



# Loreto Friends *Networker*



Welcome to our first newsletter *Issue 1 Aug/Sept 2006*

Welcome to the first IBVM Loreto Sisters Province Office newsletter. We recently established a communications office and look forward to bringing you regular updates about the works and ministries of the Loreto Sisters. We begin by sharing some news about our sisters and our recent experiences in Timor. The circulation of this newsletter will gradually expand to our colleagues and friends, via an option on our website. Please share our news with your staff, colleagues, parents or students via your own publications. You can access regularly updated news and calendar events any time at [www.loreto.org.au](http://www.loreto.org.au). Happy reading! *Sr Chris Burke*

## From the Provincial

### *Reflections on Timor Leste*

For one not used to traveling to areas with traveler alerts attached to them, going into Timor Leste in the last month was a sobering experience. I had been to Dili and Baucau in May 2005, and while the results of the earlier crisis were all too obvious, one could allow oneself the hope that the future would be brighter. Not this time. On arrival the army tents, the refugee camps in the airport, religious houses, and church grounds all look set in for the long haul. Further into Dili, more burnt out houses give substance to the fears and loss of so many.

Why was I there? In 2005, as a result of a call from our international leadership team, every 'province' or region of our world wide institute was asked to have 'the courage to move'. Often people wonder what difference there is between various groups of religious sisters. Those who know us closely know that we all share a great deal, but that each group also has some distinguishing marks, which we consider to be specific gifts for the whole church.



L-R: Sr Anne Byrne, Sr Chris Burke, Sr Diaan Stuart.

Usually these differences flow from the spirituality and concerns of the person or group who began each congregation, and they work together to show the many facets of the Gospel message of Jesus. Our group, the Loreto Sisters or Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary as we are officially called, were challenged by this 'courage to move' call to offer our particular 'take' on the gospel to a part of the church which had not yet had the opportunity to experience it.

Our Australian province thought that Timor Leste, so close a neighbour, coming recently from such a traumatic upheaval and with a very young population, might be a place we could make some first steps.

It did call for courage from the three sisters whom we have missioned there. All had many years of service behind them, all had to begin Tetum from scratch, and two had never worked in a foreign country. All had experience in our large and well established schools here, and one sister also had experience working in refugee camps in northern Uganda.



L-R: Sr Anne Kelly and Sr Diaan Stuart.

Two sisters work in partnership with the Marist Brothers in their Teachers' College in Baucau, while another sister looked at the possibility of working with literacy groups at a more village level. Two had Australian Volunteers International backing as their jobs were ones that qualified for that support. Two left in February, and the third in late March. By May, Sr Anne Byrne, a musician, had to return to Australia due to an injury sustained on a boat while traveling to Oecussi. Medical attention back home was needed if her leg was to heal.

Then the civil troubles started. Sr Anne Kelly in Dili had to be evacuated at the end of May because her workplace was closed, and the house she was living in, in Comorro district, was in the midst of the burning and fighting. Baucau was preserved from the violence, though the town grew enormously as families fled back there from the Dili upheavals. Sr Diaan Stuart opted to stay on in Baucau and together with the skeleton staff that remained, worked to ensure that the students studying for their teaching degree were enabled to finish their course.

The two Annes returned once the major outbreaks in Dili died down. I joined them on July 20<sup>th</sup> and also met with the bishops there to explain our presence and listen to the needs with which we could assist.

There is great pain, fear, anger and frustration fuelling the troubles there. No one side has the answers. The Centre for Dialogue or La Trobe University, which opened with fanfare in the National Gallery of Victoria on August 15<sup>th</sup> is sorely needed in Timor, to help people find ways to address deep fissures between groups. We would hope that in some ways we can be with the Timorese people as they address these issues, but we also know we will learn so much from them- their heroic ability to begin again, the courage that so many have shown, their joy in small things and their simple lifestyle.

It was a privilege to meet a number of Timorese people and to be with them as they ask how they can begin again to educate for peace, democracy and hope in land with few industries and little to offer to those seeking employment.

While so many are Catholic, like all of us in our own situations, other pressures can push gospel values to one side. As Australians we all have a role in offering support at this critical time.

**Sr Chris Burke**

## ***General Congregation 2006***

**The IBVM Loreto General Congregation will be held in Peru from 3 to 26 September 2006.**

**The Congregation is an international meeting for delegates of all Loreto provinces. Delegates will gather at this event to elect the new IBVM Loreto international leadership team that will guide the IBVM mission in the spirit of Mary Ward over the next eight years.**

**The congregation will be a time for theological reflection; to listen to what God is asking of us, to reflect on the Gospel and the values and vision of Mary Ward; and to draw strength from the challenges in our journey.**

**Delegates will discuss key concerns and issues, review mission movement and achievements and will look forward with hope and prayer in order to set new priorities that will guide our mission in the future.**

**We ask for your prayers during this important time and look forward to keeping you informed of the congregation outcomes.**

**There will be regular updates at [www.loreto.org.au](http://www.loreto.org.au) as well as the IBVM Generalate website [www.ibvm.org](http://www.ibvm.org)**

## Sisters in the spotlight

### *An inspirational 70 year commitment*

Sister Claudia Murphy recently celebrated an inspirational 70 years since entering the Loreto Convent in Ballarat.

During her active service Sr Claudia worked at various Loreto Colleges and convents across Australia including Mary's Mount Ballarat, Loreto Mandeville Hall Toorak, Loreto Portland, St Mary's University College in Melbourne, Loreto Kirribilli in Sydney and Loreto Marryatville SA.

Sr Claudia has remained faithful to the promise she made to God in 1936. Her motto in life has been 'In you Lord, I have hoped'. She continues to be an inspiration to us all.



Left:  
Sr Claudia  
Murphy at her  
70<sup>th</sup>  
anniversary  
celebrations.

Photo:  
Courtesy of  
the Ballarat  
Courier.

For more information about Sr Claudia please visit [www.loreto.org.au](http://www.loreto.org.au) News.

### *Loreto sister named Citizen of the Year 2006*

Sister Ruth Winship has been named City of Stonnington Citizen of the Year 2006 for her services in Education. Sr Ruth received her award at a ceremony hosted by Stonnington Mayor, Cr Anne O'Shea.

Sr Ruth attended Loreto College in Brisbane and completed her high school education at Loreto Mandeville Hall Toorak. She commenced her novitiate program at Mary's Mount Loreto Convent Ballarat in 1937

A Loreto Sister for over 60 years, Sr Ruth has held distinguished educational positions including Principal of Loreto Mandeville Hall Toorak, Superior of Loreto Kirribilli Sydney and Deputy Principal of St Mary's University College in Melbourne.

Sr Ruth's values of social justice, spirituality and education have made her a powerful advocate for those in need and a compassionate carer and support for thousands of young people.



Left:  
Sr Ruth  
Winship.

Photo:  
Courtesy of  
Stonnington  
City Council.

For more information about Sr Ruth including a list of the other winners please visit [www.loreto.org.au](http://www.loreto.org.au) News.

## Farewells

### *Celebrating the life of Sr Maria Welch*

We recently farewelled Sister Maria Welch, after a brave battle with motor neurone disease. Two years ago Sr Maria celebrated her golden jubilee as a Loreto Sister and in recent years she was involved in accompanying people's spiritual journey in Christian Life Community Groups.

Sr Maria was born on 1 October 1942 and entered her novitiate in Ballarat in 1954. Originally from Cairns, she worked in a number of schools and parishes across Australia. Her warm smile and gentle presence with people touched the hearts of all that knew her.

Her funeral at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Coorparoo, was a wonderful celebration of her life. She was deeply loved and this was beautifully portrayed on the day. Our thanks to all who helped in the preparation and in particular to Loreto College Coorparoo, under the guidance of Carmel Dunne, for supporting such an outstanding tribute.

## School news

### *Nedlands renovations*

On 13 August Loreto Nedlands celebrated the opening and blessing of its newly refurbished teaching and learning facilities.

After three years of planning, the old community areas of Loreto Nedlands are now attractive, comfortable and modern facilities areas that will nurture student development and education and will enhance their learning environment.

Various rooms were named after Loreto Sisters to acknowledge their valuable and important contributions to education and the community in Perth over the years.

These include:

- Kathleen Brennan Early Childhood Learning Centre
- Mother de Sales Field Senior Learning Centre
- Flynn Senior Learning Arcade
- Mulcahy Library
- Mother John Moore Music Studio
- Hubery Courtyard
- Mary Ward Room
- Anne Carter Archive Centre
- Lucy Stansfield Year 7
- Stella Fleming Year 6
- Cyril Allen Year 5
- Theodore Gillick Music Cell
- Ignatio Hallion Music Cell

### *Book launch*

"A School with Spirit" by Susan Emilsen and Margaret Callaghan ibvm. was launched on Friday 11th August at the Gonzaga Barry Centre, Loreto Kirribilli.

Mail Orders: \$45 each (Postage/handling \$10)

Phone Loreto Kirribilli on: (02) 9957 4722

Right: Sr Margaret Callaghan at the book launch.  
Photo: Courtesy Sr Susan Daily.



## From the archives

### *Young Christian Students' History Project*

**We have had a request from the former National Chaplain of the YCS, Fr Paul Kane, for any memories of the activities of the YCS in Loreto schools either as students or teachers.**

The Young Christian Students' Movement was established in Australia in 1943 but had evolved from other Catholic Action movements, particularly the Junior Catholic Women's League (JCWL) or National Catholic Girls' Movement. In Loreto Schools the first mention is in 1945 (in the "Loreto" magazine). Every year the activities of the YCS are recorded in the school magazine.

We have some very interesting records in our archives relating to the JCWL as M. Brigid Jones kept up a correspondence with Christine,



Countess de Hemptinne, who was the International President of the League.

The JCWL was established in Australia by Fr E Corish S.J., Parish Priest of Norwood, SA in 1929. Loreto schools joined immediately and Loreto students were on the first executive. Charitable works, spiritual formation, debating clubs, study groups, excursions, sport and reading circles were established.

A highlight of the movement was the Educational Congress in 1936 which was attended by Countess de Hemptinne as International President of the Catholic Action for Girls. You may also remember the badge, triangular in shape in two shades of blue enamel with the Southern Cross and the inscription JCWL.

Left: Education Congress 1936, Loreto Marryatville.

If you have any information about Loreto activities with the YCS or its predecessor, JCWL, please contact:

**Robin Scott Province Archivist**  
**Phone: (03)53388322**  
**Email: [rscott@loreto.vic.edu.au](mailto:rscott@loreto.vic.edu.au)**

For further information about archives go to [www.loreto.org.au](http://www.loreto.org.au)



## Contact us

We hope you enjoyed this first edition of **Loreto Friends Networker**. Please take the time to fill out the short questionnaire to help us bring you relevant, timely and interesting news.

If you would like to make a contribution to a future edition please contact Sophia Ljaskevic, Communications Officer at [communications@loreto.org.au](mailto:communications@loreto.org.au) or on (03) 9249 3208.



## More news

For more information on the stories within this newsletter as well other news, calendar events and stories visit our website at [www.loreto.org.au](http://www.loreto.org.au) . Some calendar events and news stories include:

- **The Late Mother Ignatio Hallion remembered**
- **Loreto history highlighted at Ballarat Heritage Festival**
- **Recollection Day 17 September**
- **Social Justice Sunday 24 September**
- **Federation 2007**