



Mercy Ministry  
**Companions**

# Connections

*The Newsletter of Mercy Ministry Companions*

September 2024



## **Reflection: A heart for mercy**

**Anthony Loschiavo, Executive Officer**

With the coming of spring the temptation for me was to reflect on new beginnings, or the AFL finals, or our recent Mercy Ministry Companions (MMC) Mercy Day message of fostering a heart for mercy within ourselves and our ministries.

I have settled upon a more personal reflection and that is on the unique role I have working at MMC. I was fortunate enough to have been appointed the inaugural EO on what is now the second newest Australian Ministerial Public Juridic Person. We are all often asked to briefly describe what we do and who we work for in a sentence or less, that is, the 'elevator pitch'. My explanation of a Ministerial Public Juridic Person is often met by blank stares. Describing the role of Executive Officer is also met with bemusement.

[Read more](#)

In the last month, MMC has been involved in a number of functions with other ministerial Public Juridic Persons.



### **AMPJP AGM Forum**

Representatives of Mercy Ministry Companions attended the AMPJP AGM, Dinner and Forum in North Sydney in late August.

[Read more](#)



### **We Stand on Their Shoulders**

CRMV Ltd is the body which represents the interests of Victorian Religious Institute and Ministerial Public Juridic Person schools, like those of Mercy Education. At its AGM and dinner on 5 September, CRMV



Wisdom Leaders were announced – the 2024 awardees were Sr Joan Wilson rsm and Dr Rose Marie Prosser. The awards recognise and honour their long-standing and significant roles in Catholic education in Victoria.

[Read more](#)



### **Lay leadership models in the Church**

Australian Catholic University theologians will team up with one of the country's leading governance experts to contribute to the ongoing studies into lay leadership models in the Church, including the successful Ministerial Public Juridic Persons.

[Read more](#)

## **Mercy Education**



### **Frayne Speech Festival**

On 30 August Mercy Education colleges and affiliate schools from across Victoria and Adelaide came together for the 2024 Frayne Speech Festival. Established in 1996, the annual gathering, named in honour of Mother Ursula Frayne, is a celebration of student voices. This year the festival was hosted by Our Lady of Mercy College in Heidelberg, which provided warm hospitality to the other competitors, their teachers and representatives of Mercy Education and the MMC Trustee Directors.

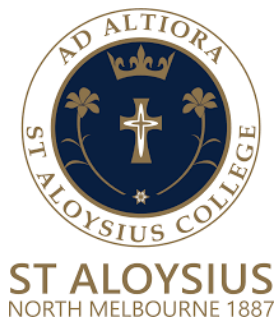
[Read more](#)



### **Mercy Day at St Patrick's Cathedral**

Students, teachers and families of the Academy of Mary Immaculate celebrated Mercy Day with their inaugural Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne. Mass was led by Fr Michael McEntee, whose homily focused on the story of the Academy from Mother Ursula Frayne to the present day, and the Cathedral resounded to the sound of glorious music performed by staff and student musicians. Ms Louisa Rennie, Chief Executive Officer, Mercy Education, Mr Anthony Loschiavo, Executive Officer, Mercy Ministry Companions and Sisters of Mercy also attended the celebration.

[Read more](#)



### **Mercy Day at St Aloysius College**

Mercy Day was celebrated on 13 September in many of our colleges, as the feast day occurs during the school holidays on 24 September. At St Aloysius College, North Melbourne, the whole school community, Sisters of Mercy, some parents, Mercy Education CEO Louisa Rennie and Trustee Director Gabrielle McMullen AM gathered for the Mercy Day Mass, celebrated by School Chaplain Fr Thang Vu. The College choir and stringed musicians led the community in singing the Mass of St Francis.

[Read more](#)

Mercy Health



### **Victorian Government recognises Mercy Health Breastmilk Bank Founder**

The Victorian Government has recognised Dr Gillian Opie, founder of Mercy Health's Breastmilk Bank, by naming a tunnel boring machine in her honour as part of the North East Link tunnel development. Dr Opie was selected from hundreds of submissions in recognition of her ground-breaking, inspiring work, as well as her connection to Melbourne's north-eastern suburbs.

[Read more](#)



### Empathy in action across Australian schools

Mercy Health Foundation, in partnership with Catholic Health Australia and Meaningful Ageing are inviting 500 secondary schools from across Australia to participate in a free program for students that aims to foster values such as empathy, compassion and respect for older people. The Program '*Learning about Ageing with Dignity through reflection and scripture*', uses reflection, scripture study, brainstorming, roleplay, and other interactive activities to explore themes such as ageing with dignity, respectful care, and the unique challenges faced by the elderly.

[Read more](#)

## Mercy Community Services

### Honouring the Journey and shaping our future in Hope

On Sunday 8 September, the Trustee Directors of Mercy Ministry Companions (MMC) were pleased to host a dinner and ritual to honour and celebrate the MacKillop journey and to acknowledge the transition of the board of MacKillop Family Services into the lay structure of MMC. Representatives from each of the three founding congregations were in attendance, along with many former members, directors and employees who have contributed to helping shape MacKillop to become the incredible organisation it is today.







### **Melbourne Airport Sleepout for McAuley**

Over 90 people joined the Melbourne Car Park Sleepout, hosted by McAuley and Juno, to shine a light on women's homelessness by spending a night in their cars at Melbourne Airport. The event raised awareness and vital funding for the thousands of women and children who are forced into homelessness each year after escaping family violence. Participants woke at dawn and reflected on the vulnerability and unease they experienced during the night, as well as the challenges of sleeping in a car.

[Read more](#)



### **MacKillop's foster families tell their stories**

From 8-14 September MacKillop Family Services celebrated Foster Care Week, recognising and celebrating their dedicated team of foster carers and their invaluable contribution to the lives of vulnerable children and young people who are temporarily unable to live with their families.

[Listen to and read these stories](#)

Save the date

4.00pm Mon 14 October -  
5.00pm Tues 15 October

2024 Mercy Ministry Companions Conference: Expanding  
Horizons

Please share this Mercy Ministry Companions Newsletter with your colleagues and [opt-in](#)  
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*Mercy Ministry Companions acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Australians.*

*Our National Office is located on the lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people of the Kulin nation, and our*

*Ministries operate across the country and across a range of other indigenous lands and clans.*

*We acknowledge the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across this land.*

*We respectfully recognise Elders both past and present.*

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