Inside

2 Introduction to new Board Directors 4 Mercy Leadership Program and Dublin Pilgrimage - Reflections
10 Seeds of Justice Event 1 – Mercy: 'The Door I Walk Through' 12 Mercedes College, Perth – Divine Mercy Pilgrim 14 Raising the Torres Strait Island flag 15 Communities in Control conference
As we continue to journey through the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, there have been many opportunities for us as Mercy people to reflect, share and discern how best we can respond to Pope Francis’ call to be people of God’s mercy. Sisters of Mercy across the world and their lay partners in ministry have entered Stage 3 of the Mercy International Reflection Process (MIRP) – Wisdom/Tradition. This stage invites us to, “engage anew with the biblical theological, spiritual, ecclesial and Mercy traditions”. Mercy International Association has provided a series of powerful video resources to help us continue to discern together globally a shared response to the ‘cry of the Earth and the cry of the Poor’ in our world today. http://www.mercyworld.org/mercy_global_action/project-home.cfm?pid=E220247F-BB4D-5777-D7B326F931C981F9

Our most recent participants on the Mercy Leadership Program and Dublin Pilgrimage were privileged to visit the founding house of Mercy in this Jubilee Year. A number of them were doubly blessed and able to join the Mercy contingent to Rome and to experience and celebrate Holy Week at the Vatican with Pope Francis. As you will read later in this edition, Mercy Ethos Coordinator, Carmel Crawford, explains how participants were offered much needed space, time and an invitation to prayer and reflection on being called to hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor just as Catherine had in her time….

This edition extends a warm welcome to two new Board Directors, Sr Sylvia Williams rsm and Mrs Georgina Smith. Sylvia is no stranger to Mercy Education having served as a Board member on the former Mercy Secondary Education Inc (MSEI) structure and as principal of many Mercy colleges for more than 30 years. Georgina joins the Board from Adelaide in SA and brings a wealth of educational experience and expertise to her work as a former principal, facilitator, policy developer and in leadership development programs. We warmly welcome Sylvia and Georgina to the Board.

Finally our students continue to be proud ambassadors for Mercy with their passion for and involvement in activities that promote social justice.

With best wishes

Eugene Lynch
Editor

Cover image: Grand Canal, Dublin

Institute Leader, Sr Berneice Loch rsm had great pleasure at the Mercy Education Ltd AGM held in May this year, announcing the appointment of Sr Sylvia Williams rsm and Mrs Georgina Smith as Board Directors of Mercy Education. Both Directors bring with them a wealth of educational experience and expertise to Mercy Education.

SYLVIA WILLIAMS RSM

Sr Sylvia returned from Ireland in December 2015 on the completion of just over six years as Assistant Director responsible for Administration & Finance at Mercy International Centre, Baggot Street, Dublin.

Before moving to Ireland in 2009, Sr Sylvia was involved in education and held Principal positions at Catholic Regional College, St Albans (1978–1985), St Mary’s College, Seymour (1986–1989), Catholic College Bendigo (1990–1997) and St Joseph’s College, Mildura (1998–2008). Prior to these positions she taught in Camperdown, Kangaroo Flat and Seymour and was a founding staff member at Mercy Regional College, Noorat Campus in Camperdown.

Over the years Sylvia has been very active in committees associated with education, particularly the Principals’ Association of Victorian Catholic Secondary Schools (PAVCSS) and Mercy Secondary Education Inc, and also served on the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Grants Allocation Committee (Sec) and the Employment Relations Committee.

With her family, Sylvia migrated to Australia arriving in the 1950s. She is a past student of St Aloysius’ College, North Melbourne and entered the Sisters of Mercy in 1963. Sylvia is very pleased to again have the opportunity to be involved in Mercy Education in Australia.
Having held senior positions in Catholic education for over thirty years, Georgina’s considerable experience covering the continuum from Early Childhood to Tertiary Education brings a wealth of experience to Mercy Education. She continues to work for Catholic Education SA in leadership development programs, chairing selection panels for Principal appointments together with a range of projects and reviews that require external facilitation.

Georgina has also represented employer groups and Catholic Education in a range of state, national and international settings, involving the provision of strategic advice on the implementation and delivery of significant local and national programs and the appropriate allocation of funding.

Having a deep knowledge and commitment to the operations of schools, extensive policy development and implementation, her leadership experiences have developed high order skills in consultation, negotiation and planning, with a strong emphasis on respectful and enabling relationships.

**2016 Board Directors**

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Mrs Lucy Molony</td>
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<td>Sr Sylvia Williams rsm</td>
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<td>Mrs Georgina Smith</td>
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Mercy Leadership Program and Dublin Pilgrimage

Carmel Crawford – Institute Mercy Ethos Coordinator

Care of the earth, care of the poor – eight words to remind us of our calling.

Reading the feedback from the participants on the Mercy Leadership Program and Dublin Pilgrimage is always a joy, privilege and inspiration for me as it reveals the depth of inspiration and formation that this program affords our Mercy ministry leaders. This year there were 52 participants over two programs: 12 Sisters of Mercy and 40 lay ministry leaders. In this year of Jubilee of Mercy the participants were especially invited to enter deeply into the experience as pilgrims. A key invitation of Jubilee is the restoration of right relationships: with the divine and the entire created order. So from the beginning ritual at the iconic red Holy Door at Baggot St, to walking the streets of Dublin in Catherine’s footsteps, to Coolock to note places and ways of prayer dear to Catherine, to Glendalough to connect deeply with Celtic spirituality and its centre in nature, to listening to the cry of the earth and the poor with renowned women of Mercy, we were invited deeply into the pilgrimage experience.

As the staff and presenters at Mercy International Centre offered extravagant hospitality and welcome, they nourished our minds, bodies and spirits. Offering much needed space, time and invitations to prayer and reflection we were called to hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor just as Catherine had in her time and to find anew our own calling to the mission of mercy: to care of the earth and care of the poor.

Whilst the program follows the same basic format each time, for every group the experience is different and exactly what they need is provided to affirm, challenge and deepen their understanding of Mercy mission and their role in leading this.

Bringing the giftedness of witness to Mercy as well as extraordinary scholarship, our presenters this year for the Dublin pilgrimage module:

• Mary Reynolds rsm, Mary Kay Dobrovolny rsm, Judy Carle rsm and Anne Reid all used story to bring alive both Catherine and the early women of Mercy so that we knew deeply God’s merciful action in their lives in ways that connected our story to theirs.

• Breege O’Neill rsm presented powerful insights into Catherine’s leadership that challenged us to find ways to be in right relationship, mindful of the interconnectedness of the created order by paying attention to what’s happening around us.

• Margaret Prendergast rsm and Kathleen Delaney rsm welcomed and invited us to recall that we are profoundly united with the entire created order as we walked and reflected in the beauty and grandeur of the mountains at Glendalough.

• Maria McGuiness rsm has over many years reminded us that she was once described as ‘the heart of a lion in the body of a sparrow’ – we experienced that extraordinary passionate heart for mercy. She called us to be courageous leaders with prophetic voices fighting for justice.

• Denise Boyle fmdm, brought our attention to the global context, exploring the cry of those trapped by human trafficking and the ways in which we must respond to the large scale degradation of the planet.

One of the participants reflected: ‘I felt the aliveness of Mercy today and hope for tomorrow amidst the confronting fact that there is still so much to do for the poor.’ Another, ‘it is not the rituals or practices but our compassion and actions which define our spirituality’. The pilgrims returned from Dublin inspired, hope-filled and ready to take up Mary Reynolds’s challenge to just ‘take the next best step’ to care for the earth, to care for the poor.

In 2016 participants came from a wide variety of ISMAPNG ministries including the areas of education, health and aged care, community services, community development, ministry support and governance. We were blessed to also be joined by participants from the Sisters of Mercy of North Sydney, Parramatta and Brisbane. Each of the participants is taking up a project that will integrate their learnings and allow the fruits of their experience to enrich the ministries they are connected with.

Karon Donnellon rsm co-facilitated the program with me, we are both grateful to the Institute Leadership Team and the Boards of Governance of the respective ministries for being entrusted with the privilege of journeying with these wonderful Mercy leaders.
Mary Retel
Director – Mercy Education

Pilgrimage: our first challenge as we were gently prepared by Sr Karon Donnellon rsm and Carmel Crawford was to understand and embrace the concept of pilgrimage. We were encouraged to look outward and inward so that we were open to the Spirit. We then went back home to prepare for the journey.

I was thrice blessed. Once the pilgrimage began, not only was I surrounded by a wonderful group of pilgrims, not only did I get the privilege of immersing myself into the daily life of the Vatican and then the Motherhouse in Baggot St, but I also had the great richness of having my husband, David, with me.

In Rome, we celebrated with our Pope the marvellous works and words of Mercy and focused on giving thanks for all that the Sisters of Mercy have done and continue to do to bring alive God’s ever present Mercy through the vision of Catherine McAuley. Villa Fatima was our home for 10 days for David and I arrived early to experience and celebrate Holy Week with Pope Francis. My husband, a very typical European extrovert, quickly made friends with the Pope’s entourage and I am sure would have been invited to have a rendezvous with the Pope had we stayed a little longer!

So many highlights of this glorious stay. Without doubt the hospitality and warmth of the Sisters remain in our hearts and minds. Sr Karon, our ever vigilant and ever so caring group leader, was so organised and indefatigable. Sr Mary and Sr Brenda had worked tirelessly to ensure that we had all the necessary tickets, entry permits and such – no small feat in a place that has not embraced the concept of being organised as a necessity!! One very emotive experience was when those who represented the various Mercy Congregations from all over the world met down by the Tiber River. We each had our own banner and with our Sisters of Mercy leading us, we processed down the Via della Conciliazione towards the Vatican, praying and singing. One by one, each group reverently walked through the Holy Doors, stopped to pray at the tomb of St Peter and went before the main altar of the Basilica. One of a myriad of very special memories!

Time literally flew and soon so were we, flying to Dublin. Yet another amazing time was to envelop us. Sr Karon and Carmel ministered to us tirelessly and nothing was too much trouble for them. David enjoyed every minute of his interactions with the group as well as the tours in and around Dublin. The hotel Mespil was very well located, within walking distance to everything and so very close to Baggot St. The warmth and hospitality of the staff really was no surprise for wherever we went in Ireland, the Irish populace embraced us and went out of their way to assist. This was magnified a hundred fold at Baggot St itself. The Sisters clearly had as their mission to ensure that each and every one of us felt totally at home. Imagine having the house that Catherine built made available to you in every way possible. Daily to enjoy a delicious and very big morning tea and lunch and then to be able to choose to either sit quietly in Catherine’s room, or to rug up and go outside to sit at Catherine’s grave or in the beautiful Chapel. All those things about which we would have read and heard were made available to us. We were reminded of Catherine’s deep commitment to understanding the Word of God and to living the gospel in her daily life.

Surroundings are important and these were outstanding, yet what made all the difference was the quality of presenters, the extraordinary organisation and the delightful people with whom I shared the week’s experiences. We were given time to listen, to share, to be challenged and to challenge. We were invited to visit those places that assisted to mould Catherine’s thinking and character and to then look at what this means for us right now in this world of ours. We were moved, enraged and called to action by the facts that were given to us, particularly in the area of modern day slavery. We were horrified to think that we may have been assisting those involved in this vile trade by purchasing services that were significantly under-priced. So many ‘wake-up’ calls.

I was inspired by my colleagues who shared their feelings, their insecurities and their desire to do all that they can to truly live the spirit and the intent of Mercy. The call for Mercy and Justice is one of the many things that remain with me. The call to be more aware of what it means to be a person of Mercy, to embrace ongoing formation as an essential and ongoing journey, and to remember that it is only by looking deep within that one can change the world.
In this Jubilee Year of Mercy, walking through the front door, the ‘holy door’ of the Mercy International Centre, Catherine McAuley’s own house with the women and men who continue the works of mercy that originated in that house was both an amazing and moving experience for me. As I listened to the stories of the dreams and desires of the participants to do more to answer the different needs in their ministries and communities, I experienced an openness to look out and dream beyond their boarders (or ministries) for the whole world.

I came back with a heart full of praise and gratitude, knowing that the ministry begun in Catherine’s Dublin is still alive and will continue to grow and bear more and more fruit in many places in our world.
of the world. With Carmel Crawford and Karon Donnellon rsm as faithful guides on the journey, our group became close companions in both the physical and spiritual pilgrimage we undertook.

After twenty years in Mercy education I realise there is still so much of Mercy to know and learn, and the pilgrimage deepened, enriched and renewed my understandings through its humble, yet powerful invitation to experience Mercy. The iconic red door of Baggot Street was as simple and as beautiful as I had imagined, and each day of the pilgrimage it opened to offer a new story of Mercy history, tradition, and endurance. The house of Baggot Street welcomed us to warmth, hospitality, and the wisdom and insights of so many learned Sisters of Mercy, who generously and gracefully shared. It offered reflection and sacred silence in places of Catherine, and nourished us spiritually each day. The Sisters’ confidence in all of us who undertook the pilgrimage was especially humbling for me, and Mary Reynold’s rsm sense that ‘the future of Mercy is in safe hands’ was powerfully affirming in linking the past with the certain future of Mercy.

Each site on the journey beckoned as sacred ground with a richness of history, legend, poetry, and prayer. Our companions on each part invited us to listen deeply, to hear, to feel and to experience the rhythms of each site in order to make connections to our personal stories and our vocations in Mercy. Glendalough, St Teresa’s Carmelite Church and the Presentation Convent at George’s Hill were all particularly moving. However, of all the steps I took on the pilgrimage, my first step across the threshold at Baggot Street into the House of Mercy was the most compelling of all I took in Dublin. Of The Door of Mercy, Mary Wickham rsm, reminds us ‘in spirit and in flesh you cross its threshold each day, often unmindful, but sometimes, and increasingly, amazed at its potent familiarity’.

James Castles
Head of Junior School – Mercy Regional College, Camperdown

I have been teaching at Mercy Regional College, at both the McAuley and O’Keeffe Campuses, since 2006. There are a number of characteristics that I value about Mercy. It is the sense of community, inclusiveness and care that I feel whenever I walk into a Mercy organisation that I appreciate above all else. No matter your age, accomplishments or faults, you have a sense of belonging. Being in the presence of Mercy people is something unique and very special.

This was certainly the case when travelling to Baggot Street as part of a pilgrimage in April. We shared this life changing experience with 26 participants from many different Mercy ministries. Although we were from all parts of Australia, there was an instant connection within the group, it felt like we were all long lost friends. We were able to confide, challenge and empower, but more importantly learn from one another during our time in Dublin.

I remember my first night in Ireland, where I walked the streets of Dublin and by chance found Baggot Street. As I strolled the street I discovered the Mercy International Centre. I was overwhelmed when standing outside this eye catching building and was in awe knowing that this place was where our story started all those years ago. Next day we were fortunate to walk through those famous red doors, we could feel that the spirit of Catherine was very much present – in the welcoming and hospitality of the Sisters, in the stories shared and in the energy of all around.
There were many highlights that will be forever shared and remembered, however it was the importance of connection that resonated within me from the beginning to the end of our pilgrimage. Catherine had a unique ability to be able to connect with people from all walks of life, and this aspect of her life certainly inspires me to continue to work hard to connect with those that belong to Mercy Regional College and beyond.

The other dimension to the theme of connection is the importance that the stakeholders associated within my ministry are familiar with the Mercy story. From this we build our own sense of kinship and connection, knowing that we belong to something much bigger than the individual, the organisation and the business. We are a part of a community, one that reaches out to all parts of the world.

It is important to acknowledge the incredible efforts of our program organisers and facilitators, Carmel Crawford and Karon Donnellon rsm. Your warmth and knowledge was infectious and invaluable. Thank you.

Elizabeth Grady
Development and Donor Relations Officer
– Mercy Works

I was very excited when invited to attend the 2016 Mercy Leadership Program and Dublin Pilgrimage. When Mercy Works Executive Director, Sr Ailsa Mackinnon rsm, asked me, I didn’t hesitate in giving her a resounding yes. It was only after I committed that I realised I didn’t really know what I had committed to. What exactly was a pilgrimage? Was I cut out to be a pilgrim and does it really rain every day in Dublin?

The journey to becoming a pilgrim began in Melbourne with historian Richard Reid weaving a colourful tale about his Dublin. His stories of rebellions, poets and pubs gave me real sense of place, but I was still unsure about the pilgrim part. As I listened to Karon Donnellon rsm invite us to make space in our hearts and minds and explain what it meant to be a pilgrim, I doubted I would ever be ready to travel lightly both physically and in the heart. All I could think of was: who was going to remember to feed the dog, would my husband remember to take the kids to school (none of which was ever really in doubt) and would I ever cross off my growing to do list at work prior to leaving (I would like to add that is not in order of priority). But as the plane lifted off the tarmac at Sydney Airport I felt a sense of both calm and excitement come over me.

The 2016 Mercy Leadership Program and Dublin Pilgrimage had many high points for me and was an experience I found enriching on a personal and professional level. Crossing the canal by walking across the tiny bridge as recommended by Richard and then walking in those famous red doors was an almost surreal experience. To actually be in Dublin where the Mercy story began really added to the feeling of authenticity. As I entered Mercy International Centre in Baggot Street I felt ready to rise to the challenge to be a pilgrim. I personally found it inspiring to be in a room with so many experienced people – my fellow pilgrims. Everyone was contributing to the Mercy Story each day, be it through education, caring for children who had nowhere else to go, or giving up their time and expertise on Boards. I would like to make special mention of the Sisters who were on the pilgrimage with me. Their honesty and generosity about their own journeys and beliefs added an extra special dimension to the week.

Sitting in the Mercy Works office in Lewisham, Australia, it is easy to not realise the international nature of Mercy and the many areas in which Mercy operates. The truly global nature and the great trust, which the Sisters place in others to carry out work in their name, was very apparent to me whilst at Baggot St. As was how far the reach of Mercy was in terms of global issues; lobbying at the UN, educating children in developing countries, teaching people about human trafficking and caring for people who have no one else. I know I have come away feeling inspired, energized and committed and I just hope that I have the same tenacity as Catherine and those who have come after her.
I often reflect on how fortunate I have been over the last nine years at Mercy Health working with amazing people, presented with opportunities and challenges that have enabled me to learn and grow in my career. To participate in the 2016 Mercy Leadership and Dublin Pilgrimage was a true privilege and an experience that will remain with me forever. As a young Mercy Leader I was immediately captivated by the opportunity to learn more about Catherine’s story and travel to her beloved city of Dublin, the beginning of our Mercy Mission.

The excitement commenced with personal preparation on what to pack for the cold weather through to reflection during orientation on how we prepare for pilgrimage thanks to Carmel Crawford and Karan Donnellon rsm. During these two days a key message that really helped me focus for the journey ahead was, “Be prepared to wander, with purpose, and be ready to see.”

What I was most inspired by was Catherine’s Leadership approach and the women who surrounded and supported her. Listening to Mary Reynolds rsm, Mary Kay Dobrovolny rsm and Judy Carle rsm, it was clear to me that Catherine had a great sense of confidence and trust in others which complimented her style as an innovative, resourceful and admired leader.

As I reflected on Catherine’s leadership style I started to question my leadership style – what have I learnt from my life and how has that shaped me as a leader? Catherine was a visionary but at the same time was very practical and led a group of diverse and committed women who she supported, encouraged and mentored as they worked side by side. Catherine together with these sisters broke through the impossibilities of their day to build the foundations of what we have today.

Walking in the shoes of Catherine and physically being in Dublin I often found myself reflecting on the challenges they must have faced. Today it is often discussed that leaders don’t communicate, don’t care or don’t have a clear vision. Catherine didn’t have the luxuries of internet, email, planes to travel but despite this she was able to develop a legacy that has seen Mercy develop a global presence. To me this shows the true meaning of leadership lies in the ability to inspire, motivate and challenge people around us whatever the circumstances may be.

This pilgrimage has given me a greater sense of what it is to be merciful and what it means to be a Mercy Leader. Whilst it has left me with a greater sense of responsibility to live Mercy today, I have personally been inspired through this journey and been given a gift to inspire and continue to share our Mercy story, and for that I am grateful.

Participant working in Focus Groups at Mercy International Centre

My fellow pilgrims will always share with me that special time and place as well as the fond memories and warmth that was shared among the group. A special bond that you come to realise is what Catherine instilled in others all those years ago; a bond that survives through stories told not without the absence of humour or playfulness.

For me though, it was not what I saw but how I felt that made the program so rewarding and inspiring. Stories of the early Sisters, Ursula Frayne and Frances Warde in particular, and how they were sent half way around the world with nothing but an ethos to fall back on. No email, no skype simply a belief instilled in them by Catherine McAuley. Stories of leadership, overcoming adversity and of mercy. Stories told not without the absence of humour or playfulness.

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I left for the pilgrimage with a mind with little space, in a mind buzzing with dealing with being out of the country and away from normality for the next two weeks.

You arrive in Dublin to the welcome embrace of not only the ever wonderful Carmel Crawford and Karan Donnellon rsm, but also fellow pilgrims and wonderful Sisters at Mercy International. The smiles, the warmth and the sense of genuine excitement of what lies ahead, having grown from the first Module back in Melbourne all those weeks ago.

The program saw us spend most of our time at the Mercy International Centre at Baggot Street but we also had outings to Coolock House and Glendalough and the walking tour of the streets of Dublin, all of which were memorable.

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I left for the pilgrimage with a mind with little space. I returned inspired by a story of leadership, mercy and compassion and a promise to myself that I would create more space for the things that matter, the things that make a difference, the things that will inspire others. I’m hoping the light of Catherine’s story and the story of those inspirational early Sisters will continue to guide me on my journey. After all, if you want to get someone to do something – inspire them.
A feeling of anticipation and excitement was evident from the moment staff and students from our Mercy schools arrived at the Holy Cross Centre in Templestowe. As the beginning of new friendships began to form between like-minded students from other schools, students and staff alike embraced the opportunity to enrich their passion for social justice.

Our theme for the Conference was Mercy: ‘The Door I Walk Through’ and what a better way to begin than with strong representation from nine Victorian Mercy Colleges including Academy of Mary Immaculate Fitzroy, Sacred Heart College Geelong, Catholic College Bendigo, St Aloysius College North Melbourne, Sacred Heart College Kyneton, Mount Lilydale Mercy College, St Joseph’s College Mildura, Our Lady of Mercy College Heidelberg and Notre Dame College Shepparton.

A number of community placements were offered for students to experience during this conference and not one disappointed. Our students came back from each of their community interactions with wonderful stories of hope, empathy and motivation to make a difference. They willingly shared their experiences of their visits to the Exodus Community, Mercy Aged Care communities and McAuley House. All staff and students confirmed that being out in the community was a highlight of the two-day event.

The opportunity to hear keynote speakers Kaillee Dyke and Winter from McAuley Community Services for Women and to work in school groups allowed each participant to have input on how we can live out our Mercy values within our own communities.

**Student Reflections:**

**Catholic College Bendigo**

On 19–20 May, five Year 11 students went off to Templestowe, Melbourne for the Seeds of Justice Conference. We started off with a few get-to-know-you activities and met students from the other Mercy schools in Victoria. Soon after, we got our placement groups. The placements involved going to different Mercy organisations and immersing ourselves. The different places were McAuley House, Parkville Aged Care, North Melbourne Aged Care, and Exodus. We returned from our placements to debrief and talk about what we had experienced and also about how we could shape our community and be the people we want to be. On day two, Kaillee and Winter came from McAuley Community Services for Women to speak to us all about what McAuley House does, what domestic violence actually is and how we can prevent it in our lives. Overall this camp was an amazing experience, filled with eye-opening stories. We would like to thank Ms Barb Collins for coming along with us and making this camp enjoyable for all.

Below left: Winter and Kaillee from McAuley Community Services for Women surrounded by Seeds of Justice students

Below: Sr Carmel Flanagan rsm enjoying the student visit at Mercy Place, Parkville
Aisling McGrath
“The North Melbourne Age Care facility was very eye-opening; it was challenging and very hard to see how the people with dementia were treated and how they acted. The people from McAuley House were very inspirational and inspired us to do more about the issue of domestic violence. Overall it was a great experience and I got to meet some amazing people.”

Bailey Butler
“I went to McAuley House for my placement. McAuley House is a refuge for women who have suffered from any form of domestic violence and are now homeless due to it. This was such an eye-opening experience, one that I believe everyone should have the opportunity to experience. This camp was such a fulfilling experience!”

Joe Gallagher
“This was my second year attending Seeds of Justice and a lot of activities were familiar. I strengthened relations with people I had met before and made a lot of new friends too. Going to the aged care facility was humbling, to hear their stories and just to have a good time.”

Laura Owins
“I went to Melbourne Aged Care facility and helped feed a really lovely lady. Unfortunately she was unable to feed herself but her smile and laughter was very touching. It was confronting to see just how dementia affects people. It provoked a lot of feelings inside of me during this time. It was upsetting to see just how dementia causes people to lose the ability to care and feed themselves. But it was really inspiring to see the love and care the volunteers and workers had for their patients. Overall it was a really great experience.”
MERCEDES COLLEGE

DIVINE MERCY PILGRIMAGE
On the 3 April 2016, the Mercedes College Italian Language and Culture tour group attended the Pilgrim’s Mass in Rome celebrated by Pope Francis in Saint Peter’s Square. The mass was concelebrated by many Cardinals and Bishops and attended by special guests.

The group of 35 students and five teachers was seated near the Obelisk at the centre of the Square with a good view of the altar, with the Jubilee Holy Door as a backdrop. They also caught a glimpse of the pilgrim representatives from the Sisters of Mercy with their banner held high. The large video screens on either side helped the group see every detail of the liturgy.

The Principal of the College, Mrs Kerrie Fraser, who was participating in her first tour with the College since commencing her role in 2015, said it was a good learning experience to hear the mass spoken in Italian with the Prayer of the Faithful in languages from around the world. “A highlight of the liturgy was the beautiful singing by the Choir, and the parts of the mass sung by Cantors.”

The hour and a half long mass ended with Pope Francis’ completing a lap of Saint Peter’s Square in the Pope Mobile which enabled many of the group to get photos close up of the Pope.

The group began their three-week tour in Rome and visit to the south coast of Italy before travelling north to the Tuscany region, Venice and Milan. They visited a number of historic and tourist sites, attended language classes and participated in a cooking and ceramic class.
On Friday 10 June an assembly, with approximately 1400 people, took place at Santa Maria College in Attadale WA. This was not an ordinary assembly, it was an assembly to officially raise the Torres Strait Island flag which will continue to fly alongside the Australian and Aboriginal Flags at Santa Maria College. Year 10 student Angelina Mene is wholly responsible for this.

Angelina, a Torres Strait Islander, is a boarder at Santa Maria College and her parents currently live in Port Headland. During Explore8, one of Santa Maria College’s enhanced learning programs, in 2014 Angelina chose to research NAIDOC week and Torres Strait Islanders and it was then the idea was born. Explore 8 is a two-week program of guest speakers and skill development sessions. It culminates in a self-directed project focused on “Improving Australia’s Future” that is shared with staff and family members. Often students feel that Australia’s future can be partially directed by service and commitment to community. For this reason, they choose research and action programs in this area.

Angelina wrote a letter to the Principal, Mr Ian Elder, asking if the Torres Straight Island flag could be hung next to the Australian and Aboriginal Flags at the front of the College and he said yes. “I clearly remember the day when a passionate and persuasive letter appeared on my desk asking me to consider flying the Torres Strait Island flag alongside the Australian and Aboriginal flag at the front of the College” said Ian Elder, Principal Santa Maria College.

“It is a classic example of from little things big things grow…” he said.

The flag raising ceremony attracted significant interest with Angelina’s family. Fifteen family members attended, some even coming from the Torres Strait Islands.

The ceremony included Mr Bernard Namok Jnr, whose father designed the Torres Strait Island flag, he spoke about the design and what it means. Mrs Harriet Naawi talked about the history and culture of Torres Strait Islanders and dancers from St Pauls Community, Moa Island Queensland, performed some traditional dancing. Angelina told her story and how… from little things big things have grown.
Students from Academy of Mary Immaculate, Fitzroy and St Aloysius College, North Melbourne were given the opportunity to attend the ‘Communities in Control’ conference on Monday & Tuesday 30-31 May. This opportunity was a very generous gesture by Denis Moriarty, Group Managing Director of Our Community and importantly for us in Mercy Education, good friend and Board Chair of McAuley Community Services for Woman.

Reflection from St Aloysius College, North Melbourne

On Monday 30 June five of our Year 11 students were invited to attend the two day annual ‘Communities in Control’ conference at Moonee Valley Racecourse. The event opened up with a musical performance from Shellie Morris who was voted NT Australian of the Year in 2014 for her dedication and commitment to empowering people through music and inspirational songs.

The Project’s Waleed Aly gave the Joan Kirner Social Justice Oration in memory of Joan Kirner, former Ambassador of Our Community. Waleed gave an insightful view into possible reasons behind the breakdown of society and opened up a discussion into what a good society should look like and how we as the community are responsible for its success.
Communities in Control cont.

Our students were given the opportunity to speak to prominent individuals on topics that they had chosen to research as part of their school studies. They asked intelligent thought-provoking questions and were a credit to our school. At the end of the first day the young students at the conference were treated to a private musical performance by Shellie. Shellie is an acclaimed musician who has toured the world singing with the likes of Sinead O’Connor, and to add to her talents sings in 19 Aboriginal languages. She spoke openly to our girls about her struggles growing up and how she was able to get where she is today.

Entrepreneurs running successful ‘Not for Profit Organisations’ spoke about how a dream to change something they felt strongly about had materialised through hard work and determination. They spoke about what had made their campaigns successful and gave tips on how to make a good video for advertisement. On the second day, Magda Szubanski spoke about the need for equal opportunity within all organisations. She spoke about her personal journey from working in a Getaway for hours for women who had been affected by family violence to now being a spokeswomen for equalities amongst everybody.

Ms Kate Lonsdale – Learning Analytics Leader

Magda Szubanski – Actor, comedian, author, TV presenter, radio host

Peter FitzSimons AM – Author, columnist, sportsperson, Chair, Australian Republican Movement