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St Joseph’s College Mildura
Held earlier in August this year, the twelfth biennial Australasian Mercy Secondary Schools Association (AMSSA) conference was held in Adelaide and hosted by St Aloysius College, Adelaide and Mercedes College, Springfield. The conference was an outstanding success with inspirational keynote speakers, panel members and workshop presenters. Conference delegates, representing sixty-six Mercy schools across Australia and Aerotera New Zealand, were fully engaged in the theme, “Making Mercy a Verb”. We congratulate host Principals, Ms Paddy McEvoy and Mr Peter Daw, the AMSSA Executive and the many planners and organisers who ensured the success of the conference.

Capital development and improvement to the facilities at each of our Mercy colleges continues on a regular basis to ensure that our students and staff enjoy the best facilities possible to promote and enhance learning and teaching opportunities. There is always a level of awe and excitement when new facilities are blessed and opened and this was certainly the case in the past months at Santa Maria College, Attadale, Our Lady of Mercy College, Heidelberg and St Joseph’s College, Mildura. These facilities were named after Sisters of Mercy who continue to inspire us and shape our communities.

The biennial Mercy Pilgrimage to Catherine’s founding house in Dublin and a visit to the Vatican and Rome will leave an indelible mark on the lives of our young pilgrims. This experience and the many Seeds of Justice events across the country provide opportunities for students to understand and reflect more deeply on the Christian message of caring for our earth and for its people, especially those who are marginalised and in most need of our love and support.

In farewellling Anthony Banks, Principal of St Joseph’s College, Mildura, we congratulate him on his leadership at the college and wish him every success as he continues his journey in Catholic education as principal of Padua College, Mornington.

On behalf of Mercy Education Board Directors and Executive staff, I wish our students and staff much success as another academic year comes to a close. I trust that 2015 has been a year of reward and achievement for all, not only in academic results but also in life-long learning, friendship, health and happiness.

May the peace and joy of Christmas be with you as we await the coming of the Christ Child.

Eugene Lynch
Editor

Farewell Anthony Banks

At the 2015 Mercy Education Dinner, Mercy Education Board Director, Max Fletcher paid tribute to Anthony Banks for his inspiring leadership as Principal of St Joseph’s College, Mildura.

Amongst many other achievements, Anthony’s principalship (2014–2015) was marked by the completion of the new Maths/Science Centre which opened in September this year; developing the Year 8 School to improve student learning outcomes at the Mercy Campus and also re-naming the Twelfth Street campus, the Enright Campus, after the founding Principal, Mother Gertrude Enright RSM.

Together with the SJC Leadership Team, Anthony continued to build on the work of the previous Principal, Darren Atkinson and harnessed and utilised the skills of the staff to continue to drive improvement and new initiatives at the College. A student-centred approach has been an important part of Anthony’s leadership and he has been totally committed to Mercy especially in advocating the six core Mercy values at every opportunity.

Mercy Education congratulates Anthony on his appointment as the next Principal of Padua College, Mornington and we wish him and his family every blessing as he enters his next phase of his professional journey.
Students and teachers from various Mercy schools in Victoria and Western Australia, together with students from England, Ireland, USA and Belize in Central America embarked on a journey of a lifetime as participants in the 2015 Young Mercy Leaders Pilgrimage. Meeting many inspiring people and making wonderful friends, the 2015 Mercy Pilgrimage was an amazing and unique opportunity to experience Catherine McAuley’s home and her legacy, her undying spirit of generosity as well as learn of the work of many of the Sisters of Mercy around the world.

The four day program was held at Mercy International Centre, Baggot St Dublin, Ireland. The Australian pilgrims then travelled on to Rome to visit various sites including attending their own special Mass at the Vatican.

“The 4 day Conference was a lot of fun and a great experience where we made lots of new friends, listened to lots of inspiring speakers and presentations, and had the opportunity to learn more about our world and ourselves”.

Young Mercy Pilgrims 2015
The Blessing and Opening of the new facilities was celebrated by the Bishop of Ballarat, the Most Reverend Paul Bird, with Parish Priest of Sacred Heart, Fr Michael McKinnon. Chair of the Board of Mercy Education, Mrs Lucy Molony, Mr Peter Crisp, MLA for Mildura, the previous Principal of the College, Mr Darren Atkinson, and our local Sisters of Mercy were amongst the invited guests.

The occasion provided the opportunity for the College to put into context the value of this wonderful new facility, which showcases modern learning and teaching pedagogies. At the same time, the College unveiled the newly installed Core Values Sculptures, that have been placed in an area that will mean students, families and teachers will walk past them on a regular basis, as they become a constant reminder of “what we are about” at St Joseph’s College. The Core Values Sculptures were designed by Media and Marketing Coordinator, Miss Andy Higgins and have relevant quotes/sayings from Catherine McAuley, as chosen by Deputy Principal, Mr Greg Kluske.

Top and right: Maths and Science students enjoying their new flexible learning area in the new SJC Maths and Science facility.
On Tuesday 1 September, the new Consilii Centre was officially blessed by the Most Reverend Donald Sproxton, Auxiliary Bishop of Perth and officially opened by Dr Michael Chaney, Chancellor of the University of Western Australia. The new Science and Humanities & Social Sciences building is named after Sister Consilii Flynn, Sister of Mercy and former Santa Maria College Principal (1971–1975).

The Consilii Centre is a state-of-the-art building, leading the way in innovation and design. The Centre caters for over 1200 students at the College from Years 5–12. Teaching spaces have been specifically designed with the needs of each science subject in mind. Students have access to an innovative Super Lab which provides a spacious open laboratory for multiple classes to conduct practical work, specialist laboratories for Biology, Physics Chemistry and Human Biology for senior students, a Forum providing a space for guest speakers and video conferencing and a greenhouse and abseiling facilities.

Deputy Principal – Mission, Helen Chaffer, at the official blessing and opening.

On Thursday 10 September, the College’s Performing Arts Theatre (PAT) was re-named the Sr Mercedes Hogan Theatre at an official blessing ceremony performed by Sr Sally Bradley RSM. Sr Sally, a member of the Institute Leadership Team (ILT) of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy in Australia and Papua New Guinea (ISMAPNG), provided personal and fond memories of her time with Sr Mercedes. Sr Mercedes was at OLMC from 1949 until 1960 and was Principal from 1956. Her time as Principal heralded a number of changes including the purchase of the properties that now make up Maryland and the name change of the College from Our Lady’s to Our Lady of Mercy College.

Sisters of the Institute, members of Mercy Education Limited, members of the OLMC College Council and members of Sr Mercedes Hogan’s family joined together with OLMC for the blessing ceremony and afternoon tea.

“Sr Mercedes is most loved and remembered for herself, for the kindness, warmth and friendship she offered so many. She was a salient expression of the love of God through service, just as Catherine McAuley asked of her Mercy sisters.”

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Seeds of Justice Program – Western Australian Event

On 19 & 20 August this year students and staff from Mercy colleges in Western Australia participated in a two day Seeds of Justice Conference at the St John of God Retreat Centre. Inspired by Sr Lucy Van Kessel RSM and through research, prayer, discussing and creating drama and art, students participated in a number of meaningful and insightful activities exploring the eye opening theme of ‘Human Trafficking’ and how serious it truly is. It was a chance to raise awareness, share ideas and develop strategies to help ease this problem. Seeds of Justice students will continue to gather as a group and this initiative is a great way to connect with Mercy schools and live out the values of Catherine McAuley. Students and staff embraced their time together and look forward to meeting again to discuss this important issue.

Regional event at Araluen Campsite, Anglesea, Vic

Mercy schools in WA gathered together for the two day Conference
Seeds of Justice Student Program – Event 2 – October

Theme – “Turning the Tide”

“Yes, I found it all very informative and although I thought I was well informed, I actually found that there was so much more to learn about asylum seekers and refugees.”

On the 22 & 23 October, students and staff from Mercy Colleges gathered once again at the Holy Cross Centre, Templestowe for the second Seeds of Justice Student Conference. Students and staff engaged in reflection, learning, sharing and expressing their hopes and dreams for action to assist those in our society who suffer injustices and hardship. The theme for this event focused on the plight of the Refugees and Asylum Seekers who seek refuge and protection.

Dr Maryanne Loughry RSM AM, Associate Director, Jesuit Refugee Services Australia shared a great deal of the program, encouraging the students to embrace the fact that they are Mercy people. Sr Maryanne has decades of experience working with refugees around the world and is currently on the Australian Immigration Minister’s Advisory committee regarding refugees. Other speakers included Hannah Carr from Asylum Seeker Resource Centre and Lauren McCarthy from Road to Refuge.

Victorian Mercy students together with Dr Maryanne Loughry RSM

Adelaide hosted the 2015 Australasian Mercy Secondary Schools’ Association Conference from August 13 to 16, with representatives from 66 schools in Australia and New Zealand in attendance. The keynote speakers, workshops and social functions were all great successes. The Friday program was an opportunity for the whole staff of SAC and Mercedes College to join the Conference delegates and explore the theme of “Making Mercy a Verb”. The afternoon session was a Q&A style panel, made up of past and present SAC students, hosted by Sr Maryanne Loughry RSM. Maryanne’s keynote presentation, “What are the core elements of a merciful response? A case study of Australia’s refugee policy”, led us beautifully into the personal stories of courage and determination shared by these young women. They received a standing ovation from the audience, and the session was a highlight of the conference.

At the Conference Dinner in the Adelaide Town Hall, we listened to the personal story of our Governor, the Honourable Hieu Van Le. His journey to Australia was inspiring and linked with the conference theme, as he found mercy in his family and in our nation. Sr Mary Reynolds RSM, Director – Mercy International Centre, and Rev Dr Philip Marshall, Vicar General – Archdiocese of Adelaide, gave equally inspiring keynotes, leaving us all with a renewed commitment to our Mercy vision.