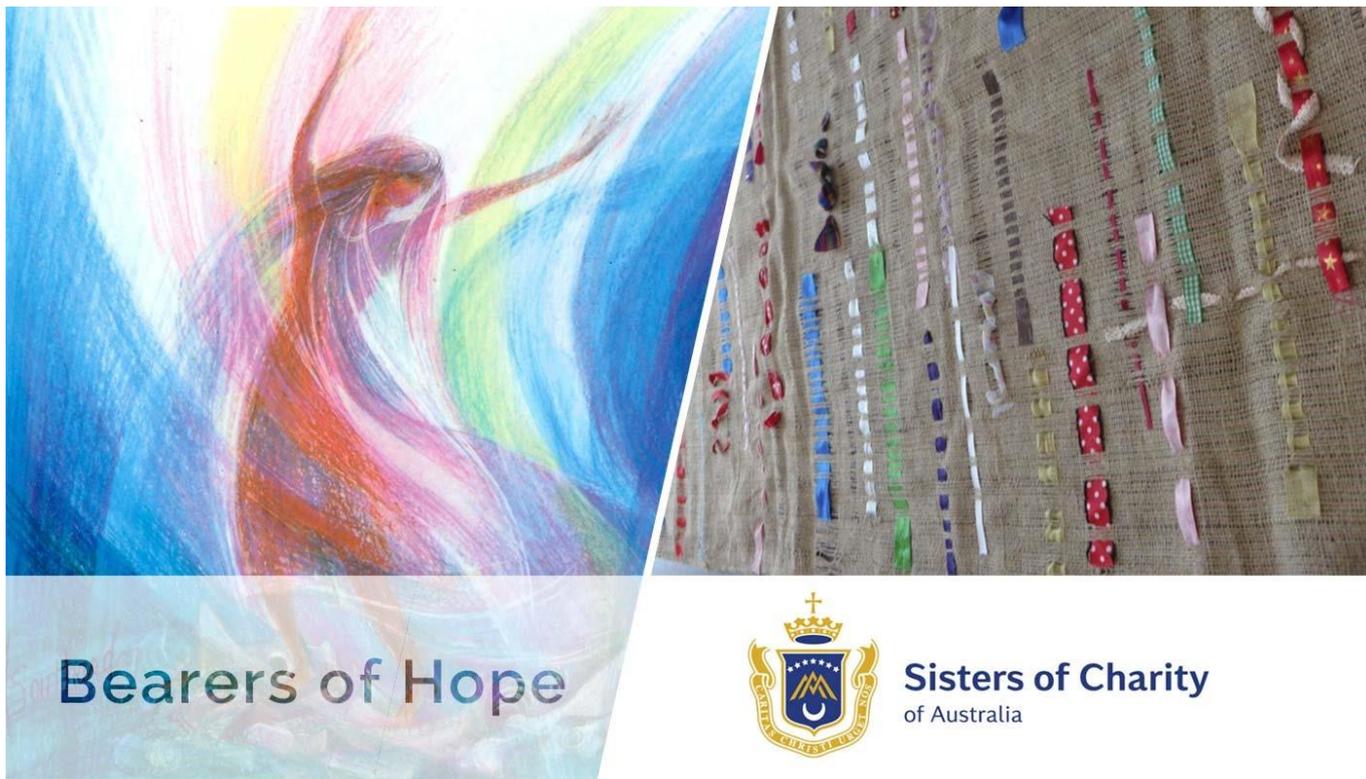
Furthermore, much relevant writing about religious life, Church documents and theological material has appeared recently. Consequently our understanding of the Ignatian heritage and of Mary Aikenhead have been enriched. Committee members are endeavouring to read widely in these areas, to immerse ourselves in this new thinking, to bring these insights to a deeper understanding and possible re-articulation of our Constitutions.

We are aware that this is not our task alone. Our task is merely to start the ball rolling – or to start our part of the weaving. We trust that you will all engage in our common task of together weaving this fabric. It is the fabric of our lives!

Consider rejoining Founding Congregation : CL&C

The CL&C continue to consider and discern this question.





## Date claimer 2018 Gathering

WHEN: Monday 25 June to Thursday 28 June 2018

WHERE: St Joseph's Conference Centre, Baulkham Hills

More information will be provided in due time.

## For more information

Any further queries, questions, or clarification, please contact Linda Ferrington, email Linda Ferrington [linda.ferrington@rscsisters.com.au](mailto:linda.ferrington@rscsisters.com.au) or mobile 0407200584.

"May our Lord teach our hearts to keep alive the fire of grateful love and service." (MA 11 August 1849)

Linda

On behalf of the Steering Committee