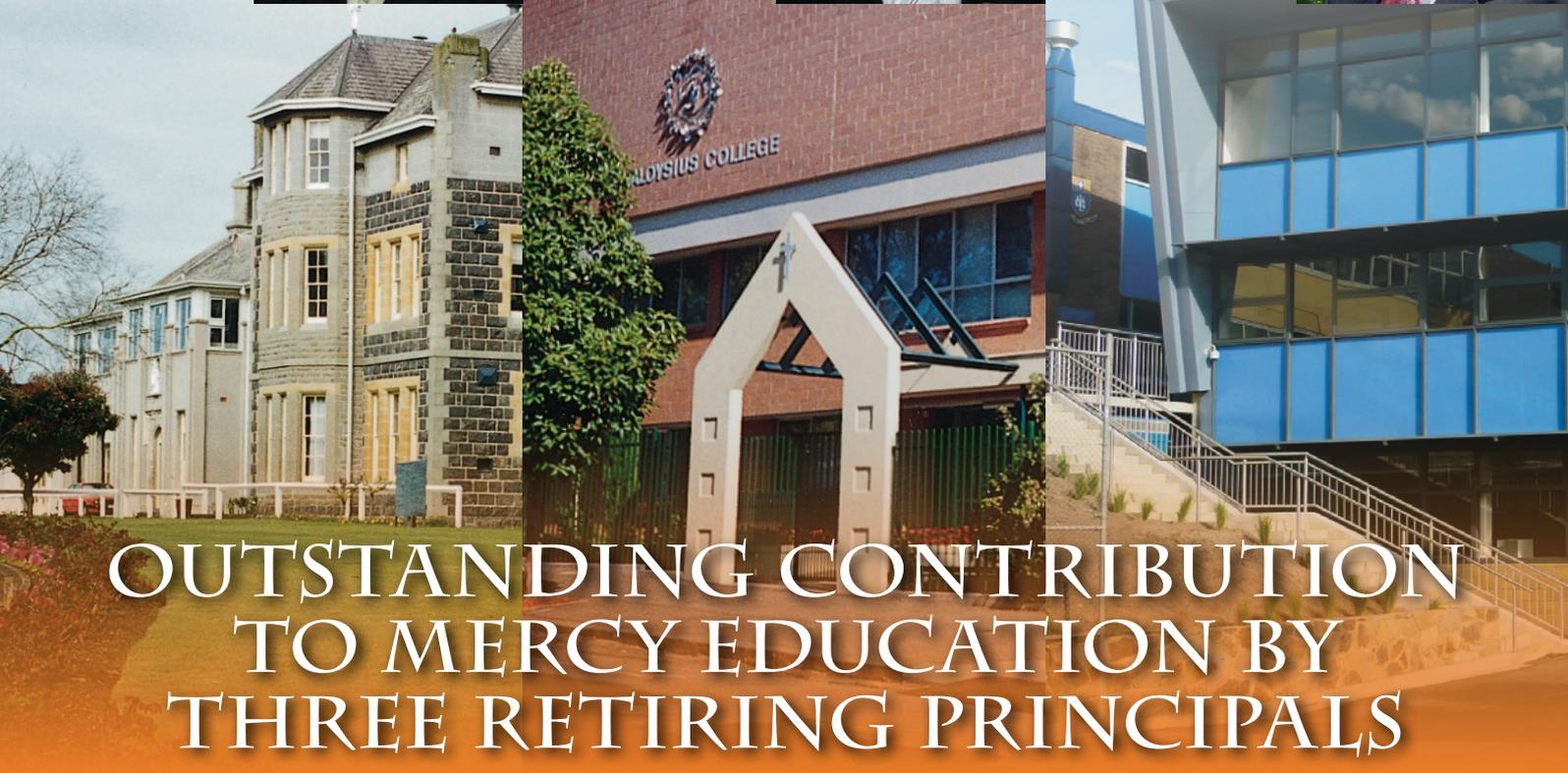


MERCY ED



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720-726 Heidelberg Road, (PO Box 5067), Alphington Vic 3078 Tel: +613 9499 1577 Fax: +613 9499 3897 • Email: elynch@mercyed.org.au • www.mercyed.org.au



OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO MERCY EDUCATION BY THREE RETIRING PRINCIPALS

REGINA BYRNE, JOHN DAVIDSON AND BERNARD DOBSON

At the 2012 Mercy Education Dinner held on 13 October, Directors of the Mercy Education Board, fellow Principals, senior staff, Sisters of Mercy and invited guests, acknowledged the outstanding leadership of Principals, Regina Byrne at Sacred Heart College, Geelong; John Davidson at St Aloysius College, North Melbourne; and Bernard Dobson at Mount Lilydale Mercy College. Combined, the three Principals have led our Mercy Colleges for nearly thirty years and together have been principals in Catholic Education for nearly 50 years. The following articles feature extracts from the tributes given at the Dinner in turn by Board Directors, John Shannon, Liz Monahan and John Brick.

INSIDE: 2-3 Outstanding Leadership ; 4-5 MLMC Chapel ; 6 SHC Geelong Opening & Blessing;
7 Seeds of Justice Student Event; 8 Mercy Connect



EDITORIAL

The establishment of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea (ISMAPNG) in December 2011 has seen much activity across Australia and PNG. The approximately 950 Sisters of the Institute have settled into their new communities of South A, B and C; Central A and B; and North A, and the Mercy ministries have continued to grow and expand to serve the needs of the people in their care. It was indeed a privilege to hear of the 'early days of the journey' of the new Institute from Institute Leader, Sr Bernice Loch rsm, at this year's Mercy Education Dinner.

The growth and expansion of the Mercy ministries has been no more evident than that experienced by Mercy Education this year. The genuine partnership that has developed in such a short time between the Colleges in Victoria and with those in Western Australia has been inspiring and is a credit to the Directors of the Board of Mercy Education, the Principals of the Colleges and all the staff involved in offering warm hospitality and heartfelt welcome. We look forward to more opportunities next year for staff, and in particular students, to experience such warm hospitality and collegiality.

This final edition of the Mercy Ed newsletter for 2012 features and offers tribute to three outstanding Principals as they retire from their positions at the end of this year. Between Regina, John and Bernard, Catholic Education in Victoria has been enriched and strengthened with nearly 50 combined years of principalship; so too has Mercy Education become the richer with nearly 30 of those years devoted to leading Sacred Heart College, Geelong, Mount Lilydale Mercy College and St Aloysius College, North Melbourne. We wish each of them our sincere thanks and blessings for the future.

Also featured in this edition are the beautiful refurbishments and additions of capital works at Sacred Heart College, Geelong and Mount Lilydale Mercy College which will bring students and staff improved reflective and learning spaces.

Finally on behalf of Sr Mary Lewis rsm and the Mercy Connect Melbourne project, please consider or share the opportunity of working as a volunteer to support refugee students in some of our schools.

With our best wishes and blessings for the joys of Christmas.

Eugene Lynch
Editor



REGINA BYRNE

Sacred Heart College Geelong: 2008-2012

Regina has made a significant contribution to Mercy Education and has an untiring commitment to Catholic Education. She has a passion for girls' education and her incredible work ethic

was always evident especially in her handling of the complexities of a large school and the development of future plans. Regina wanted to take the 'outstanding' to 'exceptional' at Sacred Heart College by bringing fresh eyes from outside and daring to provoke and encourage all to work smarter.

Regina displayed her genius with financials and budgeting. She tackled the tough issues, the not so glamorous, the mundane, as well as the buildings requiring imagination, flair, creativity and a pragmatism.

Regina is never one to step away from important issues and principles. She challenged students and parents in relation to standards of behaviour and dress. She set very high standards in the classrooms, reflected in outstanding VCE results.

Regina was a "Beacon of Light" – never afraid to speak up and challenge, but always with good humour and respect. We have admired her myriad of gifts and talents. We thank her sincerely and we will miss her. Regina - as the Irish say: "May the Lord keep you in His Hand and never close His fist too tight on you".

JOHN SHANNON



From left, Sr Annette Schneider, Institute Vicar, Mr John Shannon, Mercy Education Board Chair, and Sr Bernice Loch, Institute Leader, at the 2012 Mercy education Dinner



JOHN DAVIDSON

*St Aloysius College,
North Melbourne:
2003-2012*

It is a pleasure and a privilege to be given the opportunity on behalf of all present here this evening to acknowledge

John Davidson's contribution to Mercy

Education as Principal of St Aloysius College. John has been part of the Mercy education community for over twenty years, as Deputy Principal of St Aloysius, then for the last ten years as Principal.

He is a true man of Mercy, a person of strong faith and great integrity whose leadership at St Aloysius has been marked by authenticity; and a commitment to Mercy values which has been exemplified by his own actions and a determination that St Al's remain faithful to its Mercy ministry.

John has embodied the spirit of Mercy through his relationships with all members of the school community and his commitment to the poor and vulnerable. His undoubted strength is in interpersonal leadership, staff finding him accessible and approachable, compassionate and understanding. He always endeavoured to meet their needs and will be greatly missed by them. People's qualities often shine in the most difficult of situations. John's leadership of his school community following the death of a beloved staff member was great testimony to his own strength of character. The strong community feeling of St Aloysius was especially evident to all who attended the 125th anniversary celebrations.

Students have a deep affection for John, valuing that he knows each of them by name. He has fostered harmony and tolerance in a culturally, socially and religiously diverse community and always responded with care and concern to those most in need, putting Mercy into practice through never giving up on those students going through hard times.

John placed a high priority on student learning, ever ready to embrace change and innovation to enhance the quality of learning and teaching. Important decisions at St Al's were always referred to the touchstone of whether they would improve learning outcomes for students. The result of this has been a remarkable lifting of standards at St Al's during his principalship.

John has been an empowering leader. He demonstrated a commitment to consultative leadership and wise use of the Leadership Team and the College Council.

John, I am sure you are looking forward to a well earned rest and the time to spend pursuing those interests which have been put on hold for the past few years. But there are many who will assure you that retirement brings with it a wide range of opportunities to continue to contribute to Catholic and Mercy education on different levels. I am sure your expertise, experience and personal gifts will continue to be used in the service of others. Thank you for your contribution to St Aloysius and to Mercy education. We wish you well for next year and in the years to come as you explore this new stage of your life.

LIZ MONAHAN



BERNARD DOBSON

*Mount Lilydale
Mercy College,
Lilydale:
1999-2012*

Fourteen years ago, Bernard's superb educational vision, worked

into a practical capital development master

plan, has seen the emergence of the Mount Lilydale Mercy College the community sees today. Behind the translation of the vision into reality lay Bernard's skills of financial literacy, the management of the town planners, architects, and builders, the management of timelines, and most importantly, a deep understanding of what is needed to create the quality infrastructure within which learning and teaching opportunities may be maximised.

This could be seen in no more pointed way than in the synchronicity of the building and opening of the Our Lady of Mercy Memorial Chapel at the College last month. If you visit Mt. Lilydale make sure you leave time to visit the Chapel. It is a lovely building in its own right but better than that, it embodies a sophisticated amalgam of narrative and symbol. If you are really nice you might even be able to persuade Bernard to explain it to you.

I was talking to Bernard as the ceremonies of the opening were winding down. A small girl came up to us and asked him if she could look inside the Chapel. His response – "it is always open to you and everyone." How characteristic – says everything. On a more intimate scale, the evening before this formal dedication, the College Advisory Council held a Paraliturguy when a plaque dedicating the resurrection window in the chapel to Bernard was unveiled. The plaque reads:

"The College Advisory Council dedicates this resurrection window to Bernard Dobson in appreciation for his outstanding service to the Mount Lilydale Mercy College community. Bernard's deep faith and espousal of Mercy values immersed the College in the charism of Catherine McAuley and the current works of the Sisters of Mercy."

Bernard, Sisters from the Institute Leadership Team, your fellow principals, Mercy colleges' Leadership teams, Advisory Council members, and Board Directors know the work you have done and the exemplar you are for Mercy Education and thank you most sincerely for it.

JOHN BRICK

MOUNT LILYDALE MERCY COLLEGE – OPENING AND BLESSING OF OUR LADY



The Mount Lilydale Mercy College community joined together on 21 September 2012 for an occasion of great significance when a ceremony, led by Archbishop Denis Hart DD, was held to consecrate the new Our Lady of Mercy Chapel. The Chapel is dedicated as a Memorial to Old Collegians.

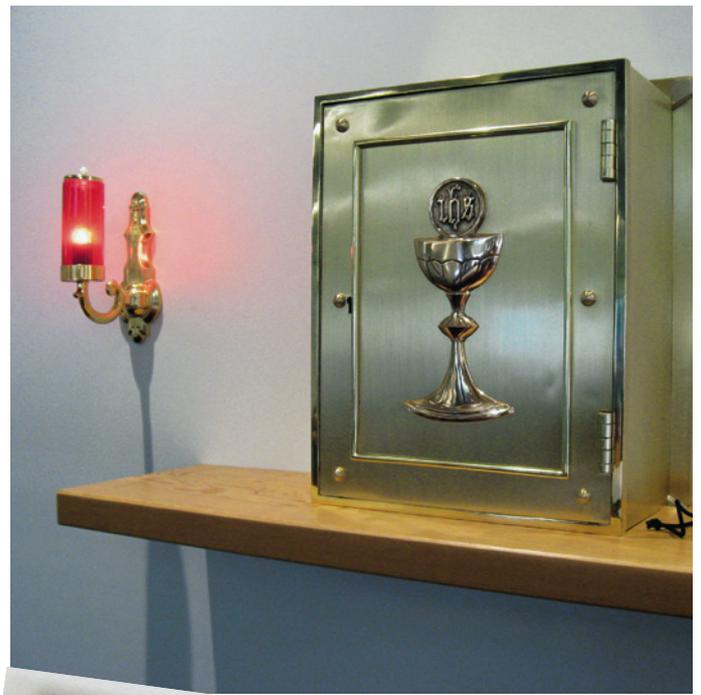
The Chapel is the latest addition to, and both the completion and the pinnacle of, the extensive building program that had taken place at Mount Lilydale Mercy College during the fourteen years of principalship under Bernard Dobson. The Chapel is beautifully, meticulously and lovingly designed, imbued with symbolism and inclusive of all. It is a gift to the College from a man of vision, foresight, courage, faith and inclusivity, a man for whom the word "community" is not just an aspiration but a lived reality.

The Chapel has many features:

- Outside the entrance is a **sculpture of Our Lady of Mercy** depicting Mary, under the title of Our Lady of Mercy, upon whom the Sisters of Mercy modelled themselves when Catherine McAuley founded the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy;
- The main feature of the Chapel is the **Resurrection Window** to which our eyes are drawn from the water font via the black carpet. The lower section of the Resurrection Window has circles in a rich red colouring and a cross, representing Jesus' death on the cross. To symbolise Jesus rising from the dead to a new and glorious life there is a link between the red circle and the bright white circle at the top of the window. The grouping of the circles in the blessing font and the Resurrection Window is an Indigenous symbol of the divine;
- The second main symbol is located on the left as you face the Altar. This is a water feature symbolising the **Water of Life**, Jesus the water of everlasting life. In front of the **Memorial Wall**, adjacent to the water feature, and on a table, is a specially made wooden book which records the names of the elect, all those old Collegians who have passed into eternal life;
- The **Tabernacle** is the tabernacle removed and restored from the Chapel in Mount St Joseph's;
- Inside the altar, **relics of two saints**, have been placed. The two saints are **St Polycarp**, a first century Bishop and martyr from Turkey and **St Bernadette of Lourdes**;
- The **Altar**, **Presider's Chair** and **Lectern** have been made from wood by staff member, **Mark Johnson**. The wood was taken from the Sisters' Chapel in the former Hostel that was located on the site of Dublin House. The **Rostrum**, **Candle Holders**, **Stools** and **Missal Stand** have been made by students and **Mr Michael Callanan**. The shelf below the tabernacle and two tables have been made by **Mr Jamie Christie**.
- Original **student art work** adorn the walls. They include a ceramic piece entitled, 'Virgin Mary', and paintings entitled 'Lamb of God', 'Faith seeking Understanding and 'Hope';
- The gardens around the Chapel have been planted with **roses** as a memorial garden to Old Collegians.



OF MERCY CHAPEL





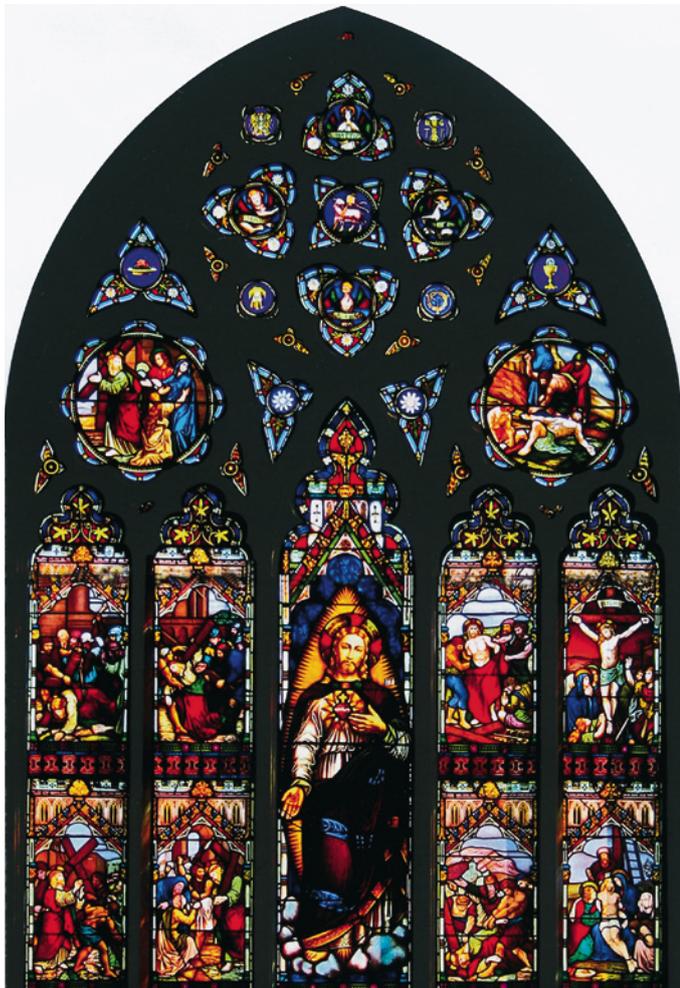
SACRED HEART COLLEGE GEELONG



Blessing of refurbished Chapel and Opening and Blessing of the new Learning Centre

On Thursday 18 October, the Official Opening of the new facilities and courtyard area and refurbished Chapel took place at Sacred Heart College Geelong. Auxiliary Bishop, Most Rev Bishop Vincent Long DD, officiated and blessed the Chapel, Mercy Reflection Garden and Learning Centre.

Over 250 guests attended including members of the Mercy Education Board, Sisters of Mercy, the Architects, Builders and contractors associated with all of the projects. Community Leader, Sr Berenice Kerr, joined the community of Sacred Heart College for the first time since being appointed to the position of ISMAPNG Community Leader – South B. The exceptional work over the past three years of Artist in Residence, Christine Sage, was also recognised.





SEEDS OF JUSTICE STUDENT EVENT

“Boundless Plains to Share? ...
Asylum Seekers and Refugees –
seeking a merciful response”

Students from across the Mercy Colleges gathered once again at Holy Cross Centre, Templestowe to listen, reflect, learn, share and express their hopes and dreams for action to assist those in our society who suffer injustices and hardship. The theme for this event focussed on the plight of the many asylum seekers who come to our shores to seek refuge and protection.

The program was comprehensive with various sessions involving guest speakers, workshops and activities that enhanced the understanding of this important issue for our students and staff. Our guest speakers were inspirational, and often elicited an emotional response from our students and staff. Speakers included:

- Sr Mary Geason rsm – a Sister of Mercy who shared who recent experience with displaced people in Sudan;
- Sr Rita Malavisi rsj – a Sister of St Joseph who works with the Asylum Seekers Resource Centre (ASRC) fighting for the human rights of asylum seekers;
- Yomal, a Sri Lankan national who fled the civil war as a 15 year old and who was detained like a prisoner in Australia for many years;
- Dr Deborah Zion – lecturer at Monash University who is lead investigator for an ARC funded project titled 'Caring for asylum seekers in Australia.



MLMC students and teachers having fun with Presenter, Sr Rita Malavisi RSJ

Responses by students expressed through the Evaluation Sheets indicated a most successful event:

“I’ve never been on a SOJ camp before, but I would love to come to more!!! It really opened my eyes and provided me with knowledge that I can now use to educate others. It was confrontational personally, meaning it challenged me to think (which is brilliant). Hearing personal stories and seeing others suffer has really inspired me to at least try to make a difference. The speeches were relevant also, so I wanted to listen to hear more.”

“I was inspired by Sr Rita and her many contributions to society. I admired her passion and I genuinely liked her personality. The hosts of the future Seeds events were helpful, comforting and kind. I enjoyed mixing with people from the other schools. It is a very valuable experience and Yomal’s performance was extremely touching. Offered many opportunities to ask questions – did not leave any session curious.”

“I had no real expectations of this retreat as we were told practically nothing. However, I certainly didn’t expect it to have such a profound impact on my mind and my heart and my future. I was told once that “your passion should make you cry” and I have found my passion.”

“It was a confronting and eye-opening experience. It was great to hear the religious side of the situation with the Sisters as well as the expert faith side with Deborah. Yomal’s performance was one of the most powerful things I’ve ever seen. The presence of an asylum seeker expressing his situation through music and drama really gave a human fact to the entire issue. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to be able to listen to these stories and sharing all this extremely valuable knowledge. I hope to see everyone again next year!”



AMI teacher, Andrea Luscombe, and AMI students with presenter Dr Deborah Zion

Mercy Connect Melbourne



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY ASSISTING REFUGEE STUDENTS

Mercy Works is currently recruiting volunteers to support refugee students in their educational transitions in secondary and primary schools in Melbourne's northern and western regions. The volunteer commitment is half a day per week for four school terms.

Experience working in an education setting is required.

Retired teachers are encouraged to apply.

A training program will be conducted in February 2013.

Please contact Sr. Mary Lewis rsm for an application form and further information.

MERCY PLACE, PO BOX 221, Moonee Ponds, VIC, 3039, Australia
Telephone: +61 (0) 3 9326 1895, Email: somml@bigpond.com,

Website: www.mercyworks.org.au