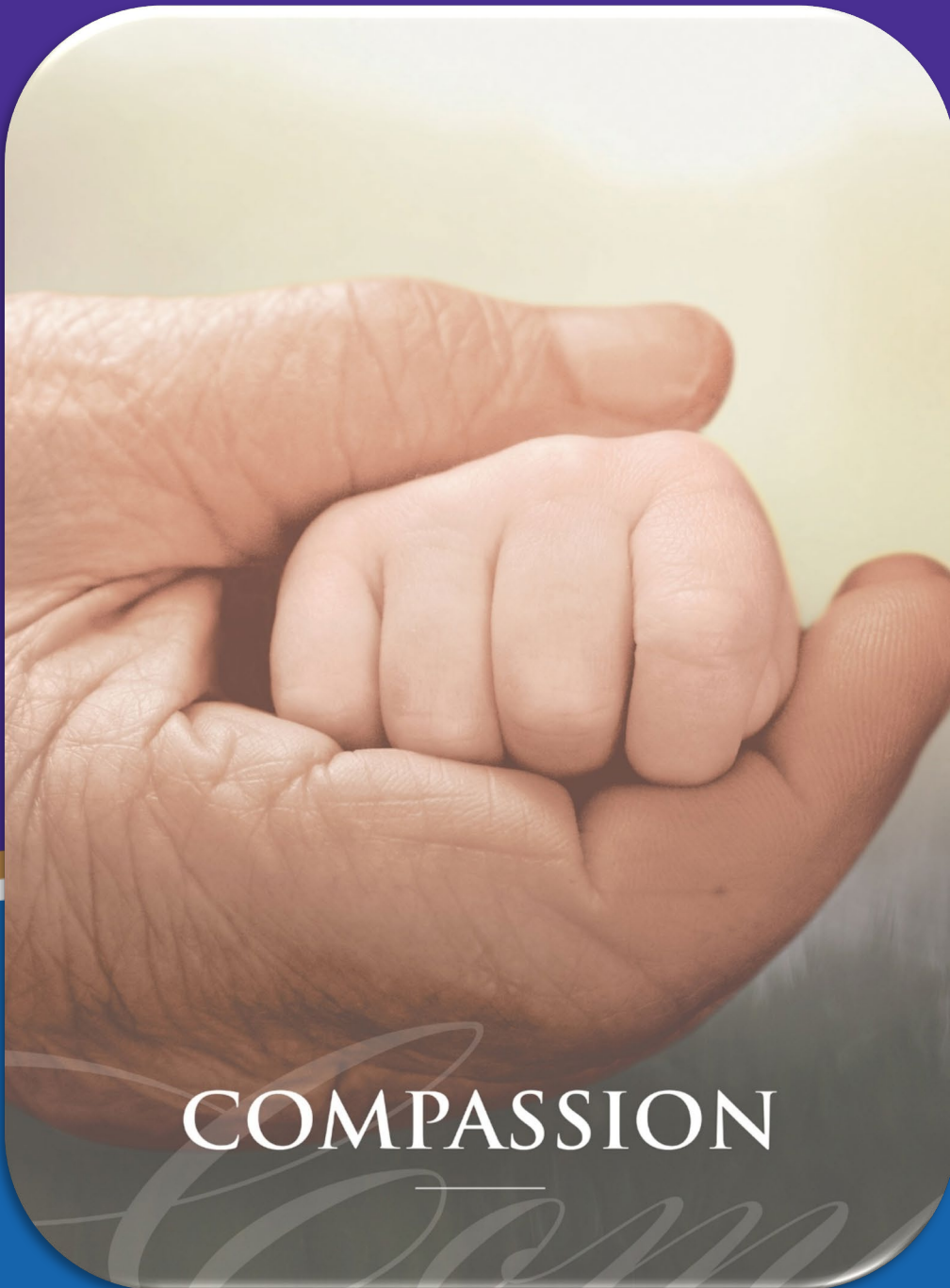




MARY AIKENHEAD MINISTRIES

JOURNEYS

VOLUME 20 | ISSUE 3 | SEPTEMBER 2025



COMPASSION

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 2025

1	World Alzheimer's Month
	National Child Protection Week
7	Father's Day
8	Blessed Virgin Mary's Birth
11	R U OK? Day
21	World Alzheimer's Day
27	St Vincent's de Paul Feast Day
29	St Michael's Feast Day

OCTOBER 2025

1	Mental Health Month
	International Day of the Older Person
5	World Teacher's Day
7	St Vincent's Private Hospital Sydney Foundation Day
10	World Mental Health Day
11	International Day of the Girl Child
12	Anti-Poverty Week
18	St Luke's Feast Day
24	St Vincent's Private Hospital Brisbane Foundation Day

NOVEMBER 2025

1	All Saints Day
2	All Souls Day
4	Melbourne Cup
10	Prison Sunday
11	Remembrance Day
13	World Kindness Day
16	World Day of the Poor
19	International Men's Day
30	1 st Sunday of Advent (Year A)
	Foundation of the Sisters of Charity approved by Pope Pius VII - 1815

COMPASSION

Mr Richard Haddock AO

Chair, Mary Aikenhead Ministries



We so often speak of the virtues of our faith without fully reflecting what they actually call us to do in our lives.

Mahatma Ghandi has said that *"the simplest acts of compassion are by far more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer"*. For me, compassion means to believe in the dignity, respect, equality and justice of everyone and to respond to this belief in an active loving way, not merely to do lip service. But how are we to discern what it means to be compassionate and to act on it?

Sometimes there is a move to prioritize empathy over compassion. However, empathy I believe is an understanding, compassion is a virtue. Some may postulate that compassion is emotional, even self-indulgent and muddies the waters of what should be the loving response in a given situation. However, is this not mistaken. Compassion is a positive virtue that underpins the way we should respond to the inequalities and injustices of life.

Empathy leads to understanding; compassion initiates action, to respond with kindness and understanding to all those we meet - not just in our work lives but in our whole of life approach.

In the most recent edition of Journeys, Dr Richard Kane, Clinical Director Geriatric Medicine, St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne was asked which of the MAM values of love, justice, compassion and hope resonates most with him and why? His response: *"If I had to pick one, it would be compassion."*

This value comes to life in many forms but, for me, it's about kindness and care to all people, in all of our interactions, all of the time."

Compassion is an essential aspect of human nature, and it has the power to transform lives, societies, and even the world. In today's fast-paced and often competitive world, compassion is often overlooked, and people prioritize their own interests over others'. However, the power of compassion should not be underestimated, and it is essential for us to embrace it in our daily lives.

Compassion is the ability to feel and understand the pain and suffering of others, and hopefully it drives us to take action to alleviate their suffering. Moreover, it is not only a moral virtue, but it also has well recognised benefits, such as improving mental health, reducing stress, and increasing happiness. When we show compassion to others, we build strong relationships, and we create a sense of community, which is crucial for the well-being of individuals and society.

In today's world, many people are struggling with various challenges, such as poverty, social inequality, discrimination, and mental health issues. These challenges can cause pain and suffering, and one way to address them is through compassion. When we show compassion to those who are struggling, we create a safe and supportive environment, and we can help them to overcome their challenges and hopefully thrive.

Compassion is not only essential in our personal lives, but it is also crucial in the workplace and in our communities.

In the workplace, showing compassion can help to create a positive and productive work environment, where employees feel valued, supported, and motivated. In our communities, compassion can help to build trust and understanding, and it can bring people together, regardless of their differences.

To embrace compassion in our daily lives, we need to practice empathy, kindness, and understanding. We need to listen to others, validate their feelings, and offer support when they need it. We also need to be self-compassionate. We need to treat ourselves with kindness and understanding, especially when we make mistakes or face challenges.

In our Healthcare Ministry we see real-life examples of compassion demonstrated continuously by our people. We should support, encourage and indeed celebrate this. In our schools our teachers seek to energise young women to be responsive to the needs of our often-unequal society and to respond with love and compassion.

If these young women leave our schools centred on this MAM value of compassion as the compass with which to guide their lives; to understand that compassion is a commitment, a choice, then I feel that the spirit of Mary Aikenhead will continue to grow and prosper. Compassion will underpin their ability to live a meaningful life, one that makes for a more civil society.

Pope Leo shortly after he became Pope stressed that *"religious practice alone does not lead to compassion. It is not a characteristic of religion but one of being human. Human beings are called to be compassionate no matter their religion."*

“ Human beings are called to be compassionate no matter their religion. ”

Pope Leo XIV

Pope Leo further reminded us that compassion takes form through concrete actions, because in order to help someone, "you cannot stay at a distance."

To be compassionate, you have to get involved and be prepared to "even get dirty, perhaps take risks."

True compassion knows no boundaries. It is the motivation to aid and support.



MARY
AIKENHEAD
MINISTRIES

Our Value: Compassion

Compassion recognises that each person is created in the image of God.

Seeking a profound awareness of the joys and sufferings of those we serve; we are impelled to reach out with humility and love.

“ Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes. Immediately they regained their sight and followed him. ”

Matt 20:34

VENERABLE MARY AIKENHEAD ORATION 2025

Ms Penelope Wright

Trustee, Mary Aikenhead Ministries



In July 2025, the Venerable Mary Aikenhead Oration "From Dublin to Digital" was delivered in North Sydney to a live gathering and a wide online audience by Maggie Doherty, an internationally recognised voice on death literacy and end-of-life care. Maggie's address provided a fresh reflection on how Venerable Mary Aikenhead's charism can guide a changing world shaped by artificial intelligence. At the outset Mary herself spoke to us, with Maggie connecting the enduring vision with the opportunities and ethical questions posed by AI in education, health care, and aged care.

The Oration began by reaffirming Mary Aikenhead's legacy as a woman of faith, service, and the inherent dignity of every human life. Maggie's reflections on the person we know as Venerable Mary Aikenhead described her as forthright, resilient, compassionate, steadfast, life-giving, and courageous. She imagined a humanity in which every person, mind, body, and soul, is cherished and invited to participate fully in society. The Oration reminded us that the work of the Sisters of Charity in Australia was not merely a historical record but a clarion call to pursue practical service with compassion, collaboration, and courage. The Oration brought Venerable Mary Aikenhead alive, not as a founder of old works but as a partner in how to reimagine our response to today's needs.

Maggie Doherty's presentation offered a thoughtful lens on AI by weaving her long-standing work in death literacy and public engagement with Catholic Social Teaching. Her description of Mary Aikenhead's charism highlighted a contemporary question - how can advanced technology be harnessed to augment human care rather than diminish it? Drawing on her research and experience, with collaborations that have included digital health analysis and partnerships across healthcare, education, faith communities, and policy, Maggie argued for a principled approach to AI grounded in humanity, relationship, and justice.

A central message of the Oration was that true human intelligence is relational, contemplative, and moral. Maggie invoked Catholic Social Teaching and the Church's recent reflections, including *Antiqua et Nova*, to remind us that intelligence is not merely computational as it is a moral and relational capacity that must be exercised for the good of the most vulnerable. In this light, she invited the audience to reflect on Venerable Mary Aikenhead's fourth vow, added to the traditional vows: to serve the poor. That vow, she argued, becomes a guiding principle for AI. Technology should be evaluated by whether it improves the lives of the excluded and marginalised, not merely by its cleverness. Maggie's compass points were explicit. Venerable Mary Aikenhead would demand practicality, asking what can be done

now, where can AI help, while using our imagination to discern where it might hinder our mission. Venerable Mary Aikenhead would have insisted that technology serves human dignity, not treat people as mere data points or means to an end. She would approach AI with a wary but hopeful eye, curious about its potential, yet ever mindful of the personal touch that characterises healing, education, and spiritual care. Maggie emphasised that digital tools can extend reach, much as Venerable Mary Aikenhead's leadership did from her sickbed for two decades; so that these tools enhance, but not replace, the essential artifacts of care of presence, empathy, and trustworthy relationships.

Maggie drew on empirical insights from recent work in digital health and end-of-life care. Her reference to a study of 68 respondents, where 75 percent welcomed digital technologies for care, was tempered by a clear caveat. Participants in the study stressed that personal care, the human presence and compassion provided by a person enlivened by a genuine mission to serve others, cannot be replaced by AI. The balance to be found in embracing innovation while safeguarding human relationship resonates deeply with Mary Aikenhead Ministries' ongoing mission. The 2025 Oration, in this sense, did more than offer a vision; it offered a practical ethic for implementation across education, health care, and aged care.

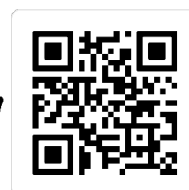
We are appreciative of all the feedback from attendees acknowledging the richness of this Oration. Maggie's address brought Venerable Mary Aikenhead to life, not as a relic of the past but as a living model for how she would navigate a changing world with AI. We assume that challenge to ensure access to education, health care, and aged care for all, especially the marginalised. We thank Maggie Doherty for her profound Oration and for reminding us so deeply of the importance of Venerable Mary

Aikenhead's legacy in today's world. Through all of you our mission is a living governance for contemporary decision making about bringing the best of technology to improve care, and support community. Beyond the rhetoric, the event reinforced the central, enduring truth of Mary Aikenhead Ministries – that our mission is a collective enterprise relying on the faithful participation of everyone involved. This is not a mission to be led by a single group; it is a shared call for all to commit to a common ethos of dedicated service at the point of need, exceptional care rooted in dignity, and opportunities for every person to flourish.

Maggie provided a bridge in the Oration from Dublin of around 200 years ago to Australia today with our enduring mission the compass rather than a map. Venerable Mary Aikenhead's vision remains our guide, inviting us to see in every innovation an opportunity to serve the most in need and to bring Christ's love to those who live on the margins. The call is clear. We must harness AI's potential to empower people and strengthen relationships, while preserving the authenticity of human connection that lies at the heart of education, health care, and spiritual well-being.

As we reflect on the 2025 Oration, the message endures to walk boldly together into unknown terrain with courage and compassion, guided by our founder's charism and a steadfast commitment to every person's dignity. Mary Aikenhead's Ministries work continues with all of us together, from education to health and aged care, with a shared resolve to deliver the mission for our times and the good of all.

**Interested in
knowing more?**



Check it out!



The Trustees with Maggie Doherty



Br Peter Rego, Ruth Bunby, Fe Heffernan & Dr Siupeli Haukoloa-Paea



Bishop Daniel Meagher & Maggie Doherty



Lincoln Hopper, Peter Sastradjaja, Joseph Abad & Anna Herbert



Maggie Doherty



Jason Kara, Martin Teulan & Sr Maria Wheeler



The Trustees with Maggie Doherty, Prof. Megan Best & A/Prof. Xavier Symons



MT ST MICHAEL'S COLLEGE CENTENARY

Ms Deirdre O'Donnell

Trustee, Mary Aikenhead Ministries

At the end of July 2025, the community of Mt St Michael's College in Ashgrove, Brisbane, celebrated an extraordinarily important milestone – 100 years of education, faith and community.

Principal Sharon Volp and her team brought together a wonderful program for the Centenary Mass on 25 July, involving generations of the MSM family, including Sisters of Charity, MSM Alumni, past members of staff, parents and caregivers, current staff and students, and members of the Mary Aikenhead Ministries family.

A highlight was the pre-Mass reflection entitled "If Grantuly Could Talk". As Ms Volp explained in The Spirit Newsletter of 1 August 2025:

"This drama piece was a gathering of verbatim stories and accounts from people who lived, worked, worshipped and were educated within [Grantuly's] walls. Ms Linda Statham, Director of The Arts, spent many hours interviewing Sisters Clare Nolan, Cate O'Brien, Mary Maguire and Jeannie Johnson as well as some past students to listen to their anecdotes to compose a series of short stories that were wonderfully brought to life by our students under the direction of Ms Statham."

All present were transported back in time to witness key events in the College's history, and experience delightful vignettes of school life in days gone by.

As well as honouring the Sisters of Charity, the celebration also honoured staff receiving service awards for devoted years of service to the College. In addition, the new year 5 cohort was also honoured by being gifted a legacy pin to wear on their uniforms. To say these students were bursting with pride as they stood on the stage would be an understatement.

Heartfelt congratulations to Ms Volp and everyone involved in bringing together such a truly memorable celebration. All present were touched by the love and generosity so manifest in every aspect of this meticulously and beautifully planned and delivered event.



CONFERENCE 2025

We are Called...

Dr Margaret McKenna

Trustee, Mary Aikenhead Ministries



It was a delight to welcome over 160 delegates to the Mary Aikenhead Ministries Biennial Conference in Brisbane, 28 and 29 July. Delegates included leadership and executive teams and board members from education, health and aged care and St Vincents Health Australia and Mary Aikenhead Education Ltd Directors. It was a particular privilege to have 14 Sisters of Charity in attendance; their experience, wisdom and commitment to mission continue to inspire the works of Mary Aikenhead Ministries.

Keynote speakers, Associate Professor Michele Connolly rsj and Dr Christopher Lowney collaborated to offer theological and contemporary insights on the conference theme, 'We are called...'.

Sr Michele opened the conference with a theological reflection of Luke 5:1-11, when, after a very slow night fishing, Jesus tells, Peter, an experienced fisherman, to cast his nets back into the water. We learned of Peter's reluctance and the moment of realisation that he was being called to something much bigger than expected. For Peter, this call was an invitation and personal encounter with Jesus, and an invitation to something unexpected and unknown. Sr Michele spoke of how, through Peter the call goes out into the world, that its presence continues, however, today the call is done differently...It is the same call in our era.

Trustees, Gary Humphrys and Penny Wright responded to this keynote, highlighting the faith filled ways that Mary Aikenhead and the Sisters of Charity had responded to a call to serve those in need; that their mission was one of head, heart and hands and named the shared leadership of MAM's mission as our common endeavor.

Sr Michele concluded inviting delegates to *'hold the space open to let the Spirit flow, as this is the depth in which we are called to lead.'*

Dr Chris Lowney explored what it is 'to be called' as a MAM leader. He named the complexity of contemporary workplaces and that the implications of this complexity are both important and challenging for today's leaders. A key tenant was the significance of servant leadership, noting that how we understand ourselves as leaders inevitably influences how we lead. Lowney drew on contemporary examples, including Pope Francis, to illustrate how in our serving, we help others to flourish and grow and that great leadership is ultimately deeply spiritual. Delegates were encouraged to consider their own spirituality in the leadership and service of others. In his second address, Lowney spoke of the gifts of Ignatian spirituality that are part of our Sisters of Charity heritage. In particular, he spoke of the opportunities that Ignatian discernment in decision making can bring to the complexity and uncertainty of our current era. Lowney spoke of being called and being sent... and that being sent to lead and live the mission takes courage every day.

Chris Lowney spoke of being called and being sent... and that being sent to lead and live the mission takes courage every day.

The Health and Education presentations and collaborations highlighted the variety of ways the call to mission is brought to life across Mary Aikenhead Ministries. Banners, sharing the many ways that ministries continue to respond to Laudato Si enriched the conference theme.

We were fortunate to be accompanied by Uncle Joe Kirby, leading the Welcome to Country; Marlon Riley and Elwyn Hennaway conducting the Smoking Ceremony; and Torres Strait Islander dances, Mabuyag Dances telling the stories of people and land through the call to reconciliation and accompaniment. Our conference Eucharist, a highlight, and celebrated by Archbishop Mark Coleridge, together with the conference liturgies were rich in ritual and symbolism.

Thank you to all who were part of the conference, to the presenters, delegates and those who generously joined the liturgy, logistics and conference planning committees, we are most grateful. The Trustees hope that the theme, presentations and connections of the 2025 MAM conference continue to evolve in your respective parts of Mary Aikenhead Ministries.

We finish with the insights of Associate Professor Michele Connolly rsj:

'In their day, within their culture, Mary Aikenhead and her Sisters responded to the call of Jesus to "catch people alive." Today, we who respond to the call to be part of the enterprise Mary Aikenhead established – to teach, care for people in social welfare practices or medical systems – is to follow in her footsteps and in the footsteps of Jesus. To do so, we will find ourselves called on to be as courageous, persistent, intelligent and determined as Jesus was, as his first disciples were, as his disciples Mary Aikenhead and her Sisters were. When we agree to work in Mary Aikenhead Ministries according to its Vision, Mission and Values we are enabled by the energy of the whole MAM community to provide "loving service to all people, especially those who are poor, marginalized and vulnerable".'

Interested in knowing more?

Videos of the keynotes of Associate Professor Michele Connolly rsj and Dr Christopher Lowney, and more photos are available on the [Mary Aikenhead Ministries Website](#).



Check it out!





Uncle Joe Kirk, Carmel Seng, Darlene Dreise



Catherine Hammond



Keynote speaker, Chris Lowney



Dr Chris Jacobs-Vandegier & Jane Clarkson



Archbishop Mark Coleridge & Marlon Riley



Keynote speaker,
A/Prof. Michele Connelly



Sisters of Charity of Australia



BY NAME, *We are Called...*

Mr Troy Tornabene

Acting Mission & Formation Director
Mary Aikenhead Ministries

The year's TMAM Conference began with scripture: *"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine."* (Isaiah 43:1) These words from the prophet Isaiah remind us of an eternal truth: we are called, not by accident, not as one among many, but personally, by name - to be compassion, love, justice and hope in this world.

God sees us, knows us, and claims us as God's own. Our identity is not shaped by the world's uncertainties, but by the unwavering love of the One who created us. Yet, God's call is never just about personal reassurance; it is an invitation to mission.

To be called is to be sent, to live with purpose, to serve with love, to embody justice and compassion in the world. This call is beautifully lived out in the legacy of Mary Aikenhead and heritage the Sisters of Charity, who heard God's voice and responded with courageous faith.

As a symbolic commitment to this call, the Conference Delegates were invited to sign their name onto the image of a palm.

“ I will not forget you.
See, I have inscribed you
on the palms
of my hands.

Isaiah 49:16



PLATINUM JUBILEE

Thankyou Sr Deirdre

Prof. Michael E Drew

Trustee, Mary Aikenhead Ministries



On Friday 8 August 2025, the Sisters of Charity of Australia gathered at St Vincent's Private Hospital Brisbane to joyfully celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Religious Profession of Sr Deirdre Hickey.

Seventy years to the week since her profession on 6 August 1955, Sr Deirdre was honoured for her lifetime of faithful service, quiet strength, and deep commitment to the mission of the Sisters of Charity.

A beautiful Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated in the Giovanni Chapel by Fr Rodel Enriquez MI, with Sr Deirdre's chosen scripture, *"I can do all things in Him who strengthens me,"* echoing the spirit of her remarkable vocation. Following the Mass, guests gathered for a joyful High Morning Tea in the Jim Douglas Boardroom. The celebration brought together a wide circle of those touched by Sr Deirdre's life, including her family and friends, fellow Sisters, and members of the Congregational Leadership Team. In attendance were Sr Laureen Dixon, Congregational Leader, Sr Margaret Guy, and her great friend, Sr Clare Nolan, along with Mr Gary Humphrys, Deputy Chair of Mary Aikenhead Ministries, and Professor Michael Drew, also representing Mary Aikenhead Ministries.

Sr Deirdre's life has been a living witness to the charism of Venerable Mary Aikenhead, bringing hope and compassion to the poor and vulnerable in both word and action.

Fittingly, the celebration took place on the Feast Day of Saint Mary MacKillop, a shared reminder of the enduring legacy of strong, faithful women who have shaped the Church in Australia through lives of courageous service.



Sr Deirdre Hickey, Sr Clare Nolan and guests.



Sr Deirdre Hickey, Sr Laureen Dixon and Fr Rodel Enriquez.



REFLECTIONS ON OUR SOCIAL INCLUSION STATEMENT

Lucia Angelico

Director of Faith & Mission

Catholic Ladies' College, Eltham

Which of the organisations/ministries within Mary Aikenhead Ministries do you work for, and how long have you been there?

I have been in the role of Director of Faith & Mission at Catholic Ladies' College for 18 months.

What is your personal response when reading the *Social Inclusion Statement*? How does it make you feel?

Immediately, I felt moved by the statement "We joyfully welcome all people because of who they are and because of who we are." The statement feels heartfelt. It declares that 'welcome' is an encounter where all parties engage, see the best in each other and reveal their core values, gifts and vulnerabilities. The phrase, we seek to be with others" redefines 'welcome' not as an invitation into one's home but as a call to step out and accompany those who feel excluded, unsafe or unseen. Social inclusion is therefore active, intentional and relational as we 'seek out' and 'be with' the marginalised. It does not mean being static and inviting others in. Rather, it requires us to be open minded and dynamic in seeking out those who may not be so obviously in need of being 'seen' and 'included'. This statement requires of us a heightened sense of awareness and sensitivity. We are reminded of the sacred divinity within all, of God being in all things and it calls for us to be stewards of creation.

However, it challenges the traditional image of inclusion as the welcoming arms of the Church (as represented by Bernini's travertine colonnade in St Peter's Square) and instead calls us to a more outward-reaching approach.

As I grow in my understanding of the charism of Mary Aikenhead and the Sisters of Charity, the *Social Inclusion Statement* seems strongly embedded in the mission of 'the walking nuns' who are committed to 'going to the margins' and 'being extensively useful.'

How might the *Social Inclusion Statement* inspire, challenge, or hold you accountable to respond to the needs of those around you and those you serve?

The *Social Inclusion Statement* inspires and challenges me to review my thinking, attitudes, and perspective. It challenges me to look beyond labels and to see the smiles, the eyes, the minds and the hearts of those I meet. This statement inspires leading with greater intentionality and to ask: *Who is not yet fully included in our school community? Whose voice is missing? Whose dignity needs to be more deeply honoured?*

It encourages me to continue to raise awareness and to strive for justice and equity of access for all. It is a reminder that there are vulnerable people not only in war-torn countries but also in our own neighbourhoods.

It reminds me to be gentle and non-judgmental, to step outside my comfort zone, to always be open to learning from others and to focus more on listening and observing with compassion. I am reminded of the sacred dignity of all and that this is the fundamental basis of all our encounters.

I feel honoured to be part of Mary Aikenhead Ministries and I feel blessed to be working at a College where inclusion is not just a word, but a lived reality, where every individual, student and staff alike, is seen, known, and loved. Through our daily interactions and through role modelling we keep each other accountable as we respond to the needs of those we serve.

How do you see your ministry/organisation living out the values found within the *Social Inclusion Statement*? Please provide one to two examples of initiatives taking place in your workplace.

At Catholic Ladies' College, the call "to welcome all people joyfully" aligns with our mission to foster a school environment where every student belongs, feels valued, and is supported through a strong pastoral care program. Students are invited to: "See yourself here."

The *Social Inclusion Statement* speaks powerfully to the lived experience of our students, who navigate a diverse, rapidly changing and complex world. Students are encouraged to engage in social justice initiatives through the three Student Leadership portfolios of Mission, Social Justice and Environment and Reconciliation. This year, inspired by presentations by Sr Colleen Jackson RSC, Bernard Dobson and other ACRATH volunteers, we launched a fundraising initiative for ACRATH with a team participating in the *RunMelbourne* event.

Year 11 and Year 10 classes explored the issue of Human trafficking with Year 10 students leading the fundraising campaign. Our ten-year commitment to Project Kenya continues, enabling a group of children to receive an education, and participation in St Vincent de Paul, FIRE Carriers, Caritas and other projects continues to gain momentum.

The *Social Inclusion Statement* is a compelling and affirming articulation of values that are deeply embedded in our College. It supports our work in thinking beyond our immediate context as we strive to contribute to a more just and compassionate world. It challenges us as educators and students to "bring love, acceptance, connection and understanding to a world that is yearning for these gifts of the Holy Spirit."

“ Bring love, acceptance, connection and understanding to a world that is yearning for these gifts of the Holy Spirit. ”

Have you visited the...?



**Sisters
of Charity**
of Australia

**HERITAGE
CENTRE**



socheritagecentre.org.au

Check it out!



REFLECTIONS ON OUR SOCIAL INCLUSION STATEMENT

Vijaya Sundararajan

National Director, Health Equity
St Vincent's Health Australia

Which of the organisations/ministries within Mary Aikenhead Ministries do you work for, and how long have you been there?

I work for St Vincent's and have been here for 13 years.

What is your personal response when reading the *Social Inclusion Statement*? How does it make you feel?

As I read the *Social Inclusion Statement*, I am moved and am deeply reminded of the values which underpin my life. Particularly central to my world view is that as human beings we must all care for one another from the capabilities we are given and the good fortune bestowed upon us.

How might the *Social Inclusion Statement* inspire, challenge, or hold you accountable to respond to the needs of those around you and those you serve?

The *Social Inclusion Statement* reminds me that it is not enough to agree with its values in my mind but inspires and challenges me to behave in an open, inclusive and compassionate way at all times. I choose to work at St Vincent's because its culture supports me in this daily effort and in being accountable to myself and my colleagues.

How do you see your ministry/organisation living out the values found within the *Social Inclusion Statement*? Please provide one to two examples of initiatives taking place in your workplace.

In the area I work within, St Vincent's lives out the values of the *Social Inclusion Statement* by its commitment and support of research and service innovation to groups who are at risk of poor health based on their social determinants such as housing, income, education, proximity to health care services and cultural safety. For over 10 years, the St Vincent's Health Equity Research Awards have funded projects whose aim is to improve health services. This year we will support 13 projects, including one which will improve the treatment of people with chronic heart infections who are experiencing homelessness and another which will develop a new online mental health intervention for people with newly diagnosed cancers who live in rural areas.

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THE FACES OF MAM

Simon Gridley

Business Manager

Catholic Ladies' College, Eltham

Which of the organisations within Mary Aikenhead Ministries do you work for, and how long have you been there?

I have worked at Catholic Ladies' College (CLC) for 5 years in my role as Business Manager.

The MAM values are love, justice, compassion, hope. Which of these resonates most with you and why?

All four of the MAM values have a place in my heart and purpose, the one that resonates with me most is compassion. I believe that if you act with compassion in any situation or challenge, you can move forward together and grow as individuals and communities. For me, being compassionate is about being able to meet people where they are at, which takes vulnerability, patience, empathy and openness to understanding others' circumstances and perspectives. When guided by compassion, life becomes purposeful and fulfilling, both personally and collectively.

What do you think sets your organization/ministry apart from other workplaces?

The Sisters of Charity's history and story set our organisation apart from other workplaces, the story is very relatable and easy to understand. The mission, at its simplest, is to treat people well and be welcoming to all. At CLC this spirit is alive in the way we focus on the whole person - educating young people to achieve their potential and become engaged global citizens. I see great hope in how our young people and staff connect with the mission, advocating for social justice and care for the environment.



In this way, we are not only honouring the legacy of Venerable Mary Aikenhead and the Sisters of Charity story but also continuing this story today as members of Mary Aikenhead Ministries.

If you were to have lunch with Venerable Mary Aikenhead today, what story would you tell her about your work?

For me, having been part of the recent pilgrimage to Ireland, I would use this time to explain the impact Mary's mission has had on me. I was blown away by how her dedication, courage and care has spread far and wide, creating opportunities for a better quality of life through education, health care, aged care and outreach, so many people have benefited, whether receiving access to services or performing services. The amazing sisters who dedicated their lives to the mission achieved so much by always understanding the need and having the courage to go towards it, sometimes in the most trying of circumstances, always pushing boundaries and going to the margins. The more I learn, the more I see Venerable Mary Aikenhead and the sisters, as modern-day entrepreneurs and pioneers, showing what can be achieved through passion, commitment and trust in divine providence. I imagine Venerable Mary Aikenhead would be modest and humble, but I hope that she would feel proud of all that has been accomplished and continues to be lived out today, as the love of Christ urges us on.



THE FACES OF MAM

Katie Viviers

Chief Executive Officer

St Vincent's Clinic & Open Support

Which of the organisations within Mary Aikenhead Ministries do you work for, and how long have you been there?

I joined St Vincent's Health Australia as CEO for St Vincent's Clinic, Open Support and St Vincent's Clinic Research Foundation in April 2021.

The MAM values are love, justice, compassion, hope. Which of these resonates most with you and why?

The MAM values are very aligned to my own. For me though, love resonates most strongly both as a value and a character strength. In our work, compassionate love is kindness and genuine, patient listening in just about any situation and I find that very satisfying.

What do you think sets your organization/ministry apart from other workplaces?

What sets us apart at St Vincent's is our shared values, inspired by the legacy of the Sisters of Charity, and a professional, caring team who work with purpose to make a meaningful difference every day. We share real stories from our ministry that motivate, inspire and help us learn together.

If you were to have lunch with Venerable Mary Aikenhead today, what story would you tell her about your work? And what do you think she might say to you in reply?

I would share with her that the qualities she instilled in her Sisters are qualities that continue to inspire us today. For 35 years, Sisters of Charity Outreach, now Open Support has delivered services in our community across greater Sydney – to those feeling lonely or isolated and to women and children escaping domestic violence. Our programs have evolved as the need and context of their delivery has changed to ensure they are impactful and positive for our clients. I would share stories and quotes from our clients to share with her what an impact we can have at an individual and community level.

In reply I suspect she might tell me to keep being useful and to trust in divine providence that if we work hard to serve the community, we will find a way to fund the service!



ST VINCENT'S



Interested in knowing more?



Check it out!

GETTING MORE OUT OF THE JOURNEY



Want to get more out of the Journeys articles? Here are some prepared discussion or reflection questions based on Mr Richard Haddock's article you might like to use for personal reflection, or as formation during a meeting etc.

Empathy vs. Compassion

The article mentions empathy as understanding and compassion as action. Do you think we sometimes stop at empathy without moving into compassionate action? Why does this happen in personal or professional settings?

Compassion in the Workplace & Community

How can compassion be practically integrated into our work culture or community life? What are some small, daily habits we can adopt to create a more compassionate environment?

Barriers to Compassion

What are some common barriers (personal, cultural, systemic) that prevent people from acting compassionately? How can we as a group/community help overcome these barriers?

Faith and Human Values

Pope Leo suggests that compassion is a human value, not exclusive to religious practice. How does this perspective challenge or enrich your understanding of compassion within and beyond faith contexts?

Prayer Reflection

Prayer Reflection based on this edition's article has also been prepared:

- **Compassion – A Value of Action, Not just Words**

This may be useful for your own personal prayer or for Meeting or Gathering Prayer.

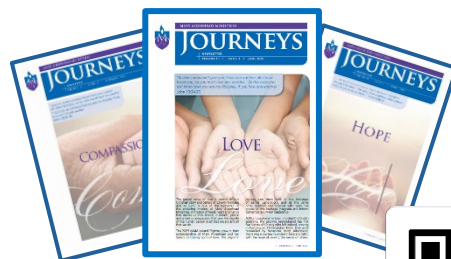
If you are interested in this resource and would like a copy sent to you, please email the MAM Mission & Formation Director (acting):

troy.tornabene@maministries.com.au

Missed an Edition?

Past editions of Journeys can be found on the Mary Aikenhead Website:

maryaikenheadministries.com.au



Scan me



MARY
AIKENHEAD
MINISTRIES



Suite 103, Level 1
26-30 Spring Street,
BONDI JUNCTION 2022 NSW



+61 2 9291 9400



info@maministries.com.au



www.maryaikenheadministries.com.au