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## Greetings to all Sisters and Partners in Mercy!

Dear Partners in Mercy,

So much has happened since the last edition of the Newsletter it is hard to know where to begin! Floods and cyclones have in one way or another intruded into the lives of all of us. I have not heard of any substantial damage to any Mercy ministries, but I know there are some of you whose homes have been affected. I hope things are getting back to normal for everyone, although 'normal' is not something we can take for granted any more.

There have been some exciting developments for Mercy Partners in the last couple of months. Firstly, we now have an Executive Officer! I am pleased to announce that Judith Gardiner will take up her appointment on May 2. Judith has quite a deal of experience in the kind of work we require of an Executive Officer and we are very happy to be able to appoint someone with her background to this position. On behalf of the Council, I welcome Judith to Mercy Partners and hope that her time with us will be rewarding for her as well as for all of you. She has been invited to tell you about herself and you will find this elsewhere in the Newsletter. Judith will initially be working 22 hours per week, and you will be advised what days she will be 'in the office'. There will be several opportunities over the coming months for her to meet Board members and Executives, and she will be attending both the Annual Gathering in Brisbane in September and the next Formation Programme session in October.

The other piece of news is that the Sisters of Mercy Rockhampton have formally applied to transfer Mercy Health and Aged Care Central Queensland to the sponsorship of Mercy Partners. Three Council members visited Rockhampton recently and met with the members of the Transition Committee which Sister Berneice has set up to facilitate the transition process. We also had a quick tour of some of the facilities which are part of MHACCCQ. I wish to thank Sister Berniece, the members of the committee, and the executives of the various facilities for their time and hospitality on that day. The Council is now working with the Transition Committee to ensure that the transfer takes place as smoothly as possible. As this is our first venture down the transfer path, we will be documenting the process so that other transfers can benefit from our experience in this first instance. Accepting responsibility for even one group of ministries is a daunting responsibility for the Council. Please pray that we will be equal to the task.

# Mercy Partners Update

## Another Partner?

by *Berneice Loch rsm*

The dream for Mercy Partners includes the possibility that other sponsors of Catholic Ministries might join as new partners in the organization. One other Congregation is now seriously exploring this possibility with us, and we have had requests for information from some other groups. While none of this is at a point of decision-making, the Stewards and Council are being challenged to engage in working through how we might move into genuine partnership with others: a partnership that respects mutuality and reflects the original vision; a partnership that could be a small but very positive sign of the hope out of which we live.

The broad interest in questions of future governance of Catholic ministries is evident in the number of meetings, seminars and conferences around this topic even in 2011. Please pray for all involved as we attempt to respond to the call that might be for us in all this

## Living Mercy: Past, Present and Future



**21-23 September 2011**  
**All Hallows' School Brisbane**

"Living Mercy: Past, Present and Future" Conference will be held at All Hallows' School Brisbane and will feature International and local speakers plus an exciting range of workshops and papers.

**21 September** – *Challenges from our Tradition* (Keynote speaker: Caitlin Conneely rsm)

**22 September** – *Challenges from our World* (Keynote speaker: Deirdre Mullan rsm)

**23 September** – *Challenges for the Future* (Keynote speaker: Peta Goldberg rsm)

For further details visit

<http://www.livingmercy.org.au> and click on **View Upcoming Conferences**. Full program and registration form will be posted on the website in mid-May. Registration cost (including morning tea and lunch each day) will be around \$350.

[www.livingmercy.org.au](http://www.livingmercy.org.au)



## Appointment of Executive Officer

### Judith Gardiner

Judith comes to the position of Executive Officer to the Council after a career in education and governance within the Catholic and government sectors. Originally teaching in Catholic schools, Judith moved into an executive officer position within Queensland Catholic Education Commission, serving there for eight years. Moving into a senior management position in the Queensland Public Service Judith developed her skills in leadership, executive management and governance. Since leaving the public service in 2008 Judith has worked part-time for Mary Aikenhead Education, the entity within the PJP structure established by the Sisters of Charity, with responsibility for providing executive governance support to the Board of Directors. Judith also has successfully established her own leadership consultancy over the past few years working with schools and other agencies to develop effective leaders and managers.

Educated initially by the Sisters of Mercy at All Hallows', Judith comes well qualified for the position of Executive Officer to the Council, with degrees in education, management and leadership, and is currently undertaking an MBA with the Australian Catholic University. Having educated her own daughters at All Hallows' Judith has an understanding and commitment to the Mercy tradition, and is excited to be part of the next significant step for the Sisters of Mercy in Queensland.

Judith is married to Ron, and they have grown children and grandchildren. They live at Woolloowin with their two dogs.

# Formation Program Update



## Conference “The Haven” Emu Park – March 2-4<sup>th</sup> 2011

*By Carmel Dwan rsm*

Our “Leadership and Governance in a Catholic Ministry” Retreat was held in March at that beautiful place “The Haven” at Emu Park. These surrounds truly remind us of the wonder of God’s creation.

The sense of being with each other in our Mercy Partners journey was there right from the beginning. The sense of community was very real right as people gathered. This Retreat was well attended with 44 people attending if not for all of the time but at different times.

Our key note speakers: **Maureen Cleary** who helped us to reflect on “Leadership and Governance in a Catholic Entity” and **Robert Fitzgerald** who spoke on “Resourcing the Mission”: were both very thought provoking and challenging. We are blessed to be the recipients of their research and talent.

**Berneice Loch** rsm provided some very helpful information about the Responsibilities of Stewards, Sponsors, and Boards and brought us up to date with where we are on journey towards the handing over of Ministries to the PJP.

**Coralie Kingston, Steven King, Paul McMahon** and **Carmel Dwan** rsm presented their researched projects and once again these reached the high standard of their former colleagues.

As is becoming the current practice because of so few ordained ministers, instead of the celebration of Eucharist Carmel led a celebration of Liturgy of the Word and Communion. This was followed by the Conference Dinner and the solving of many problems into the late evening.

## Dates for the Diary

### Annual Reunion

September 22, 2011

The annual reunion for Mercy Partners will take place this year within the “Living Mercy Conference” conference. We have targeted the second day September 22<sup>nd</sup>, and as the conference is due to conclude at 3.30 pm we will begin at 4 pm. The venue will be at All Hallows’ and after our reflection together, drinks and nibbles will follow.

### Catholic Identity Retreat

October 12-14, 2011

As our planning includes locating one of these sessions in each of the four centres – Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton and Brisbane – and in order to get the pattern working our second gathering for this year will at Emu Park again. More details later but please note the dates.

### Theology of Mission Retreat

March 2012 (tba)

The Retreat, which will be our first gathering for 2012, will be held in Cairns.



## Thoughts for the Easter Season

Jesus helps us to see the daily resurrections  
that can transform our world and ourselves.  
This Easter we can catch a glimpse of the Risen Christ  
and our Risen Selves by . . .  
helping to transform another's hurt into forgiveness,  
... transforming our dying planet  
into a world of interdependence and beauty,  
... freeing ourselves from anything  
which might hold us in the tomb.  
Resurrection is about allowing ourselves and others  
to live alleluias every day of our lives.  
It is believing we are all one.  
It is about hope and being set free.  
And, yes, it is about a cosmic leap of faith!

Reflect Joy in your own life !

*Source: Ministry of the Art*



**Mercy Partners**

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