



Loreto Friends *Networker*

Dear Friends,

Loreto Friends Networker

Issue 11
September 2009

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Loreto Centre

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This Loreto Networker gives me the opportunity to congratulate and thank the many Loreto women and men across Australia who have made such great efforts to celebrate and make known Mary Ward's story of fidelity, freedom and integrity. A wider circle of friends is growing, of people who are surprised at and moved by her story and are proud to be part of the long tradition she began. This Networker will share some of those events, and our Loreto schools, colleges, past-students and sisters have generously supported and hosted so many activities. Many hidden people have acted to ensure it all happens. Thank you to each one.

Next week over 100 Australian pilgrims head for Rome. They will join 1000 people from around the world who will meet, make connections and celebrate the 400 years of education, action for justice and dedicated service of those who have joined Mary Ward in the footsteps of Jesus, who always remains the compass point guiding our lives.

A much smaller group of IBVM sisters will remain to participate in a special Congregation, a meeting to finalise the Constitutions of our Institute. Basically our Constitutions are the ones Ignatius wrote for the Society of Jesus, and along with that we will take a second volume encapsulating modern theology and the expectations for us as religious women today. Many of you might know that our own Australian Sr Deirdre Browne has written this text which will enhance the lives of women in every one of our provinces.

You might wonder at such activity when so many sisters are ageing, and only a few women are joining us here in Australia. Is this a 'last hurrah'? Trusting that the insights into discipleship that Mary Ward lived are relevant to the church today, we hope God will continue to call

women to form the core of this tradition, and also invite many others to join us in carrying her vision into the future. Religious life has brought fulfilment to many, and while it is clearly at a point of change, religious congregations are becoming rallying points for many seeking to be in touch with a spiritual tradition. You are some of those people, and with us are part of Mary Ward's expanding circle of friends.

A Carmelite sister, who was key-note speaker at the American Catholic Theological Society this year, suggests that it is only when all our expectations have been swept from us that we learn the true nature of hope, and can be open to God's ways and God's desire to do something new, beyond our imaginings. She was suggesting that in this time in the Catholic Church, when many people feel a loss of hope, it may be the beginning of true hope in God. I think Mary Ward lived that kind of hope and her life challenges us to look beyond what is now, and trust in a God of surprises. **Chris Burke *ibvm***

Below: Mary's Mount College Councillors, 1913. Turn to page 2 to view photographs from the July 19 photographic exhibition.





Loreto Celebrating Mary Ward – 400 years

Events Round Up



Above Left: Mary's Mount College Councillors 1913

Above Right: Recreation Dancing 1899

Below Left: Criticism Lesson Central Catholic Training College Albert Park 1914

Right: Sts Peter and Paul Cooking Class c1958

Eucharist and Photographic Exhibition, Melbourne, Vic.

Over 500 sisters, friends and families joined us in a wonderful celebration of 125 years of Loreto in Australia at a Eucharist held at St Francis Church, Melbourne, on Sunday 19 July.

Fr Tom Knowles sss presided with an atmosphere of generous welcome. The welcome to country with didgeridoo accompaniment grounded us and provided a spiritual opening to a wonderful celebration.

Christine Burke ibvm, Provincial Leader, gave the opening reflection, allowing us all the opportunity to reflect on and be moved by the 'Glory' vision theme and to acknowledge that we are all recipients of Mary Ward's gifts.

A 50 voice choir and string quartet under Deirdre Browne ibvm, previous Loreto Australia Provincial and well known composer of liturgical music, beautifully highlighted the significance of Mary Ward's 'Glory Vision'.



A string quartet and organ accompanied an SATB Choir formed specially for the occasion.

The Mass setting was the Missa Magis of Christopher Willcock SJ, one of the world's leading Catholic composers of liturgical music, who arranged and composed other new music for the liturgy; Mozart's Laudamus Te and Vivaldi's Gloria 1st movt highlighted the theme of Glory.

Thanks to the efforts of Loreto Archivist Robin Scott Loreto Toorak Heritage and

Records Manager Steve Stefanopoulos and Josephine Fagan (designer) a magnificent photographic exhibition highlighting Mary Ward and the story of Loreto was displayed in St Francis Pastoral Centre. Some of the photographs from the exhibition are provided on this page.

More information:
http://www.loreto.org.au/news/article_display.cfm?article_id=316





Loreto Celebrating Mary Ward – 400 years

Celebrating Mary Ward in Three Springs, WA.

A Eucharistic Celebration was held at St Paul's Church, Three Springs, on 26 July to honour 400 years of the foundation of the Loreto Sisters by Mary Ward and to acknowledge the Loreto presence in the Geraldton Diocese.

It was the culmination of 12 months planning by Good Samaritan, Anna Warlow, who works in the central west district together with Sr Ellen Moran.

A dinner was held in the Shire Hall on the Saturday night - a joyous occasion attended by more than a hundred people, who came from the surrounding Communities of Coorow, Carnamah, Morawa and Perenjori to join the local Community.

Visitors from Perth and interstate were present plus representatives of many religious orders - Our Lady of the Missions, Dominican Sisters who have worked in the area for many years, Josephites, RSCJ's, and of course, Good Samaritans together with some Loreto Past Pupils and friends. There was a wonderful spirit helped along by excellent food and wine, great music, as well as items from local talent and the community choir (who have produced a CD under Sr Anna's direction, called "Crowing in the Mid West"!)

Mass on Sunday at St Paul's Church was concelebrated with Father Michael Morissey, (who has two sisters Past Pupils of Loreto Claremont) the Principal Celebrant, along with the newly appointed Abbott of New Norcia and several other priests from the Geraldton Diocese. At the Mass a beautiful banner (right) was presented to the Loreto Sisters. It was made by members of the local Indigenous Community and depicts a map of Australia, encircled by the Rainbow Serpent with the spirit of Mary Ward coming to this land with the arrival of the first Loreto Sisters to Ballarat, Victoria and then reaching out in many directions, as

illustrated by beautiful dot-painted arcs.

Mass was followed with a special cake cut by Sr Leonie Peterson, surrounded by Srs Margie O'Sullivan, Marg Finlay, Margie Bourke, Ellen Moran, Kathleen Brennan, and Francine Roberts.

It was a wonderful weekend of tribute to



the work of these very special followers of Mary Ward. Thank you Sr Anna, for sharing your many creative talents and making it such a wonderful occasion.

By Marilyn Kennedy Lincoln (Class of '55 Loreto Claremont), past member of the Loreto Nedlands School Council.

The Loreto Sisters worked in Three Springs for about 5 years. Sr Leonie Peterson's love for the area helped pave the way for the sister's work there. Sr Kathleen Brennan worked in Geraldton from 2001 to 2006, running development activities with women, book clubs, prayer groups and prison visitations; Francine Roberts spent about 5 years in Three Springs from 2001 and was soon joined by Ellen Moran and Mary Roarty who worked there from 2001—2004 and 2002—2004 respectively, providing Eucharistic services.

Events Round Up

Celebrating at Loreto Marryatville, Adelaide, SA.

Loreto Marryatville, Adelaide, combined Mary Ward 400 celebrations with Social Justice Week (14-18 September).

Highlights during the special week included: Mary Ward's Women's Mass; Justice Lectures; the Social Justice Expo; the '1609' Dinner, the 'Just Soul' breakfast and a student-led "Mission Day".

At the 'Just Soul' breakfast, a medal was presented to Rachel Burke (Year 12), (sponsored by the University of Adelaide), for her outstanding contribution to works of social justice. She was voted by her peers to have shown 'freedom justice, sincerity' throughout her schooling.

The staff, school council and sisters also enjoyed a '1609 dinner' in the school hall. Sr Josie Jeffrey set up a display in the Cathedral Hall drawing attention to the 400 years. Srs Janet Palafox and Christine Burke gave 'public lectures' on the life of Mary Ward and Mary Ward International Australia. The week concluded with the 'Be More Evening' on Mission Day for students - an opportunity for students to come together in solidarity: 'to be more together, be just, be reflective, be giving, be in solidarity, be caring, be informed, be expressive and to *be grateful* for what we have'.

Staff have taken part in a '400 Days of Service Pledge', contributing time to social and community related volunteer work. By mid year their target had already been exceeded by 57 days!

Nancy Rodi, organiser of the week and Social Justice Co-ordinator, said, "The week exceeded my expectations - the whole community came together and took part wholeheartedly. I was particularly delighted with girls asking me "when is this happening again?"



Loreto Celebrating Mary Ward – 400 years

Launch of *Loreto in Australia* by Mary Ryllis Clark

Loreto in Australia by Mary Ryllis Clark was launched Brisbane, Sydney, Adelaide, Perth, Melbourne and Ballarat. In each state a notable woman had been invited to launch the book; one familiar with Loreto and who embodied the values and spirit of Mary Ward in some way.

In each state the audiences were captured by thoughtful and beautiful words. Author Mary Ryllis Clark said, "Every aspect of my work with the Loreto sisters over the past few years has been notable for the extraordinary trust and generosity of all those associated with this project... it has been a privilege and an inspiration for me to write their story".

Each launch event was a wonderful celebration followed by the Mary Ward Justice Lecture 2009 featur-

ing Pat Murray ibvm (Ireland) as Key Note speaker and Josephine O'Reilly (respondent). Pat spent 6 years on the General Council of the Loreto Sisters, recently completed her Ph.D and is currently Executive Director of an initiative of 80 religious orders who have responded to a call from the people of Southern Sudan and named aptly, Solidarity with Southern Sudan. Pat spoke on *Daring to imagine; willing to risk - keys for social transformation*

Josephine O'Reilly (ex Kirribilli student) has returned to Australia after writing and performing for 8 years all over the world with comedy groups. Jo has had extensive experience in television and theatre sports and corporate motivational training.

Loreto in Australia was published by UNSW Press. It is the story of women of great strength, charm and deep spirituality who work

inspiring and entertaining conference. Some highlights were:

- Claire Martin (ex student and ex Chief Minister NT) speaking about importance of empowering community to make decisions together.
- the Mary Ward Panel (ex students now in science/medical careers) who spoke about creativity and

Loreto Federation 2009 Brisbane

Federation 2009 was held at Loreto Coorparoo in Brisbane. 'Federation' is the coming together of the staff, past-students, family, and friends of Loreto schools from around Australia. It is held every two years.

The theme this year was "Creating Pathways".

Around 200 people attended the engaging, in-



towards Mary Ward's dream that 'women in time to come will do great matters'.

'..The characters, ambitions, disputes and sheer drama involved in the Australian Loretos' evolution offers both stunning surprise and inspiration.' - Geraldine Doogue

Pictured above at the Brisbane launch L-R: Loreto Provincial Christine Burke ibvm, author Mary Ryllis Clark, The Hon Justice Ann Lyons, Chair Loreto History Committee Jane Kelly ibvm.

Events Round Up

A special thank you to the wonderful women who launched the book, each college that hosted these superb events and to all who attended:

The Hon Justice Ann Lyons (Loreto Coorparoo), The Governor of NSW, Her Excellency Prof Marie Bashir (Loreto Kirribilli), Ms Meliesa Judge (Loreto Marryatville), Dr Carolyn Polizzotto (John XXIII), Her Honour Judge Elizabeth Gaynor (St Mary's College), The Hon Mary Delahunty (Loreto College Ballarat).

- inspiration, making a change in someone's life and seeing the beauty in people and their inspiration to learn.
- The Mary Ward Symposium highlighting boldness and creativity prevailing. Pat Murray speaking about social change starting from just one person and that one person can do something small to help others, and the response by Josephine O'Reilly.
- Ex-student, Aline Matta, working as a government legal advisor in Iraq, Lebanon, Israel talking about the challenges facing women and the research and policy work she has done to assist.
- The RE students and choir who performed the Mary Ward tableaux.

More information about Mary Ward 400 events:
http://www.loreto.org.au/about/mary_ward_003.html



MWI Australia - Volunteer Stories

This year, Mary Ward International Australia (MWIA) launched its volunteer program. The Program is aimed at Loreto past-pupils, staff, parents and friends of the Loreto network wishing to become more involved with Loreto works for justice and development in Australia and overseas.

Here six recently returned MWIA volunteers share their stories:

Bridget Scanlon (Loreto Toorak class of 2003) spent three weeks working with Sr Helen Parer in Alice Springs, assisting with the retail course being offered to young people by Charles Darwin University.

Bridget says that volunteering is a great way to bring things back into perspective and something that everyone should try to do. She said, "The dedication that people like Sr Helen have to the indigenous people in itself was inspiring. There are a lot of resilient people who, despite being dealt the tough cards in life, made the decision to keep on going and often these people were the most kind, generous and open people I met." She encourages future volunteers to go with an "open mind" and to be prepared to "listen before asking questions."



Georgette Scanlon, Fenina Acance and Clare Condon (Loreto Toorak class of 2006) spent time in Darjeeling, India working with the Mary Ward Social Centre (MWI Darjeeling). Their tasks included evaluating the Centre's development programs, writing funding applications and updating the Centre's website.

Fenina says that she chose to volunteer with MWIA as it offers "a unique experience with its established and extensive programmes across the world". Fenina found Lolay, a remote rural community in steep and rocky hill top areas, to be very inspiring. The community has been extremely isolated from vital resources including electricity and health care facilities. During their visit to Lolay the girls met "some amazing women who travelled hours up and down the hills assisting as paramedics or teachers at the local Loreto primary school".

Georgette (pictured left) says, "I chose to volunteer with MWIA because of its emphasis on women and children, on development instead of charity and on program design informed by the local people who are intended to benefit. I have always greatly admired Mary Ward's ability to think beyond the constraints of the society and church structure she lived in and conceive a more just society. I think this calls us to constantly be challenging the inherent prejudices in our community that we have come to accept or ignore".

The relationship she formed with the Loreto Sisters of the Darjeeling region was one of her most rewarding experiences. "While the work they did in helping the

marginalised was truly inspiring, it was the way in which they went about this work that left the greatest impact on me."

Michelle McCarty (Year 12 Coordinator at Loreto Toorak) spent one month in Nairobi, Kenya. Michelle chose MWIA because she wanted the chance to learn more about the work of the Loreto Sisters. Michelle took classes, assisted teachers and also visited Loreto community projects. She was impressed by the work the Sisters do "in tough circumstances, with few material resources and for little instant reward. They are big hearted, generous, smart and determined women". The girls she met at the Loreto schools were "lively, curious, determined and incredibly hard working young women who have great dreams for their own futures and for the future of their country".

Louise Peyton (Director of Loreto Toorak Junior School), volunteered in Peru, helping establish a library at the Fe y Algoria School in Jicamarca.

"Witnessing the way Sr Patricia McLaughlin runs the school was inspiring. The school is like a haven for so many children and they LOVE coming to school.

Louise has this advice, "Be interested in what others are doing in Loreto communities worldwide (and other agencies). Make contact. Ask questions. Read and investigate. Make others aware. Don't be content with ignoring the situation, thinking someone else will act."

This is an abridged article. The full article will be available soon in the Mandevillian School Magazine and on the Loreto website www.loreto.org.au.

Sisters in the Spotlight

Celebrating Women in the Catholic Church

Inspiring Women featured in photographic exhibition

Three religious women among the 44 inspirational women featured in a photographic exhibition to celebrate the role of women in the Catholic Church in Australia.

They are Srs Marg Finlay ibvm (Perth WA), Pauline FitzWalter SGS (Sydney, NSW) and Mary Cleary MSS (Toowoomba, Qld).

The Council for Australian Catholic Women and Bishops Commission for Church Ministry compiled the *Photographic Exhibition of Influential and Inspirational Australian Catholic Women* to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the report into the participation of women in the Catholic Church in Australia, "Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus". Each diocese in Australia was invited to nominate two women for inclusion in the exhibition.

The Church in Australia is richly blessed by talented, gifted women who seek out a voice and place in the life of the Church, according to the Office of the Participation of Women (OPW) director, Kimberley Davis.

"This exhibition highlights a small sample of the expertise, knowledge and wisdom available to the Church in Australia," she said.

"It provides an opportunity to reflect on the journey we take with women of the old and new Testaments, pioneering women of Australia, Religious Sisters, past and present who provide a voice for the voiceless and continue to be groundbreakers as women in the Church, for women in positions of leadership in Catholic education, Catholic health and Catholic so-

cial services and for wives and mothers who bring alive the message of Jesus Christ to the people they care for and nurture."

Source: *CRA Pathways*

Sr Margaret Finlay, a member of the Loreto community in WA has been the Catholic chaplain in Bandyup Women's Prison since 2002. Sr Marg along with a group of Religious women from various congregations established a night shelter in Fremantle for homeless women in Perth - "The Sisters' Place". Since July 2007 they have provided 2000 "safe sleeps" to 95 women. Sr Marg also works with groups of interfaith women who gather monthly to reflect and study.

The Exhibition will be shown in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle at Swansea Public Library – 6 to 8 October and Scone Parish Meeting Rooms – 10 and 11 October. Contact: pabanister@dodo.com.au.

Catholic Women's teleforum

The OPW runs quarterly teleforums for women, whereby guest speakers present to group of women who listen in by telephone. Sr Marg Finlay recently presented and a review was featured on the OPW website:

Yesterday we had the pleasure of hearing the story of *Building Bridges - From Prejudice to Compassion* through the eyes and experiences of Fazida Razak, Marie Therese Ryder RNDM and Marg Finlay ibvm. These three inspiring women demonstrated just what can be done by developing friendships, promoting understanding and building relationships.

Fazida, Marie Therese and Marg offered their presentation through a conversation circle, "The Circle of Peace". Throughout their conver-



Marg Finlay with Aisha Novakovich

sation participants in the forum were privileged to hear the many practical examples of building peace they have been involved in. Fazida highlighted a "Peace Sports Festival" which was implemented at John XXIII College in Perth. She spoke of the positive effect this initiative had on the young people involved. Fazida said, "When these young people 'sweat' together, tolerance becomes compassion! They discover that they share commonalities with each other and are respectful of differences."

Another significant initiative mentioned during the forum was a women's day walk in the park with Muslim, Christian and Jewish women gathering. From humble beginnings many women now gather to walk and pray for peace.

We were challenged not to be "one story people" where we only take our opinions from the media or narrow sources. We were encouraged to widen our vision and to get to know people and to build relationships.

Fazida, Marie Therese and Marg generously shared their many projects and ideas for bringing about and maintaining peace in our society.

A copy of the teleforum will be available soon on the OPW website: <http://www.opw.catholic.org.au/from-the-office/inspiring-teleforum-2.html>

Courage to Move - by Natalie Houlihan

I have never thought of myself as someone who, metaphorically speaking, had the 'courage to move' and yet I am in fact that person - asked by our Australian Province to join our small group in East Timor.

In April 2009 I arrived in Timor ready to enter another culture, learn about and immerse myself into a different way of living. I came to live in Baucau with Sr Diaan Stuart and to work at ICFP, a Catholic Institute for training teachers. My role was to assist ICFP graduates and the associated school communities from Railako, Dili and Occussi.

One of my first challenges came when I heard that changes in government regulations would not permit this Caritas funded project to continue, prompting me to readapt my thinking, hopes and understandings and also accommodate change as an everyday reality.

In the months that I have been here I have assisted with a training course in Dili for teachers with no formal education and have learnt the basics of Tetun (Timorese language).

I have commenced English classes with local children (pictured right) who are slowly progressing in their language development. They are very eager to learn and having the opportunity to be in a class with them is a privilege. In their own ways they have provided me with the opportunity to learn about everyday realities and to hear first hand of the contented simple lifestyles lived despite the ongoing struggles and hardships. Every day there is some point of learning to either take on board or ponder.

2010 will bring yet again more change as I move into the area of Student Pastoral

Care and Biblical Studies.

One of the greatest challenges for me at this stage is the development of my ability to converse in the local language. Learning a new language is no easy task and I will certainly need more time to improve my confidence in communicating in order to be effective within the College.

To date it has been wonderful to have had visitors from our Australian Loreto Sisters and friends. It is always lovely to introduce other people to my new friends and to share with them the beauty and ways of this country and its people.

'Courage to Move - East Timor' is in its early stages of development and hopefully with careful discernment, prayer and trust, clarity as to the best way of proceeding will be reached in good time.



...If the Gospel of Jesus and Mary Ward's charism, which we value so much, have a message of hope for all, why not take some risks, however small, in moving out from safe and familiar situations? Why not ... see if the Institute can build a new home and make a contribution in other cultures, other lands...
(Courage to Move, IBVM, 2002)

A Word from Rome - by Sandra Perrett

Every sensible Roman leaves the city during the month of August and one can only applaud their good sense! I've been in and out from June to August and I must say that it is like a furnace without any promise of relief. However, the tourists fill the spaces left by the Romans and the lines into museums, galleries and churches are never ending.

The forthcoming celebration of the 400th Jubilee is now just days away and the final details are coming together to make it a wonderful event with over one thousand registrations.

My permission to stay in Italy "Permesso di Soggiorno" has taken a little twist. My fingerprints, taken in July, were not

good enough so there was a need for a re-take! I cannot imagine what they think thousands of religious women and men in Italy will do that requires such measures as finger (individual and together) and palm prints recorded with a signature. But it's done and I now await two months to receive permission documentation. Meanwhile I'm traveling on a receipt and goodness knows whether that will work in a sticky situation!

While the joy of the week in Rome is still to happen, the preparations for it have been both delightful and challenging. Negotiating with the Italian authorities for permission to use piazzas, to erect a

banner or three in a public place, to drive in certain parts of the city etc. is very interesting. I've learnt that what is 'not a problem' one minute might become a problem in the next - but if you wait long enough it comes back to 'no problem at all!' It's all part of the charm of this culture and this city. I think a thousand pilgrims are about to have an experience of a lifetime - real theatre on the streets of this magical city where the backdrop is always charming and theatrical. As many say, every turn in a street is like looking at a new stage-set.

With love to all - and I wish everyone could come from down-under and enjoy the festivities as they unfold!



"I think a thousand pilgrims are about to have an experience of a lifetime"

Sandra Perrett

Improving our Website

Further information or to contribute a story:

Website www.loreto.org.au

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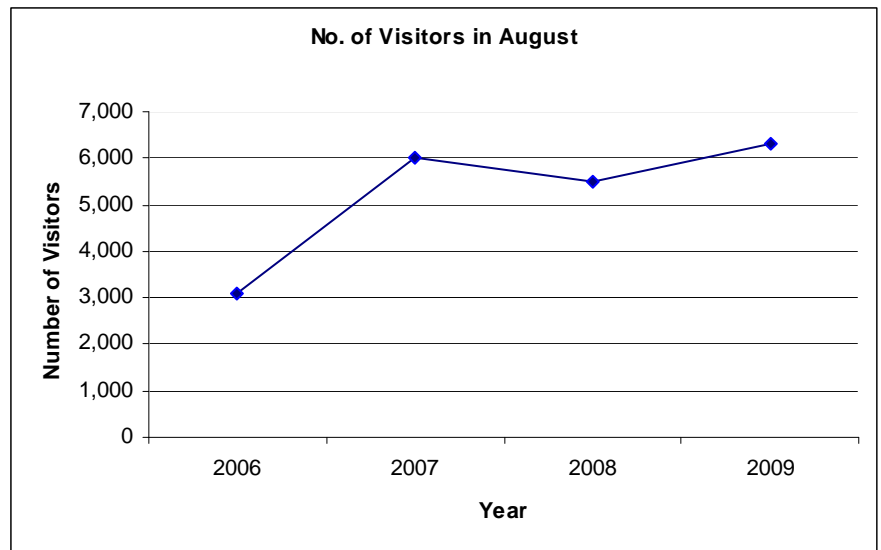
(Mailing address: PO Box 4082

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We are currently reviewing our website and would love your feedback, thoughts and ideas on how we can improve it. A short, anonymous and easy to fill out survey (10 questions) has been set up on our website for our Loreto friends and colleagues, students and teachers to complete.

The link below will take you straight to the survey. There is nothing to download or print out, just tick the relevant boxes and fill in your answers where appropriate. Once you have finished, press "Done" on the survey and it will be automatically submitted. Thank you for helping to improve our website. [Click here to complete survey](#)

Our website visitors have steadily grown since 2006. Here is a snapshot of the latest month for which we have data, shown across every year:



Upcoming Events

Mary Ward Jubilee Event, Rome

Over 1000 of our Loreto friends from around the world, including 100 Australians, are heading to Rome for an exciting week of 400 year jubilee celebrations. Loreto friends, teachers, sisters and families will unite in a special program of events in Rome from 4-9 October.

The celebrations will include welcoming walking pilgrims from Liège, concerts in the Churches of S. Ignazio and S Eustachio, a Papal audience in St Peter's Square, a Symposium on Mary Ward, visits to 'Mary Ward places' and lots of opportunity to meet up with friends and make new ones. Stay tuned to our website and look out for our November Networker edition to read all about and view photographs from this exciting event.

More information: http://www.loreto.org.au/about/mary_ward_004.html

Parliament of the World's Religions, Melbourne.

First held in Chicago in 1893, the Parliament of the World's Religions is held every five years and brings together the world's religious and spiritual communities, their leaders and their followers to a gathering where peace, diversity and sustainability are discussed and explored in the context of inter-religious understanding and cooperation.

As the world's largest inter-religious gathering, the Parliament will:

- convene religious and civil leaders and people of faith, spirit and goodwill from at least 80 countries
- foster inter-religious, civil and cross-cultural dialogue on important local, national, and global issues

- invite over 10,000 participants to work together for a just, peaceful, and harmonious society

- have global appeal, covering social concerns including understanding and respecting diversity, peace and Indigenous reconciliation

- engage worldwide religious, spiritual, secular, environmental, business and educational leaders to seek commitment and practical solutions through dialogue.

More information: <http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/index.cfm?n=8&sn=10>