



## “... blessed by her generous gifts”

*Sr Sandra Perrett - worldwide Loreto Sisters leadership role*



In September 2006 Australian Loreto Sister Sr Sandra Perrett was elected as the “Vicar General” (Vice General) to help lead the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (IBVM) Loreto Sisters worldwide. The exciting announcement was made during the General Congregation in Lima, Peru, a month of reflection, discernment and planning by over 60 Loreto Province Leaders around the world.



Sr Sandra is second in charge to Sr Marian Moriarty, the newly elected General Superior and former South African Province leader. The new international leadership team also consists of Carmen Diston (Canada), Barbara Murphy (Ireland) and Beatrice Stuart (India). The team will serve an eight year term, leading the Loreto Sisters worldwide and guiding the IBVM mission in the spirit of Mary Ward (founder). Sr Sandra will support Sr Marian in her responsibilities for the governance, finance, formation, development and progress of the order worldwide, acting as General Superior in Sr Marian's absence.

Sr Christine Burke, Australian Provincial Superior, said, “Sr Sandra is loved by many and gives herself untiringly in so many ways. She will be missed in the Australian Province, but we know the whole Institute will be blessed by her generous gifts”.

*Left: Sr Sandra Perrett*

Sr Sandra has a Bachelor of Theology degree and began her professional life as a high school teacher of Home Economics. She is well known and loved in Adelaide where her work mainly focused on children and education. From 1993 to 1996 she taught at Loreto Marryatville in Adelaide where she took religious education classes, cared for and supported students in the boarding school and co-ordinated the school liturgy. She then became Principal of St Patrick's Dulwich from 1997 to 2001 where her main role was to administer the school of 45 children with intellectual disabilities aged from 5 to 20 years of age. Her caring and practical nature meant that she also retained a hands-on approach, teaching and supporting the children in her care. She also carried out advocacy work for parents, providing a voice for parents about the need for respite care and post school opportunities for the children.

Sr Sandra has held various youth leadership, parish pastoral council and Diocesan liturgical commission positions. She has worked extensively with Loreto Schools in Australia, including Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne, promoting the Loreto charism and Ignatian spirituality and encouraging student leadership. Sr Sandra had this to say before departing on her exciting and challenging journey:

“The role of Vicar General is essentially one of service. I will be a member of a team of five, serving the worldwide Institute. The ministry involves considerable travel around the provinces listening to the dreams and concerns of the members. It is an incredibly privileged position and I am looking forward to it. There are many questions today around religious life: the way it is lived, the new ministries to be undertaken to respond to the needs of our world and other such challenges. How we live and love as Mary Ward women in our society today, in all the countries where we are present, requires open and honest, prayerful and respectful dialogue across the cultures and I am sure there will be many creative ideas and outcomes. We have wonderful opportunities to realise our internationality and strengthen the ways in which we are ‘seekers of truth and doers of justice’”.

Sr Sandra relocated to Rome in late November 2006 for to take up her new position. She has been busy learning Italian and working with the new leadership team. Her latest task involved traveling to Canada to run an extensive consultation period with members of the province on who they felt could be the new Canadian province leader. Her next tasks will take her to Albania, Nairobi, Johannesburg and India.