



Mercy Ministry
Companions

Connections

The Newsletter of Mercy Ministry Companions

February 2025



Reflection: Introducing the Strategic Priorities of Mercy Ministry Companions

Carmel Ross, MMC Trustee Director

A year ago, the staff and trustee-directors of Mercy Ministry Companions started the year with a joint gathering to begin the identification of the strategic priorities of the organisation.

We revisited our mission, vision and values and reflected on the diversity of services the ministry family of MMC provides. Our strategic priorities need to support these. We exist as an enabling body, to encourage the flourishing of the ministries. And we exist as an accountability body within the Catholic Church, to ensure MMC and the ministries conduct themselves in a way that is consistent with the gospel message of Jesus and the teachings of the Church.

At the 2024 MMC conference, Sheila Curran RSM alerted us to the need for ministries to avoid getting caught by corporate ways of seeing and being. She reminded us that those we serve are not 'customers' but rather are fellow human beings – companions really – journeying through life just as we are. So, it might seem a little jarring to realise that we now have Strategic Priorities for MMC – how will these impact on our seeing and being?

[Read more](#)



Mercy International Association Launches Preservica: A New Online Heritage Portal

Mercy International Association (MIA) has launched Preservica, a new online heritage portal designed to provide access to a wealth of primary sources related to Catherine McAuley and the foundation of the Sisters of Mercy.

[Read more](#)

Mercy Education



A new school year is underway!

All of the 13 Mercy Education Ltd colleges have now returned for the 2025 academic year, each beginning the year with an Opening Mass. Many of the schools have also celebrated the success of Year 12 students who completed their studies in 2024 such as [Mount Lilydale Mercy College](#) and [St Aloysius College](#).

Mercy Health



Mercy Health is improving outcomes for our littlest miracles

Mercy Health Neonatal Fellow Dr Kristin Ferguson has received highly competitive and prestigious funding, including a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Postgraduate Scholarship, a MACH-Track Fellowship, as well as a ZOLL Foundation Grant, to pursue her PhD studies in Improving outcomes for extremely premature babies.

[Read more](#)

Mercy Community Services



McAuley opens new refuge, Jan's Place

In February, The Hon. Natalie Hutchins, Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence, officially opened Jan's Place, McAuley's new family violence refuge on Melbourne's western fringe. This facility addresses the urgent need for safe, supportive accommodation for Victorian women and children fleeing family violence.

[Read now](#)



Dr Robyn Miller honoured with Order of Australia

Mercy Ministry Companions is delighted to announce that Dr Robyn Miller, CEO of MacKillop Family Services, has been appointed a Member of the Order of Australia. This prestigious honour recognises her significant contributions to children, young people, and families over the past 40 years.

Dr Miller began her journey as a volunteer while studying Social Work at RMIT University. She later completed her Clinical Masters in Family Therapy and worked at the Bouverie Family Therapy Centre for 14 years.

[Read more](#)



MacKillop celebrates World Care Day

On 21 February, MacKillop Family Services joined the global celebration of **World Care Day**, the biggest awareness event recognising the experiences and achievements of children and young people who have grown up in foster or residential care. This year's theme, 'Celebrating Every Journey,' highlighted the unique experiences of children in care and the role of safe, trusted adults in their lives.

[Read more](#)

From the MMC Formation Coordinator

Our planning for key ongoing formation opportunities this year is underway and we look forward to each ministry's participation in various offerings.

Orientation to Mercy Modules have had some minor updates and the process of accrediting them for 6 hours professional development in 2025 are underway with Melbourne Archdiocesan Catholic Schools, Catholic Education South Australia and

Catholic Education Western Australia. Schools will be informed when accreditation is approved.

The **Induction Seminar for Directors New to MMC's Ministry Boards** will be held on Wednesday 19 March from 10am – 3pm at the MMC Office in Brunswick. Any MMC ministry directors and senior executive who have not attended this seminar before are invited to attend. To register please contact helen.boland@mercyministrycompanions.org.au.

The **2025 Mercy Leadership Program and Dublin Pilgrimage (MLPDP)** begins for the 25 pilgrims when they gather in Melbourne for Module 1 on March 4 and 5. In addition to participants from within MMC and our ministries, we are pleased that pilgrims from ISMAPNG, Mercy Works, MercyCare in Western Australia and Whanau Mercy Ministries in Aotearoa New Zealand are joining the MLPDP.

Two Cohorts from across MMC's ministries will participate in the **Middle Leaders Program** this year. The residential component for Cohort 1 will commence at Santa Casa in Queenscliff, VIC, on May 19-21. Cohort 2 participants will gather at St John of God Retreat Centre in Shoalwater Bay, WA, on June 16-18. We estimate that 34 Middle Leaders will be involved in the four Parts of the Program across both Cohorts during 2025.

SAVE THE DATE! The **2025 Conference** will be held from 5pm on Monday 15 September – 5pm Tuesday 16 September at the Catholic Leadership Centre, Melbourne.

For further information about any of these ongoing formation opportunities please contact annette.schneider@mercyministrycompanions.org.au.

Please share this Mercy Ministry Companions Newsletter with your colleagues and [opt-in for further communications](#).

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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