At the 2011 Mercy Education Dinner, members of the MSEI Board, Principals, Sisters of Mercy and invited guests joined together and paid tribute to Sr Kath Tierney for her outstanding contribution to the governance of Mercy Secondary Education. Sr Kath has been Congregation Leader of the Melbourne Congregation of Sisters of Mercy for the past twelve years and over that entire period, has been a member of the MSEI Board, a co-Governor of Catholic Bendigo College and a co-Governor of Emmanuel College, Warrnambool. Her contribution as a visionary, pragmatic and inspiring leader in her governance role in Mercy education has been exceptional.

At the annual Dinner, four people including recent past MSEI Board Chair, Patricia Ryan OAM, MLMC Principal, Bernard Dobson, CCB Principal, Darren McGregor and current MSEI Board Chair, John Shannon, expressed their sincere appreciation, deep respect and genuine admiration for Sr Kath. Extracts from the four speeches are included overleaf.

A presentation was also made to the Congregation Councillors, Sr Julie O'Brien rsm, Sr Nicole Rotaru rsm, Sr Mary Bennett rsm and Sr Beth Calthorpe rsm for their untiring support for the Mercy Education ministry.

MSEI to transition to Mercy Education Limited and to partner with Mercy Colleges in Western Australia

At a Special General Meeting of Members of the MSEI Association held on 30 September 2011, it was determined that MSEI, an incorporated association under State legislation, will transfer its operation to Mercy Education Ltd, a company limited by guarantee, constituted under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth). The transition will be effective before the inaugural chapter of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea (ISMAPPNG) commencing on 12 December 2011.

In another exciting development, the Sisters of Mercy – Perth Congregation and Sisters of Mercy – West Perth Congregation, have formally requested that the governance of their education ministries be transferred to Mercy Education Ltd from 12 December 2011. This is a very exciting opportunity for Mercy Education across the country and the Melbourne Congregation was very pleased to approve the request.
Welcome to the final edition of the Mercy Ed newsletter produced by Mercy Secondary Education Inc. It is an exciting time for Mercy Education as it not only sees the migration of MSEI from an incorporated association to a company limited by guarantee, but it also provides the opportunity for partnership across Australia with three wonderful Mercy Colleges in the environs of Perth joining with the seven strong Mercy Colleges in Victoria. Everyone associated with Mercy Education is absolutely delighted with what the future may hold and what synergy and learnings this union can bring as the ten Mercy Colleges come together under the one governing body.

Exciting times too, at this moment in history, as fourteen Mercy Congregations from across Australia, along with the autonomous region of Papua New Guinea, come together on 12 December to begin to form the new Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea (ISMAPPNG). Significantly on the 12 December 1831, Foundation Day, Catherine McAuley, and her two founding companions were professed and returned to Baggot Street, Dublin, thus bringing into being the Religious Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy. More on this significant event will be shared with our readers in the first edition of the Mercy Ed in 2012.

At the 2011 Mercy Education Dinner, MSEI Board members, Sisters, principals, staff and members of our College communities paid tribute to the outstanding leadership of Congregation Leader, Sr Kath Tierney, over the past twelve years. Tributes honouring Sr Kath by four speakers on the night are featured in this edition.

WYD 2011 was a highlight for many young people across the world and was certainly the case for many of our Mercy students. Through a dream and initiative of Sr Mary Moloney, Principal of the Academy of Mary Immaculate, Fitzroy, Mercy students were placed in the privileged position of being able to undertake an immersion experience at Catherine McAuley’s founding house in Dublin, en route to Madrid. As articulated here, this journey in faith will be a lifelong memory for many of our young people.

Also featured in this edition is another successful Seeds of Justice event, enjoyed by our students and staff from across the Mercy schools in Victoria.

Finally I wish you rich blessings for the joys and wonder of the coming of Jesus in our midst.

Eugene Lynch
Editor
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You uphold the Mercy brand and have inspired those in education to follow your
Kath, you do not claim an educational background but you are a great educator.
work for and with you.  …You have always focussed on the mission and ministry.

I am confident that I speak for all present when I say it has been a pleasure to

Mrs Sheena Barber
Principal

Mercedes College, located in the heart
of the City of Perth and part of the City’s
heritage precinct, has the distinction of
being the oldest girls’ school in Australia
on the original site of foundation. With its
beautiful gardens and a mix of historic
buildings and modern facilities, Mercedes
College offers a unique and quality
education for young women in Years 7
to 12 and has a current enrolment of
approximately 950 students.

Mercedes College caters for young women from a wide variety
of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. It provides an
extensive range of excellent academic, cultural and sporting
opportunities, balanced by a focus on spirituality and education
in the Catholic faith.

Mr Ian Elder
Principal

Santa Maria College, nestled in picturesque
gardens overlooking the Swan River, was
founded in 1938 by the Sisters of Mercy as
a Catholic secondary College for girls. The
College has an enrolment of 1180 students
that includes day girls from Year 5 to Year
12 and 152 boarders from Years 8 to 12.

Students are assigned to the Junior School
(Years 5 and 6), the Middle School (Years 7,
8 and 9) and the Senior School (Years 10,
11 and 12). Whilst retaining a whole College
identity, these structures enable the College to better respond
to the individual needs of young women at different stages of
their development.

Dr Amelia Toffoli
Principal

Santa Maria College offers a unique educational experience
that combines academic excellence with the five values of
Mercy, Compassion, Justice, Service and Excellence, as
codified in the College Mission & Belief Statement and integral
to every aspect of College life.

St Brigid’s College, situated in the green
hills 25 minutes east of Perth, was
established by the Institute of the Sisters
of Mercy, West Perth Congregation in 1929
to provide for a superior boarding school
to that which had been a part of St Brigid’s
School West Perth since its inception in
1888. Approximately 1300 students aged 4
to 17 Years, from across Western Australia
learn to become principled, inquiring,
knowledgeable, thinking, communicators,
open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced and reflective life-
long learners confident in their place as contributing citizens
and leaders in the world. Boarding, for girls only in Years 7–12,
is a unique opportunity to learn about caring for one another.

In addition, SBC is the first Catholic school in Western
Australia to have been authorised to offer the Middle Years
Programme of the International Baccalaureate Organisation.
Various extracts from students and staff members’ reflections following their pilgrimage have been taken from college newsletters or presentations to school community members.

‘A journey undertaken in light of a story’
– Dublin, Ireland

The 6th of August 2011 marks a memorable day for twenty-two young Mercy Leaders across Catholic Mercy schools in Victoria, four terrific group leaders and one exceptional Coordinator, Sr Mary Moloney. There were nine schools in total including Sacred Heart College Geelong, Academy of Mary Immaculate Fitzroy, St Aloysius College North Melbourne, Mount Lilydale Mercy College, Mercy College Coburg, Sacred Heart College Kyneton, Our Lady of Mercy College Heidelberg, St Joseph’s College Mildura and Mercy Regional College Camperdown. They presented twenty-two fine ambassadors to the WYD community.

We started the trip on a very long flight to Dublin. Here we were staying for one week, a couple of days of sightseeing and then the most important event the Young Mercy Leaders Formation Programme. The theme for the programme was ‘A journey undertaken in light of a story.’ It was a fitting theme as we reflected on the journey of Catherine McAuley and her story of Mercy. It then enabled the other delegates from around the world to talk about their story of Mercy and for some of us to prepare for our journey as a pilgrim to World Youth Day. The Formation programme had 143 participants from 25 schools. There were delegates from New Zealand, America, United States, Ireland and Australia.

Over the three days we were truly filled with the Mercy spirit and gained a real appreciation for the Sisters of Mercy and a great amount of admiration for Catherine McAuley. We now have a true understanding about the heritage of our school and are incredibly grateful to be attending a Mercy College.

Marilyn Lacey rsm, a Sister of Mercy from America, stole our hearts when she spoke of her missionary work in South Sudan with her organisation ‘Mercy Beyond Borders’. She reinforced the concept that “we see from where we stand” and challenged us to shift our perspective and stand in the shoes of another.
Giving us an insight into the hardships of life in Africa, she shocked us with statistics that ranked South Sudan as the country with the lowest education enrolment rates. Seeing an evident need, Sister Marilyn and her team set out to work in this troubled part of the world to open up opportunities, specifically for girls and young woman, to improve their life situation through training and schooling. Her inspiring biography energised us to continue to raise funds for the amazing work in which the sisters are involved.

At the end of the Formation Programme the group of Young Mercy Leaders from Victoria committed to the following Action Plan:

1. Telling the Mercy Story
2. Raising awareness of Mercy Issues
3. Undertaking Action in the area of Mercy and Justice
4. Making and enhancing Mercy connections
5. Greater ongoing communication between Mercy schools in Victoria and overseas.

We are also committed to arranging for Sr Marilyn Lacey to come to Australia to address staff and students in Mercy schools about “Mercy Beyond Borders”.

Contributors: Angela Moore, Social Justice Coordinator – St Aloysius College. Erin Love and Stephanie Dickson, OLMC Heidelberg. Sofia Viegas, Johanna Mousley and Amy Moreno, SHC Geelong

World Youth Day – Madrid 2011

WYD 2011 in Spain was hot, there were millions of people in the city, we ate bread rolls every day with Spanish ham and we walked nonstop for kilometres, but boy what an amazing experience!

We started our journey in Spain at Avila, here we were able to see and have Mass in the convent were St Teresa of Avila lived for thirty years. After Avila it was on to Madrid the capital of Spain. Our accommodation was right in the centre of the city which enabled us to be amongst the atmosphere and crowds of WYD. After the gathering Mass for all Aussie Pilgrims and the arrival of the Pope it was down to business with catechesis in the morning and then activities in the afternoon.

Some highlights: the Pope driving past our hotel on the Saturday morning before the Pilgrim Vigil sleep out; the fire trucks going up and down the roadways to hose the pilgrims down to keep cool. The main highlight or challenge of our pilgrimage was the night of the vigil, wind, rain and snakes were all part of the night. When we heard reports the next morning of hurricanes and buildings having fallen down, we were glad to see the sunshine again. After Mass with the Pope we made our way back to the accommodation for some rest and a shower!
The last two days of the pilgrimage were spent in Salamanca. This was a time of retreat and reflection of our experience and how we bring that back to our families, friends and school. It was an absolute privilege to take these Young Mercy Leaders to Dublin and then lead them in Spain. They were outstanding young ladies and gentleman who made the most of their opportunities and immersed themselves in the atmosphere of World Youth Day. This was an experience of a lifetime which will be etched in our hearts forever. It has been a time to re-evaluate our spirituality, deepen our love for Christ and stand firm in our faith. The world-wide friendships made in this short time will remain strong as we plan to reunite in the future. Pope Benedict XVI left us with: “Be apostles of the 21st century – messengers of His Lord. Don’t let Him down.”

Lucia Tabacchiera – MLMC Campus Director Barak

World Youth Day’s Opening Mass was held in Madrid’s Plaza de Cibeles
The main points the presenters were trying to get across were that we need to ignite a fire within our bellies to make a difference in the world and raise awareness of Indigenous Concerns across our community. We need to have compassion and act on it.

We had two Aboriginal guest speakers, Vicki Clark and Scott Darlow. Vicki was a very inspirational woman who shared her story with us. She spoke about her Aboriginal heroes who she called ‘liberators’; people who inspire her because they had a ‘fire’ in their bellies. They stood up for their culture and made a difference. We found out about Aboriginal people gaining rights in Australia so they were no longer, ‘flora and fauna’.

Vicki also spoke about the effects of the Stolen Generation on women, children and all Aboriginal families. Her workshops were very emotional with us now being able to feel and show empathy for Aboriginal people.

Scott is a musician who puts a lot of his faith, beliefs and concerns into song. He was very humorous but serious and switched on at the same time. He taught us the acronym: FLUTE – Forgiveness, Love, Understanding, Tolerance and Empathy. Scott showed us that this is the key to living a wholesome, loving life.

We look forward to sharing our experience with our teachers and fellow students.

Caitlen Tuohey, Wesley Sansom, Ainsley O’Conner, Elizabeth Stoel and Samuel McCormick
Catholic College Bendigo
The following reflections form staff and students are a testimony to the richness of the ‘Walking Together’ experience:

It was an amazing experience and something I would definitely recommend doing to everyone. I was blown away by some of the facts and all the speakers and presenters really touched my heart and made me think about who I am, how I could become a better person and what I can do to help people, especially Aboriginals.

Very educational and has ignited people in our school with a “fire in our belly”.

It was more than I expected, I absolutely loved it. Can’t even describe the place and how much stuff I achieved from it. I gained a lot and the experience I got will help me get ideas and gave me confidence in my leader position in 2012 as Year 12 Mission Captain.

I liked the prayer sessions – I care that at Seeds I feel I can openly express my faith as a big part of my social justice mission.