



Health and Integrity Conference calls for a 'reformation' of Australia's churches

Coming Soon... a new look for the University website

The University of Divinity will be launching a new website in November, with new features rolling out over the next few months.

We'd love to hear your suggestions on how we can improve your online experience while you study with us. Downtime will be minimal, and we thank you for your patience as we make this exciting and important upgrade.

A new online enrolment and application form will also be trialled among some students of Stirling Theological College. Once completed, easier online forms will be made available to all University of Divinity students from mid-2019.

Contact Andrew Hateley-Browne with any feedback or questions.
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In a media release, distributed on Friday 31 August, the Health and Integrity conference has called on Australia's churches to embrace thoroughgoing reformation of their structures, governance and culture in the wake of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The three-day ecumenical Health and Integrity in Church and Ministry conference on the task of rebuilding and renewal for the churches after the Royal Commission (27–29 August 2018) was hosted by the University of Divinity and sponsored by four leading Catholic religious institutes and Yarra Theological Union. The conference was attended by church members and leaders, academics, clergy and religious, ministers and church workers, survivors of child sexual abuse and their advocates, and groups advocating church reform.

The Health and Integrity conference heard that there is grief and pain everywhere throughout the Australian churches as a result of the criminal sexual abuse of children. The conference expressed its solidarity with the many thousands of men, women and children who had been directly and indirectly harmed, and strongly condemned ongoing denial by some church members of the truth of what has happened. The conference heard that the churches are still too often failing to respond adequately to the ongoing care needs of victims, their families, and communities who have been harmed by their own predator members.

Continue reading on p.8

CONTENTS

Health and Integrity Conference calls for a 'reformation' of Australia's churches	1
FEE-HELP changes: Loan fee abolished	2
University awards Distinguished Service Medal to Tricia Lewis	3
Leatherland Prize awarded to Captain Adam Couchman	4
Mannix Library Manager awarded Distinguished Certified Professional status	5
UD signs new Collegiate Agreement with St Athanasius Colege	6
Creativity in church management	7
Health and Integrity Conference continued	8
A Testament of Mentors	10
A tapestry of woven threads	11
Confluence: a pioneer in the emergence of meditation research in Australia	12
A Christology of Religions	13
Research Publications	14
UD Academic one of Australia's top thinkers	16

FEE-HELP changes: Loan fee abolished

Professor Peter Sherlock
Vice-Chancellor

Already recognised as having Australia's most highly satisfied university students, the University of Divinity now offers more affordable tuition fees.

Recent changes to the FEE-HELP loan scheme mean the University of Divinity is more attractive than ever for people undertaking undergraduate studies in theology, philosophy and ministry. The cost of study for undergraduate students using FEE-HELP loans will be significantly reduced from 2019.

In August 2018 the Commonwealth Parliament amended the FEE-HELP scheme. FEE-HELP was introduced in 2005 to provide interest-free loans to Australian students undertaking courses that were not eligible for HECS.

The recent changes have two impacts upon University of Divinity students.

First, since 2005 undergraduate students using FEE-HELP to pay their fees have been charged a loan fee of 25% of tuition fees. This fee was retained by the Government, not the University, and provided no educational benefit to the student. This fee will cease to be charged to University of Divinity undergraduate students from 1 January 2019, including both new and existing students.

This is a significant saving for undergraduate students, of up to \$10,000 for students enrolling in a three-year degree.

In 2019, a full-time University of Divinity student enrolled in a three-year Bachelor of Theology will be charged an annual tuition fee of \$12,672 (for a total cost of \$38,016 over three years at 2019 rates). The loan fee of 25% would have added a further \$3,168 in 2019 (and a total of \$9,504 over the three years at 2019 rates).

Second, the new changes amend the repayment thresholds for both current and past students with FEE-HELP loan debts. This means that from the 2019/2020 tax year, students and graduates will commence repaying FEE-HELP loans when their taxable income exceeds a lower threshold. Current repayment rates commence at 2% of taxable income and increase to 6% of taxable income for students on higher incomes. These rates will be changed to extend from 1% at the lowest threshold and 10% at the highest threshold. Further details will be available once published by the Commonwealth Department of Education.

Students currently using FEE-HELP, or wishing to apply for a FEE-HELP loan, do not need to take any action as these changes will be applied automatically from 2019.



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University awards Distinguished Service Medal to Tricia Lewis

Mrs Tricia Lewis, the Office of the Vice-Chancellor's (OVC) Business Manager, was awarded the University Distinguished Service Medal on Wednesday 31 October 2018. Tricia will conclude her employment with the University in November 2018, following 17 years of dedicated service in a variety of roles. During this time she has been instrumental in the institution's growth and development. She began in an office comprised of a Dean and four staff in 2001 and leaves the present OVC with eighteen employees. She began at a College and concludes from a University.

About the award, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Peter Sherlock, said: "Tricia has been a lynchpin in the University: she has worked closely with a very wide number of staff across the Colleges and Libraries and has done her utmost at all times to support both students and colleagues. As the longest serving employee in the OVC, she will be deeply missed across the University."

At a farewell event, Tricia paid tribute to the enormous amount of change and growth that she had witnessed over the years. When she commenced at the Melbourne College of Divinity (MCD) in October 2001, she was

the first dedicated finance staff member. When MCD first moved to 21 Highbury Grove in Kew, the Dean, Reverend Harold Pidwell, resided upstairs while the downstairs rooms became offices during the day. Tricia described how the building was newly converted fully into offices when she began. Change was always afoot and throughout her years of service, Tricia worked in almost all of the rooms in the stately Victorian manse.

Asked about her fondest memories, Tricia described how it was "a special thrill to attend the reception at Government House and have the Victorian Government contribute a significant sum of money to allow MCD to prepare an application for specialist University status. The long hours and team effort in preparing the submission was all worth it when the outcome was favourable."

Outside of her work, Tricia is an avid dragonboat paddler and an active member of a local racing team. A true team-player and leader, Tricia's role on the team of 22 paddlers is to be the person who stands at the back and steers the boat and is responsible for the safety of all the team members, ensuring paddlers are able to keep to a steady rhythm. Everyone who knows Tricia will recognise these attributes in her daily work. She has, for instance, been a member of the OVC Health and Safety Committee. Quietly leading and always caring for her team, Tricia has been an outstanding member of the University. She will be missed. We wish her well.

The citation for the award read:

Mrs Tricia Lewis has rendered distinguished service to the University of Divinity as an employee in the Office of the Vice-Chancellor from 2001 to 2018. She was instrumental in supporting the institution's growth and development across this period, playing a key role in managing and implementing financial systems and significant changes which have proved critical both to achieving University status in 2011 and maturing as a University since 2012. Her working relationships with colleagues, academic staff and students throughout the University have consistently modelled the collegiality and willingness to serve which lie at the heart of the University's Vision and Mission.

Tricia Lewis outside the Office of the Vice-Chancellor.
Photo by Meg Nelson.



Leatherland Prize awarded to Captain Adam Couchman

The University of Divinity in partnership with the Australian Academy of Liturgy is pleased to announce that the 2018 Leatherland Prize has been awarded to Captain Adam Couchman (PhD student, Eva Burrows College).



Captain Adam Couchman has been teaching since 2008. He has held various appointments at Eva Burrows College in both the School for Officer Training and School for Christian Studies. From 2009 to 2012 he was the Director of the School for Christian Studies. He was commissioned as an Officer,

along with his wife Megan, in November 2003, and since then he has been Corps Officer at Armidale Corps (NSW), Gosford Corps (NSW) and is currently a Lecturer at Eva Burrows College and Assistant Corps Officer, Box Hill Corps.

Adam is both a lecturer and alumni of Eva Burrows College; having completed his undergraduate degree through the college in 2005. His honours studies, through Charles Sturt University, saw him research the sacramental theology of The Salvation Army. His Masters studies in Christian Holiness were completed with distinction through the Nazarene Theological College in Manchester, UK. Adam is currently working towards his Doctor of Philosophy through the University of Divinity where his research is engaged in theological interpretation of Scripture; specifically the worship of Jesus Christ himself.



The Citation for the award

In his essay, *Performing in the Theodrama: a Theocentric Vision of Christian Worship*, Adam Couchman draws on the work of Adrienne von Speyr in conversation with James Torrance and Kevin Vanhoozer to explore what it is for worship to be at the heart of the Trinity. Beginning with the question of what it is for Jesus to be a worshipper, Couchman addresses questions around the relationship between prayer and worship, and how doctrine is enacted through liturgical action, to offer a definition of worship as a theocentric drama that unfolds the inner life of the Trinity in the daily prayer and worship of the Church. Couchman argues that:

"Christian worship is an ongoing, theodramatic performance of the eternal glorification of God that is already taking place within the Trinity. It is made possible through the High Priesthood of Christ and effective to us by the presence of the Holy Spirit. It is centred upon the worship of Jesus Christ as revealed in the canon of Scripture and yet the theodrama is extended into new contexts every day through faithful improvisation."

The examiners remarked on Couchman's fresh approach, observing how 'it was particularly satisfying to see classical Chalcedonian doctrine – and that very well understood – closely integrated with liturgical analysis.'

About the Leatherland Prize

The Leatherland Prize was established to honour the memory of the Rev Dr Harold F Leatherland, a prominent Australian liturgical scholar, by supporting scholarly engagement with liturgical studies. In 2018 the Prize consists of \$1,000 to resource the cost of attendance at the 2019 Australian Academy of Liturgy National Conference or another liturgical conference approved by the Victorian Convenor of the Australian Academic of Liturgy.



Mannix Library Manager awarded Distinguished Certified Professional status

Catherine Place
Catholic Theological College

Ms Kerrie Burn, Mannix Library Manager at Catholic Theological College and the University of Divinity Library Hub, has earned Distinguished Certified Professional status from the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA).

Already an Associate Fellow of the Association, she was presented with her Certificate at an ALIA event in Melbourne on 23 August 2018. Among the requirements for Distinguished Certification are membership of ALIA for a minimum of five years, demonstration of professional/technical and personal knowledge and skills, evidence of a significant degree of autonomy in decision-making in practice and of course, to be actually employed in the Library and Information sector.

Kerrie is well-regarded throughout Catholic Theological College and the University of Divinity for her warmth and competence as Library Manager. Associate Professor Shane Mackinlay, Principal of Catholic Theological College, noted that her certification is “a well-earned recognition of (her) professionalism, initiative and leadership”. Professor Peter Sherlock, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Divinity thanked Kerrie for her “efforts on behalf of all the libraries of the University, as well as (her) service at Mannix”. He expressed the feelings of all of us in his comment:

We are very fortunate to have someone of (her) capability and energy available to the University.

When invited to write a few lines about what her new status meant to her, Kerrie preferred to reflect on the value of taking Professional Development seriously.

“I have been a bit of an ALIA professional development devotee over the years, having been a member of their Continuing Professional Development Scheme since 2003. Membership of the Scheme has been a very practical way to demonstrate my commitment to lifelong learning. Recording all of my PD, and the scheme’s requirement to reflect on the learning outcomes for each activity, has also helped me to identify gaps in my knowledge and thereby shape the selection of future activities. Many libraries that I’ve worked in haven’t necessarily had a lot of money allocated to professional development. However, I find that if you are interested enough there are always free PD opportunities available. This might include professional reading, getting involved in a work-based research project, joining a committee or working group, writing a blog post or journal article, investigating something new, attending webinars/ seminars or presenting at a conference.”

Congratulations Kerrie Burn AFALIA (DCP)!



UD signs new Collegiate Agreement with St Athanasius College

Copts in Modernity

St Athanasius College hosted the 5th International Symposium of Coptic Studies themed **Copts in Modernity** that focused on the history of the Coptic Church and community between the 18th and 21st centuries.

The event, held at SAC's new city campus, took place from Friday 13 July to Monday 16 July 2018.

The symposium brought together 27 local and international speakers (from Scotland, London, Geneva, Amsterdam, Cairo, California, New York, Chicago, North Carolina, Moscow, and Tokyo, as well as from Sydney and Melbourne), and included three renowned scholars in the field of Coptic Studies: Professors Nelly Van-Doorn Harder (Wake Forest University, NC), Mark Swanson (Lutheran Theological College, Chicago), and Maged Mikhail (Fullerton University, California).

Papers were presented on a range of topics from historical, hagiographical, liturgical, and theological to ecumenical. The event was attended by 146 participants, and a wonderful cohort of 60 SAC volunteers.

The University of Divinity is delighted to announce that on Sunday 15 July 2018 a new Collegiate Agreement was signed between the University of Divinity and St Athanasius College.

The signing of the agreement, by Professor Peter Sherlock, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Divinity, and His Grace Associate Professor Suriel, Principal of St Athanasius College, took place during the dinner for the major international conference, Copts in Modernity, hosted by St Athanasius College and the University of Divinity.

At the dinner, Professor Sherlock commended the College on its progress since it joined the University of Divinity in 2012 as the first Coptic Orthodox College in the world to receive University accreditation:

“Since 2012 the College’s maturation has been very impressive, with growth in student numbers, in the qualifications of academic staff, and in the creation of an outstanding new CBD campus at Eporo Tower. It has been a privilege and delight for members of the wider University to learn from the Coptic tradition and to benefit from Coptic hospitality, and to be inspired by the entrepreneurial spirit of the College’s leader, His Grace Bishop Suriel. We look forward to working with the College in the years ahead as it continues to grow in research, teaching, and equipping people for leadership and service in church and community.”

This agreement, which is for a term of seven years (2018-2024), was authorised by the University Council following a Major Review of the College in 2017. The University Council commended the positive growth of St Athanasius College over recent years. When the last Collegiate Agreement was signed, the College was accredited to teach a single award only, the Diploma in Theology. Under the leadership of Bishop Suriel, St Athanasius College is now accredited to teach twelve of the University’s awards, from diploma to doctorate.

Banner: Participants of Copts in Modernity Symposium Gala Dinner, at which the new Collegiate Agreement with St Athanasius College was signed. Photo by Bassem Morgan.



Creativity in church management

Professor Gabrielle McMullen AM
Council Member

Earlier this year University Council member Professor Gabrielle McMullen AM was invited to speak at the second annual International Festival of Creativity in Church Management. The 2018 Festival held on 25-27 June at Villanova University in Philadelphia.

The International Festivals are a joint initiative of Villanova University and the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, where the first Festival was held in 2017. Their aim is “to explore new pastoral ways to proclaim the Gospel in a changing world. The fundamental purpose ... is to create a community to research, exchange and compare best practices in Church Management ... to develop new solutions to Church Management challenges and explore the Entrepreneurial Spirit in a Mission-Driven Church”.

Gabrielle’s presentation at the 2018 Festival was entitled ‘Advancing Lay Leadership in the Australian Church’ – it focused on the establishment of the Association of Ministerial PJPs Ltd, which Gabrielle describes as “an historic development for the Australian Catholic Church in relation to lay ecclesial leadership”. She noted in her paper that, since 1994, ten new foundations (formally titled ministerial public juridic persons [PJPs] in Church law) have been established in Australia to take education, health and community service ministries of religious congregations into the future as works of the Catholic Church.

In the period 2012-2016, representatives of these PJPs explored means of fostering collaboration between the respective entities, leading to the establishment of the Association of Ministerial PJPs Ltd in May 2016. This is now the peak body for these new lay-led Church ministries and provides a vehicle for them to interact formally with one another and, in a corporate sense, with the Australian Bishops and Church agencies. From 2011-2017, Gabrielle was a Trustee of one such

PJP, Mary Aikenhead Ministries, which has taken responsibility for education, health and aged care, social service and research ministries previously conducted by the Religious Sisters of Charity of Australia.

Festival keynote speaker Chris Lowney, one-time Jesuit seminarian and later a Managing Director of JP Morgan on three continents, considered ‘The Entrepreneurial Spirit in a Mission-Driven Church’.

A key element of the Festival were five sessions of parallel research presentations when 3-4 invited speakers made their contributions to describing creativity in Church management – Gabrielle’s presentation in the first session was well-received and, significantly, the only paper at the Festival addressing the ministerial PJPs, which are such an important development in lay-led governance for the Catholic Church.

The Festival also featured two major panel discussions on ‘Creativity in Structuring Organisations for Growth and Mission’ and ‘Creative Uses of Technology to Scale Affordably’, respectively, as well as moderated and rotating table discussion. The latter process arrived at some agreed principles and practices for enhancing Church management. With the Festival utilising “multiple formats to maximise creativity”, “social experiences” over meals and refreshments were also an important part of the program for fostering exchange of ideas and experiences.

Gabrielle said, “It was a privilege to attend the second annual International Festival of Creativity in Church Management and a source of hope and inspiration to learn of many initiatives in diverse communities whereby the contemporary Church is responding to the ‘signs of the times’”.

Banner: Professor Gabrielle McMullen AM speaking at a RASP event.
Photo by Meg Nelson.

On Thursday 6 September 2018, the organisers of the Health and Integrity in Church and Ministry Conference released their six-page Conference Communiqué.

Leading the communiqué to the Church and the Australian Community were the words:

"For the Christian Churches, we are at a Tipping Point. Recovery will depend on engaging in a thorough going reformation of theology, structures, governance, leadership and culture."

The communiqué, including 14 conference resolutions, is addressed to survivors of child sexual abuse in church institutions, to members of the Australian Christian churches, and to Australian church leaders, including the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Catholic Religious Australia, and the leadership of the National Council of Churches of Australia (NCC). Above all, this communiqué is an appeal to the whole Australian community, including all members of faith communities, because participants believe that health and integrity in ministry and the rebuilding and renewal of our churches should be of the utmost concern to all Australians, whatever their beliefs.

Visit Vox online for coverage of the Health and Integrity conference, including the full Conference Communiqué, the Vice-Chancellor's Blog, information about the speakers and videos of the keynote sessions.

[vox.divinity.edu.au/
health-and-integrity/](http://vox.divinity.edu.au/health-and-integrity/)

Continued from p.1

Describing the sexual abuse of children by clergy, religious and church personnel as a national tragedy, the conference resolved that it is essential for Australia's churches to fully implement all of the Royal Commission's recommendations pertaining to them.

Opening the Health and Integrity conference, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Divinity, Professor Peter Sherlock, said the conference provided a focussed opportunity for the University to identify both immediate and longer-term actions. One outcome will be the creation of a new goal in the University's Strategic Plan commencing immediately, to pursue the dual themes of health and integrity in church and ministry.

In his address, Emeritus Professor Des Cahill of RMIT University told the conference that the Royal Commission's final report was the most thorough and credible report that has ever been produced on the sexual abuse of children in religious institutions. "Due to the Royal Commission's unparalleled moral authority, Australian governments are moving quickly to implement its recommendations", Professor Cahill said.

The Health and Integrity conference called on Australia's churches to exceed the minimum standards of implementation in the Royal Commission's recommendations, to undertake thoroughgoing reform of theology, ministry, governance and leadership, and in so doing return to the teaching and example of Jesus Christ. Survivor Joan Isaacs told the conference that it was time for the churches to "get back on the donkey".

The conference further called on the churches to engage in a process of fundamental theological and interdisciplinary reflection about the causes and implications of the child sexual abuse crisis, as an essential first step in the task of reform.

Reverend Professor Richard Lennan, an Australian priest who is Professor of Systematic Theology at Boston College in the United States, warned that any church that proved unwilling or unable to learn the lessons of the Royal Commission "will disqualify itself from a continuing place in Australian society".

Professor Lennan said the Royal Commission had brought distorted aspects of the Catholic Church's culture into relief. "When the Royal Commission defined clericalism as the idealisation of the clergy, and by extension the idealisation of the Church, it was describing a form of idolatry". "Idols cannot ever give life; they can only be a distortion of what God enables," Professor Lennan said in his paper. "While taking up the specific recommendations of the Royal Commission will

certainly help the church to become a more transparent and authentic body”, Professor Lennan said, “the renewal of integrity in the church requires more than individual pieces of reform: it requires broad and deep cultural shifts in the church. To achieve this, it will be necessary for the Church to embrace an overarching approach to change”.

Susan Pascoe AM, President and Chair of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and Chair of the Community Director’s Council, told the conference that although most of the churches have signed up to the National Redress Scheme and many have issued apologies to victims, to date there has been limited public recognition by the churches of the need for governance and cultural reform. “Abuse survivors, many of whose lives have been irretrievably damaged may take some convincing that genuine reform is on the way,” Ms Pascoe said.

Noting that “Basic Religious Charities” are exempted from meeting the reporting obligations and governance standards of other charities and not-for-profit organisations under the 2013 Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Act, Ms Pascoe said it was “reasonable to expect church bodies to operate on comparable, or equal governance standards as corporate, government and not-for-profit entities”. She said they should also be subject to the same, or a comparable, regulatory regime.

The Health and Integrity conference called on the leadership of all Australian churches to immediately initiate a program of action and change which must include the following principles:

- The churches need to take responsibility for the lifelong care and support of all those whose lives have been harmed irreparably. This goes beyond the notion of “redress”. Ongoing care should be based on principles of trauma informed practice. The churches should urgently review their processes for responding to ensure that victims are not re-traumatised when they seek support and redress from the Church.
- Clericalism in all its forms should be rejected.
- Any restoration of public trust in the churches will be dependent on a commitment to contemporary ethical standards of good governance based on the principles of transparency, accountability and inclusivity. There can be no theological excuse for poor governance structures and practices.
- It is essential that the laity, and especially women, are supported to take their rightful place in all aspects of church life, including governance.
- All Christian churches should participate fully in the national apology to victims of institutional child sexual abuse on 22 October 2018.
- The churches should also consider instituting a shared National Day of Remembrance on the anniversary of the release of the Royal Commission’s report on 15 December 2017, to ensure that the testimony of victims and survivors of child sexual abuse continues to be heard, and to be an occasion on which each church reports publicly on its progress in implementing the Royal Commission recommendations and reforming its governance and culture. It should also be an occasion to celebrate those righteous truth-tellers who refused to keep silent about the abuse and those who have worked in the interests of victims and child safety.



David Leary, Conference Coordinator, welcomed participants.



Susan Pascoe AM, the keynote speaker for the session on Implications for Governance and Leadership.



Janiene Wilson, a keynote speaker for the session on Implications for Ministry.



Reverend Dr Alan Niven, a keynote speaker for the session on Implications for Ministry.



A Testament of Mentors

Associate Professor Katharine Massam
Pilgrim Theological College

James Morrison played in Melbourne a few weeks ago with the ensemble of students and faculty from his Jazz Academy in Mount Gambier. It was a fine occasion full of life and energy that had nothing to do with the University of Divinity, except metaphorically. Not for the first time, the interplay of harmonies, the movement between individual and corporate responsibility for keeping the melody flowing, and the beat at the heart of dazzling variations reminded me of academic life, and of the church too. Like jazz, both institutions that intersect in the UD depend on the creative interpretation of tradition. Also like Morrison, and the work for which the Jazz Academy is increasingly respected, scholars usually flourish best in a network of mentors and colleagues.

Mentoring was in focus explicitly at the event convened by the *Australian Collaborators in Feminist Theologies* at Pilgrim Theological College at the end of August. Forty people gathered to hear Professor Joy Damousi from the University of Melbourne and Ms Alexandra McMullen with a background in VET and projects shared with the Brotherhood of St Laurence, introduce the programs they had designed to enable people, especially women and others currently under-represented in the academy, to contribute more effectively and to offer leadership.

The statistics leave no doubt that the discipline of theology in Australia, and the University of Divinity within it, lags behind other disciplines and tertiary institutions where mentoring programs are in place. But it was also sobering to hear that markers of women's participation are stagnating across Australian higher education generally. Active mentoring helps challenge entrenched assumptions and keep the door open for new voices to offer fresh perspectives into the conversation. More representative institutions benefit everyone, even those who find their access to power is no longer taken for granted.

In the long-term project of cultural change, some steps are simple and immediate.

Strategies to foster the skills and capacities needed across academic life were one dimension of the conversation: identifying strengths and weaknesses, claiming those strengths and working on the weaknesses. Practical tips such as having more than one mentor, seeking mentors who were not a predictable or easy fit, and recognising informal as well as formal mentoring opportunities, all emerged as talking points. Deeper questions of vocation also came into play as discussion focussed on the significance of resilience and the role of collegiality.

The program run since 2014 as part of Professor Damousi's ARC Kathleen Fitzpatrick Laureate Fellowship has created communities of younger women scholars around Australia that continue to support and encourage each other. Applications for this national program are open again in 2019.

The group that gathered was also keen to continue the conversation about the contribution of feminist theology, in particular, to re-shaping the academy, encouraging and equipping non-traditional leaders to make their voices heard. This brings us back to jazz. Traditionally, the band might have had an all-male look with the contribution of women confined to vocals but that's changing; even, slowly, in Australia.



Banner: Participants at the Testament of Mentors workshop.
Above: The Janette Gray Lecture. Photos by Meg Nelson.

A tapestry of woven threads

An excerpt from the first annual Janette Gray Lecture, given by Emeritus Professor Elaine Wainwright RSM, 31 August 2018.

What an extraordinary privilege it is to have been invited to present this Inaugural Lecture in honour of Dr Janette Gray, known familiarly to us as Jan. In preparing for it I have been drawn much more deeply into Jan's life and work. Tonight I hope to lay out before you something of the woven tapestry of her theologising through the lens of a biblical text: Matthew 19 whose opening verses I have just cited. In sharing my title and text with a colleague at an initial stage of preparing for this lecture, she expressed surprise at my choice. I was guided, however, by the focus of Matthew 19 on relationships following as it does Matthew 18 which some call the Community Discourse. It is my hope that dialogue with this biblical text will provide me with a framework for the broader dialogue with Jan's theology or theological undertakings and that we might experience something of the tapestry of woven threads that link her life and work to the biblical text and into our lives.

My usual way of beginning an interpretation of a biblical text is to set out the hermeneutical lens that I bring to that task. Given the urgency of the current ecological crisis that faces our planet, the perspective which informs my reading of the biblical text is ecological and my way of reading I call eco-rhetorical. My hermeneutical lens and my methodological approach coalesce as I seek to attend carefully to the narrative features of the text and the way these both hide and reveal ecological insights. In this lecture, I bring these not only to the biblical text but to all texts with which I engage, especially, in this lecture, Jan's two theses, her Masters and her doctorate.

Neither Escaping nor Exploiting Sex

The final chapter of Jan's Masters thesis, published as *Neither Escaping nor Exploiting Sex: Women's Celibacy* is entitled "Ecology of Celibacy".[1] Ecology was not an explicit interpretive lens informing her unfolding work but it functioned then for readers on reaching her final chapter as a lens that she directs backward over the material covered and forward into new interpretations of women's commitment to celibacy. In this her work was and still is very innovative.

Initially, her ecological hermeneutic leads her to uncover and emphasize the function of 'death' within the choice and life of celibacy, recognizing that it "is not in opposition to other lives but performs a different function in the web of life." [2] Death, is, however more pervasive and pernicious. Of this Jan says that "(h)umanity's capacity for death-dealing not only threatens itself, the planet and the cosmos; it also signals a death of God. It disclaims any cosmic purpose in life beyond what is already nearly destroyed." [3] In the face of such ultimate destruction, Jan concludes that celibacy "requires a clearer identification of its meaning in relation to life as well as death." [4]

She provides this by turning to figures such as Teilhard de Chardin and Thomas Berry. Berry, she claims regards "the ultimate task of humanity" to be "conversion from an instrumental and utilitarian concern about what physically supports us to a total involvement with the world of life." [5] This, she suggests, should enable the experience of celibacy to be understood more ecologically.

Such an ecological view of celibacy is not a new thing, Jan reminds us. Hildegard of Bingen, Francis of Assisi, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and Teilhard de Chardin, for example, all demonstrated "profound ecological awareness" which informed their reflections on their celibate lives. [6] We are now in a new place and a new time with new challenges which Jan lays out: Lack of generativity has a social and cosmic purpose yet to be communicated more clearly by women celibates. Their private option could develop in them an awareness of a cosmic concern active beyond the self. It could expand the celibate responsibility beyond narrow immediate concerns like one's person, place, and the present, to include the communal, cosmic, and the future. [7]

Indeed, we have barely begun such expansion of celibate responsibility in an ecological age and so Jan's work goes with us into the future as a profound challenge.

This turns us now, with a more developed ecological reading lens, to the Matthean text and the short verse, Matt 19:12 which belongs in the context of Jesus' teaching on divorce (19:3-8) and the subsequent discussion with the disciples (19:9-12) on divorce, remarriage and chastity. ...*(continue reading online)*

Read the full lecture online:
vox.divinity.edu.au/news/a-tapestry-of-woven-threads/



Confluence: a pioneer in the emergence of meditation research in Australia

Dr Cullan Joyce
Confluence and Catholic Theological College

Inspired by the Mind and Life Organisation, in 2016 Confluence developed a plan for a conference that would examine the relationship between different traditions of meditation. This idea would be a catalyst for a collaboration with The Meditation Association of Australia. Together we organised a conference that provided a platform for meditation research and practice to move out of the universities and meditation halls and into a public event. The University of Divinity provided the support for us to initiate this event, the full breadth, and consequence of this initial idea extended far beyond what any of us anticipated.

After nearly two years of planning, on the afternoon of Friday 20 July 2018, hundreds of participants gathered to learn about, practice and apply meditation. The conference began, officially, with Dr Rick Hanson discussing how meditation helps provides conditions for Resilient Happiness, as he described it. The energy of this initial gathering persisted through the three days of the Australian Meditation Conference. This same energy has concentrated efforts and research in Meditation in Australia and created a platform for the community of meditation researchers in a variety of different perspectives to collaborate and plan.

The Australian Meditation Conference was the first of its kind and the largest conference examining Meditation research and practice in Australia. The conference had 62 speakers and 288 attendees over the course of the three days, with two international speakers, Dr Rick Hanson, and Ms Robin Carnes as well as several world-class researchers, teachers, and practitioners based in Australia.

Confluence played an essential role in providing the initial concept for the event, organising funding and establishing some of the partnerships that made the event possible, including the venue partner, Australian Catholic University, with enormous support from the

Dean of Theology, Professor Dermot Nestor and Dr Anita Ray. Confluence also contributed to organising content and provided an entire stream, consisting of nine speakers.

The conference brought together researchers, scholars, expert teachers, dedicated practitioners, and provided a platform for meditation research in Australia and set the paradigm for future events, including another national conference in 2020. Almost by accident, Confluence has found itself at the forefront of meditation research and practice in Australia. The University has established itself in the minds of the participants and speakers as deeply connected to the study and practice of meditation in Australia.

Confluence contributed two plenary speakers: Associate Professor John Dupuche (Catholic Theological College and Australian Catholic University) and Dr Nicholas Van Dam (University of Melbourne). John spoke on how Hindu Tantric traditions complement Christian meditation. Nicholas, a psychologist, discussed some issues in contemporary meditation research that are challenging the dominance of Mindfulness. These lectures educated and challenged the audience. We also provided a full stream of lectures examining a variety of different approaches to meditation. Our speakers represented an important voice at the conference. We offered variation from the focus on contemporary mindfulness perspectives.

Professor Wendy Mayer spoke on traditions of medicine in Ancient Greece and described how spiritual and ascetic practices played an essential role in the maintaining of health and well-being. Dr Pak Wah Lai spoke of the importance of Meditation in Chinese medicine and described how the Chinese perspective represents a legitimate approach to health.

Professor Paul Beirne (Heart of Life) gave a profound lecture discussing Choe Je-u (Su-un), the founder of the Korean Religion and spiritual practice of Cheondogyo. Associate Professor Matthew Sharpe (Deakin University) addressed the role of meditation for Ancient and contemporary Stoics and demonstrated the relevance of these traditions today. I discussed how religious traditions of meditation, mainly Christian and Buddhist, require the practitioner to take risks; I discussed how this could provide insights into the practice of meditation today.

Confluence speakers also offered perspectives from the Fine Arts from artist Dr Elizabeth Woods, who addressed the role of meditation in her practice. The renowned Australian Chinese poet Ouyang Yu gave an absorbing discussion on the role of meditation in the practice of poetry, using his poems as examples.

I was proud of the standard of our speakers; I was also proud of how our voice provided a critical contrast and complement to the contemporary and scientific focus taken by the majority of speakers.

The conference organiser, Karen Stone (Meditation Australia), commented on the important role we played in providing depth and breadth to the conference. I am also proud of how we have been able to place the University at the heart of this emerging field and demonstrated the value of Religious institutions and perspectives to meditation in Australia. Confluence is collaborating with MAA and leading researchers, such as Nicholas Van Dam, to extend the benefits of the conference into further research outcomes and fruitful public engagement.

The conference was an excellent beginning to the emergence of Meditation research in Australia, and we are looking forward to contributing to the development of a meditative culture in Australia, and hopefully internationally.



Banner: Participants at the Australian Meditation Conference.
Below: Dr Cullan Joyce at the Confluence/University of Divinity information table in the conference foyer.
Photos provided by Meditation Australia.

A Christology of Religions

The seventy-third book of Reverend Professor Gerald O'Collins SJ AC was launched at the Catholic Theological College on Wednesday 19 September 2018. At the launch, Professor O'Collins reflected on this book and his hope for its contribution to discussion and understanding between religions.

Read it online:

vox.divinity.edu.au/news/a-christology-of-religions/



Research Publications

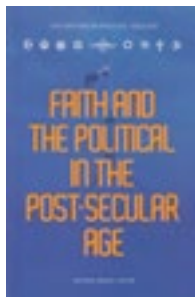


Graham Buxton, Chris Mulherin and Mark Worthing, *God and Science: In classroom and pulpit* (Morning Star Publishing, 2018)

ISBN: 9781532659522

Controversies about science and faith – especially debates about creation and evolution – continue to engage Christian teachers and pastors. How do they deal with such questions and respond with answers that are both informed and intelligent? This book acknowledges that science can be an

uncomfortable topic in Christian schools and churches. The authors recognise that teachers and pastors need a framework for thinking through the hype surrounding these topics so that they can identify the genuine core concerns of people of faith. Written by three highly respected and experienced educators and pastors, the book will assist in creating a conversation and dialogue on how to discuss science and faith in an open and honest way. It will also help teachers and pastors in their ministry of shaping the minds and hearts of members of the Christian community.



Robert Dixon 'Post-Secularity and Australian Catholics' in Anthony Maher (ed.), *Faith and the Political in a Post-Secular Age* (Coventry Press, 2018).

ISBN: 9780648230311

This chapter examines what is meant by the term post-secular, the extent to which it can be applied to Australian Catholics, and whether it enhances understanding of contemporary Catholicism and the challenges it faces. The major part of the chapter sketches twelve key

features of the contemporary Catholic community, all of which are informed by demographic or sociological research. This is followed, first, by an account of selected newspaper articles that illustrate that the intellectual debate in Australia remains firmly secular as opposed to post-secular and then by a discussion of the disjunction between the Catholic Church's traditional approach to morality and the approach taken by many contemporary Australians, including many Catholics, arising largely from the change in Western culture over the last fifty years. Finally, the chapter returns to the question of whether and to what extent the term post-secularity can be applied to Australian Catholics.



'Why do they belong? Factors influencing sense of belonging in Australian Catholic parishes', in Andrew Village and Ralph Hood (eds), *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion* (Brill, 2018)

ISSN: 10468064

Research has consistently identified a strong sense of belonging among attenders as an important component of parish and congregational vitality. What factors contribute to Mass attenders' sense of belonging to their

parish community? Does it depend only on the personal characteristics of the attenders, or do the characteristics of the parish and even the diocese also have an impact? This article explores these questions by employing a multilevel modelling approach to questionnaire responses from Mass attenders in a national random sample of Catholic parishes across Australia that took part in the 2006 National Church Life Survey. Findings include that Mass attenders' country of birth has an important influence on their sense of belonging, and also that parish

priests can influence Mass attenders' sense of belonging in a very powerful way, not only through their style of presiding at the liturgy but also through their ability to communicate a clear vision for the parish, their ability to get people to work together, and a readiness to encourage parishioners to put their gifts and skills to use for the good of the parish.

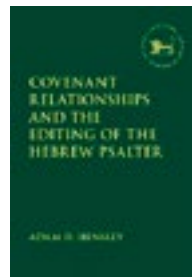


Jan Morgan and Graeme Garrett, *On The Edge: A-Way with the Ocean* (Morning Star Publishing, 2018).

ISBN: 9780648232452

On the Edge: A-Way with the Ocean, is an exploration of eco-spirituality in a world facing ecological crisis. Based on a practice of meditative attention, and taking the ocean as a point of entry, the book explores the possibility of nurturing our Australian love of

the sea (and nature in general) in a new way. Such a practice begins to transform our interaction with the oceans from exploitation toward cooperation. More radically the book asks: can we risk reclaiming our deep inheritance, moving from the story of ocean as 'object' to ocean as a communicative, sacred presence? The authors, formed within the Christian tradition, engage in conversation with poets, theologians, philosophers, scientists and Indigenous wisdoms. *On the Edge* was published by Morning Star press in July 2018 and is available on line.

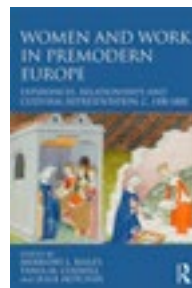


Adam Hensley, *Covenant Relationships and the Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2018).

ISBN: 9780567679109

An examination of the relationship between the Davidic covenant and Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants reflected in the editorial shape and shaping of the Masoretic Psalter. Hensley proposes that the editors of the Psalter understood these covenants as

a theological unity, whose common fulfillment centres on an anticipated royal successor to David. To test this hypothesis Hensley examines the Psalter's references and allusions to covenant(s) in light of editorial evidence.



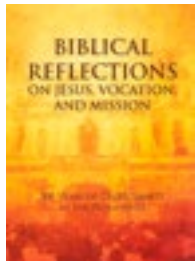
Merridee Bailey, Tania Colwell and Julie Hotchin (eds), *Women and Work in Premodern Europe: Experiences, Relationships and Cultural Representation, c. 1100-1800* (Routledge Taylor & Francis Ltd, 2018).

ISBN: 9781138202023

This book re-evaluates and extends understandings about how work was conceived and what it could entail for women in the premodern period in Europe from c.

1100 to c. 1800. It does this by building on the impressive growth in literature on women's working experiences, and by adopting new interpretive approaches that expand received assumptions about what constituted 'work' for women. While attention to the diversity of women's contributions to the economy has done much to make the breadth of women's experiences of labour visible, this volume takes a more expansive conceptual approach to the notion of work and considers the social and cultural dimensions in which activities were construed and valued as work. This interdisciplinary collection thus advances concepts of work that encompass cultural activities in addition to more traditional economic understandings of work as

employment or labour for production. The chapters reconceptualise and explore work for women by asking how the working lives of historical women were enacted and represented, and analyse the relationships that shaped women's experiences of work across the European premodern period.



Francis Moloney SDB aM FAHA, *Biblical Reflections on Jesus, Vocation and Mission: 500 Years of Christianity in the Philippines* (Don Boscoe Centre of Studies and Catholic Biblical Association of the Philippines, 2018).

The Prophet Isaiah once cried out: "The Word of God will stand forever!" (Isaiah 40:8). For many decades the Church has steadily developed a greater appreciation of the restless

role of the Word of God in the Catholic Tradition. We are at the beginnings of a new era of Catholicism, focused upon the challenging centrality of the Word of God in the Church's life and mission. Professor Francis J. Moloney wrote the studies found in this book to support and stimulate this new era. The essays are deliberately associated with the preparation of the Filipino Church for the celebration of 500 year of Christianity in the Philippines.



Edwina Murphy, *The Bishop and the Apostle* (De Gruyter, 2018).

ISBN: 9783110600162

This study examines how Cyprian of Carthage, the most significant bishop in the early Latin tradition, appropriates the canonical Paul. Cyprian, like Paul, is a pastoral theologian, so his pastoral concerns provide a helpful lens through which to study his use of the apostle. Examining Cyprian's

use of Paul in these areas allows us to move beyond a simple literal/allegorical paradigm to appreciate the wide range of reading strategies used by Cyprian. It also provides a different perspective on Paul than the one arrived at by privileging a handful of texts. This study of Cyprian's appropriation of Pauline texts therefore illuminates the interplay between text, context and theology in his exegesis. It also deepens our understanding of the early North African hermeneutical tradition and the early reception of Paul.

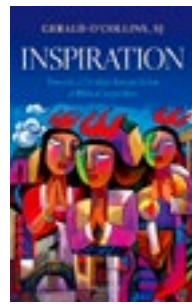


Glen O'Brien, *Wesleyan-Holiness Churches in Australia: Hallelujah under the Southern Cross* (Routledge, 2018).

ISBN: 9780815393207

Most Wesleyan-Holiness churches started in the US, developing out of the Methodist roots of the nineteenth-century Holiness Movement. The American origins of the Holiness movement have been charted in some depth, but there is currently little detail on how it developed outside of the US. This

book seeks to redress this imbalance by giving a history of North American Wesleyan-Holiness churches in Australia, from their establishment in the years following the Second World War, as well as of The Salvation Army, which has nineteenth-century British origins. David Bundy of the Manchester Wesley Research Centre and New York Theological Seminary has described the book as 'an important contribution to the study of world Christianity with implications for the study and analysis of churches around the world' and as 'a veritable scholarly "tour de force."' Historian Dr Geoff Treloar (Australian College of Theology), in launching the book in Sydney, referred to it as 'the authoritative account of the Australian churches in the Wesleyan-holiness tradition [and] a model of how serious historical investigation should be conducted...It undoubtedly takes an honourable place in the line-up of new books that makes 2018 probably the most prolific year in the religious historiography of Australia.'



Gerald O'Collins SJ AC, *Inspiration: Towards a Christian Interpretation of Biblical Inspiration* (Oxford University Press, 2018)

ISBN: 9780198824183

Inspiration: Towards a Christian Interpretation of Biblical Inspiration anchors its study of inspiration firmly in the Scriptures and examines the inspired nature of the Bible and its inspiring impact. Gerald O'Collins begins by examining classical view of inspiration expounded by Karl Barth and Raymond

Collins. He takes up the inspired origin of the Old Testament, where earlier books helped to inspire later books, before moving to the New Testament, which throughout shows the inspiring impact of the inherited Scriptures—both in direct citations and in many echoes. The work then investigates the Bible's inspiring influence on Christian worship, preaching, teaching, the visual arts, literature, and life. After a chapter that clarifies the interrelationship between divine revelation, tradition, and inspiration, two chapters expound ten characteristics of biblical inspiration, with special emphasis on the inspiring quality of the Bible. O'Collins explains a major consequence of inspiration, biblical truth, and the grounds on which the Church 'canonized' the Scriptures. After spelling out three approaches to biblical interpretation (the authorial intention, the role of readers, and the primacy of the text itself), the book ends by setting out ten principles for engaging theologically with the Scriptures. An epilogue highlights two achievements of the book. By carefully distinguishing inspiration from divine revelation and biblical truth, it can deliver readers from false problems. This work also underlines the inspiring effects of the Scriptures as part of the Holy Spirit's work of inspiration.



Randall Prior, *Vanuatu Women in Leadership Vol 2: Development* (Gospel Vanuatu Books, 2018)

The recent emergence of women in leadership roles is challenging all cultures and churches across the South Pacific, overturning the assumed cultural roles of both women and of men. Through the medium of oral interview this volume documents the voices of those women in Vanuatu who were the first to

break new ground in leadership. These are the brave pioneers who are inspiring the next generation of women to move into roles that were, until recently, the domain of men. Some of the men currently in leadership also offer their own responses to what they see happening. This is a project of the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu in response to the recognition that this issue is of national importance for both the church and the society. In 2013, the church adopted the project as a priority and co-opted Randall Prior to facilitate the process from oral interview to publication. This is the second of what will be a series of at least four volumes.



Mark Worthing, *Iscairiot* (Morning Star Publishing, 2018)

ISBN: 9780648376576

Judas Iscairiot is the most infamous and most perplexing character in religious history. He accepts the offer to follow Jesus, hoping he might be the long-awaited Messiah who will liberate his people from Roman rule. But in the end, his actions seal both their fates. What led Judas to betray his friend and teacher, then fall into complete despair? If Judas' father was

Simon the Pharisee of Bethany, then Judas was likely the cousin of Martha, Mary and Lazarus. A very different picture suddenly emerges of the events in the last weeks of the life of Judas Iscairiot. It is a story as tragic as it is compelling.

UD Academic one of Australia's top thinkers

For the second consecutive year, Reverend Dr Robyn Whitaker will be included in the forthcoming publication, *The Conversation Yearbook 2018: 50 standout articles from Australia's top thinkers*. This collection of essays, including Dr Whitaker's *Jesus wasn't white: he was a brown skinned, Middle-Eastern Jew. Here's why that matters*, collates the best of the authoritative journalism for which The Conversation is renowned, and the University of Divinity congratulates Robyn on her success.

The Conversation is an independent source of news and views, sourced from the academic and research community and delivered directly to the public. Dr Whitaker, Senior Lecturer in New Testament at Pilgrim Theological College, regularly contributes articles to this forum, reaching an extensive international readership. In August 2017, her article *To Christian's arguing 'no' on marriage equality: the Bible is not decisive* reached an online readership of 585,000, with hundreds participating in the comments. Since contributing her first article to The Conversation in June 2017, Dr Whitaker has amassed a total of well over 1.5 million readers.

When asked about her experience writing for The Conversation, Robyn said:

"I've been writing for The Conversation for just over a year now and it has been the most helpful and pleasant publishing experience I've ever had. Their pitch process makes us wordy academics hone ideas into 50 or 100 words, but I've grown to appreciate just how much that helps clarify one's thinking. If a pitch is accepted, the editors work with you at every step of the way. Unlike major newspapers who often give no feedback at all, The Conversation editors work with you to make sure your article is in the best form it can be. This may include suggesting a less technical term or reorganising a sentence. Authors get to approve final copy which means you get to participate in decisions over images, titles, and any editing that has happened. I can honestly say I've never felt uncomfortable with changes that were made and it is a very collaborative process that has improved my writing.

For those who like statistics and graphs, the author's "dashboard" means you can track who is reading, tweeting, or sharing your articles. The Conversation moderate the comments too, which reduces the kind of anonymous online abuse that can happen in other places.

Writing shorter articles in The Conversation has helped me find my voice as a writer and hone a style that is more readable. I'm hoping it will mean my next book has a bit more of that approachable tone which is so often lost in my more technical academic writing."

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