



Pilgrims on the Journey
REFLECTIONS, GIFTS AND INSPIRATIONS

*“We are all connected, all united in Spirit and all critical to what is indeed one Spirit inspired endeavour. Over the course of the coming days, our success, the outcomes we desire both personally and collectively, will be gauged by the extent to which we can trust, support, challenge, and journey together as companions eager to be ‘Drawn by Mystery - Destined for Life’”. Bill Sultmann
(Opening Address)*

WELCOME

With this opening message, Province Mission Director Bill Sultmann calls on the delegates of the 2014 Ministry Leaders Conference to embrace the days as an opportunity to recognise our sameness and celebrate our solidarity.

The Ministry Leaders from across Oceania are gathered for conversations with each other and representatives of the Province Leadership Team as well as key personnel from the Mission Directorate. The veterans merge with the new-comers; wisdom and insight blends graciously with verve and enthusiasm. Kathy McEvoy and Tim Moloney accompany us as facilitators and the gentleness of their spiritual presence and probing stirs our hearts.

We are being drawn to the heart of the matter!

The Conference call invites each participant to enter a liminal space of reflection and imagination. This is a Leadership experience designed to promote deep listening – listening to our own stories, the stories of our Earth community and the heart that inspires our unique response.

The Conference theme and logo establishes our agenda –
Drawn by Mystery, Destined for Life.

The flames within the logo are symbolic of the dynamic and unbridled nature of the Divine Mystery we name God, central to our faith tradition. The leaf-like shape of the flames mirrors the leaves of the Christian Brothers' logo – the sparks of new life and mission expression that grow from our Edmund Rice tradition.

The spiral references our Celtic tradition and honours the spirit of Ambrose Treacy in daring to journey beyond the safety of the centre. The green of the spiral holds the stories of the lives that ground our ministry endeavours and privilege us with a further glimpse of the Sacred.

The collection of words, quotations and images that follow is an attempt to capture something of the vibrant spirit of this 2015 Conference. It serves not simply as a memorial of our time together but ideally as a source of continuing inspiration - **to awaken us again and again to that presence of Mystery that draws us in ...and destines us to unconditionally choose Life!**





DAY ONE

DRAWN INTO CONNECTION

'In coming down the Mugoia drive I embrace a spirituality of letting go.' Cassandra Gibbs

We are present...we are open.....we are welcomed on behalf of the Darug people.

On the edge of the Hawkesbury sandstone, the edge of the Blue Mountains, we gather. We are ready to be drawn into a deeper sense of the mystery revealed in the physical landscape of the Mulgoa bio-region.

Mystery is spoken to us through earth, water, air, and fire.

We embrace the earth as an ancient energy of love – a power so immense that millions of years ago it washed half the Blue Mountains away into the sea.

We go to the edge of the inside.

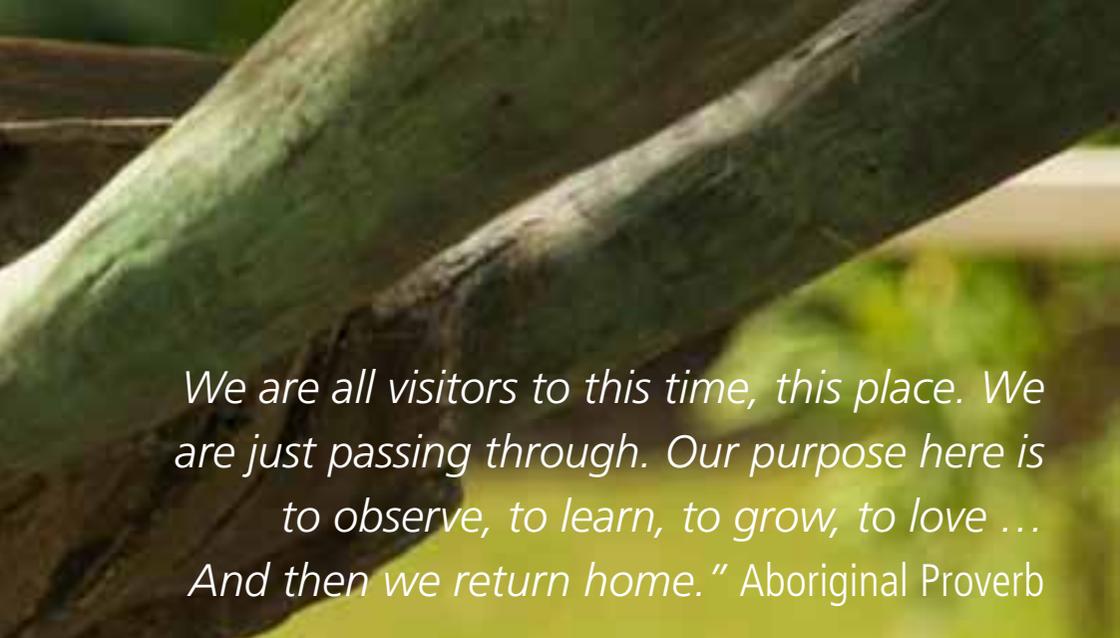
We awaken to the mystery of water through contemplation on its centrality within this driest of continents. Below us the Nepean River flows as an ancient source of life, its course marked out long before the towering mountains existed.

In this spirit of constancy we pause to listen deeply.

The air stirs around us and we note how this same air we breathe is shared with all the other plants and mammals of this area.

"By breath, by blood, by body, by spirit we are all one."

*Can we embrace the world's agenda
with this same creative life force energy?*



We are all visitors to this time, this place. We are just passing through. Our purpose here is to observe, to learn, to grow, to love ... And then we return home." Aboriginal Proverb

The mid-morning sun radiates its warmth fuelled from the inside out, its energy half way through its life span.

The Darug people have harnessed this energy in fire for 60,000 years.

We are today's fire-carriers.

The Universe has a story of origin, as does creation and our own personal life story. Our Ministries too have a story of origin and evolution.

Our deep listening to these shared stories brings us into connection ...and offers us new life.

When we are mindful, when we are deeply in touch with the present moment our understanding of what is happening deepens and we begin to be filled with acceptance, joy, peace and love. Take a moment to sit and contemplate the view from the back of the bus. It is from here that we will find the liminal place - the new life, the place of connection and the place of new growth. Dr Bill Sultmann

In the midst of forming as community, we are destined, through the words echoing from John O'Donoghue's Anam Cara, to return to where the days journey began.

Where in my ministry landscape do I feel most at home?



*"You cannot change what's over,
but only where you go." Enya*

DAY TWO

DRAWN BY MYSTERY

Our Hebrew and Christian traditions talk to us of journey – of always being drawn ahead by Mystery.

The Emmaus journey straddles the old and the new, and comes out of a time of crisis asking 'What do we do now'? Like the Emmaus disciples, in moments of urgency, we often need to look back to see where we have come from in order to see clearly the way ahead.

Caravaggio's painting "Supper at Emmaus" interprets an awesome moment of awakening for these disciples at table with Jesus. It reminds us that we live together in a world of grace - a world in which our invisible God is always near.

We trace our steps recalling the journey of our Christian Brother Congregation and Ministries from the Spirituality Conference of 1982 to the Chapters of 2014. We hear stories of moments of grace, great insights and encounters with the One who draws us on.

We are all part of this unfolding story.

As pilgrims, we are formed and nourished along 'Our Way into the Future' by the wisdom,

*"Live the questions
now. Perhaps you will
then gradually, without
noticing it, live along
some distant day into
the answer." Rilke*



“Pilgrim, it’s a long way to find out who you are.” Enya

challenge and poetry of Mystery and Life. With a rich collection of documents paving our path, we remain steadfastly confident that the good seed will grow.

Echoing the Emmaus tradition, the Congregation’s call from Nairobi prompts us to “awaken to the presence of God in our midst, as we seek meaningful and respectful ways of standing in solidarity with the whole Earth Community.”

Br Peter Clinch, Oceania Province Leader, embraces us as “fellow pilgrims on the journey of bringing good news of compassion, justice and liberation to all life that is suffering and living with the possibility of death or extinction.”

We are consoled and challenged.

*“Every formation experience is a gift
– but as always a gift is given to be re-gifted.”* Participant
How do I plan to re-gift what I received in this Conference?

*“Rather than playing a secondary role in a ministry,
I am becoming aware that formation may be
the source from which all productivity flows.”* Participant
Do I have a Formation Plan for my ministry personnel?

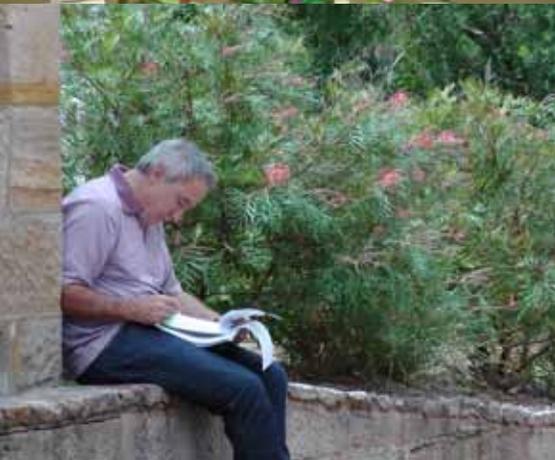


"We can encourage the emergence of leadership by integrating and balancing youthful energy and talent with the mentorship of the older Brothers."
Conference Delegate



"The most essential quality for Mission Leadership is openness to and capacity to engage in contemplative reflection and discernment."

Bill Sultmann (Q&A Panel)



"If we are going to be effective advocates as we stand in solidarity with all made poor and the suffering planet we need to be in relationships, and be prepared to befriend those who suffer."

Peter Clinch (Keynote Speaker)

"You are going where the dots are not joined."

Penny Elsley
(Keynote Speaker)



"The important teachings and learnings happen along the way to where you are going. Not at the destination but most often along the way ... but you have to be paying attention. You need to be looking out for the little specks of white between the trees."

Penny Elsley (Keynote Speaker)



"Never lose hope, miracles dwell in the invisible. They dwell in the spaces in between."

Penny Elsley (Keynote Speaker)



"We are all connected, all united in Spirit and all critical to what is inspired endeavour."

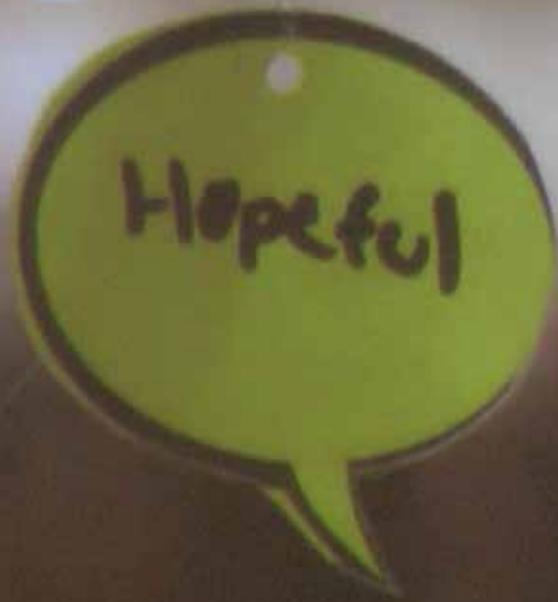
Bill Sultmann
(Welcome Address)



TAKE RISKS
BE BOLD
BE CREATIVE
"CARTE DIEM"



'We must be willing to get rid of the life we've planned, so as to have the life that is waiting for us'. Joseph Campbell



DAY THREE

DESTINED FOR LIFE

The Tibetan bells call us into the silence and stillness of our own hearts.

"What happens to the outer world happens to the inner world." Thomas Berry

We are *destined for life* looking forward into our imagination, to the sensitivities of heart, orientating us into future directions.

You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time? Luke 12:54-56

Are our ministry endeavours open to questions of critique and renewal in the light of the signs of the times and Congregational insight?

The image of Asylum-seekers setting out 'into the deep' without oars resonates with us. People destined for life with immense trust and hope in the movements of the ocean - the good tidings of a hospitable universe welcoming into its arms 'a communion of subjects' (Thomas Berry)

Is the agenda that the world sets, the mission direction of the Church and our Congregation?

We deepen our dialogue in triads unleashing energy and insight into diverse contemporary concerns and realities for further discernment. We name the lanterns that reveal the path ahead; lighthouses that warn of emerging danger; and those elephants in the room that are often ignored.

The space between the trees that's where the light gets in.

Penny Elsley breathes and exhales life.

Her own 'destined for life' journey involves seeking the spaces within which one then joins the dots. It means encountering the other, inclusiveness and making whole.

Destined for life simply needs one to join the dots in responding to the daily invitation to walk in the way of love, deep listening and trusting the process. It is about radical hospitality.

What spaces are we destined for in our lives and diverse Edmund Rice communities? How are we joining the dots?

An invitation into 'Open Space' brings forward consciousness-raising conversations and questions pertinent to earth care, indigenous and cultural concerns, governance, formation, aging, and networking across Oceania and beyond.

Questions generated by this Open Space find expression in the Question and Answer panel session

This journey awakens and calls us to places "outside the warm, safe circle" (Margaret Heffernan).

To be destined for life is both frightening and liberating.

Our Christian scriptural tradition offers a simple but challenging invitation:

"...I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live" Deuteronomy 30:19

We reflect on who we are as leadersand how as leaders we intentionally and purposefully Choose Life!

"We all need time out to think, listen and learn....so we can truly become the person we want to be." Penny Elsley

This reflective space finds a home in the recalling and re-telling of significant stories from ministry life that shape and guide our leadership journey.

What am I learning that allows me to develop my leadership skills and how am I to nurture this ongoing development?

Dialogue within a triad setting allows opportunity for personal hopes, aspirations and challenges to find voice.

Spirited conversations over coffee breaks, leisurely morning walks and evening social time, testify to the seamless transition between formal and informal relationship encounters.

In light of the challenges of this Conference, what goals am I setting myself as an Edmund Rice ministry leader?

Rituals help bring closure and meaning to our journey:

- Creation of personal candles colorfully signifying our Ministry Values and Characteristics: Presence, Compassion Liberation, The Sacred, Right Relationship, Prophetic Leadership, Community and Cross-Cultural Awareness
- 'Adoption' of a colleague through the exchange of name tags
- Leaving of a legacy via the planting of a Conference tree
- Acknowledgment of our facilitators via the gifting of a Timor Leste Tais.

"Kathy's poetry and art...Tim's images and songsthe seamless blending of scripture... meaningful reflection and group dialogue..... testimony to the warmth and sincerity of the facilitators and the integrity of their preparation." Participant

This significant encounter is over

"The conference has helped deepen my own spiritual connection to the Edmund Rice story, people and wider community of life. I particularly was taken by the emerging consciousness of deep listening and contemplation, which calls us to a greater awareness and appreciation of the Mystery we name God." Participant

.... but its Spirit is forging a new beginning in challenging all our communities to ask

Is it True? Is it Loving? Is it Necessary? Richard Rohr

The fire within makes you reach out to the goal....

You redefine the best, by stretching the soul

The Flame, Tina Arena

DAY FOUR

CHOOSE LIFE

2014

CONFERENCE DELEGATES



Andrew Blackett

Steve Bowman

Gerard Brady

Andree Brown

Rebecca Cannell

Peter Clinch

Laurie Collins

Paul Coster

Justina Dadson

James Devereaux

Rod Ellyard

Gary Ferguson

Bernard Gartland

Phil Glendenning

Peter Hay

Cathy Harrison

Frank Hennessy

Gerard Keating

Kevin Knapp

Graeme Leach

Carmel Leonard

Ted Magee

Richard Mavros

Kathy McEvoy

Dean McGlaughlin

Mark McGlaughlin

Tim Moloney

Paul Oakley

Trevor Parton

Frank Perkins

Anneke Pike

Anthony Ryan

Kevin Ryan

Martin Sanderson

Adrian Scerri

Vince Skelly

Natasha Siebert

Chris Smith

Bill Sultmann

Joe Vassallo

Mary White

Adam Whitefield

Shane Wood

Resources

Music

Kathy Sherman ~ "Be Still" (Album: Always With You), "Walk With Me" (Album: Walk With Me), "May We Become the Compassion of God" (Album: Bits of Light and Grace) and "One Small Voice" (Album: Walk With Me)
www.ministryofthearts.org

Bill Douglas ~ "Deep Peace"
iTunes; video clip from YouTube

Kirtana ~ "And So ..." and "Pulling In the Oars"
iTunes; lyrics from www.kirtana.com

Sara Thomsen ~ "By Breath" and "May the Longtime Sun"
iTunes; lyrics from www.sarathomsen.com

Ronan Keating ~ "I Hope You Dance"
iTunes

Tina Arena ~ "The Flame"
Soundtrack: "The Games of the XXVII Olympiad: Official Music from the Opening Ceremony" 2000 Sydney Olympics

Enya ~ "Pilgrim"
iTunes

Poetry

Peter Steele SJ ~ "Innkeeper at Emmaus"
"Plenty: Art into Poetry" Peter Steele, Melbourne Macmillan 2003

David Whyte ~ "Start Close In"
"River Flow: New and Selected Poems" David Whyte, Langley Many River Press 2007

Cartoons

Michael Leunig www.leunig.com.au

Videos

John O'Donohue ~ "Anam Cara"
www.soundstrue.com/store/anam-ara-3775.html

John O'Donohue ~ "A Celtic Pilgrimage"
www.soundstrue.com/store/a-celtic-pilgrimage-with-john-o-donohue-1119.html

Conference Activities, Banners and Booklets

Lanterns, Lighthouse and Elephants
(MLC Collated Responses)
Mission Directorate Basecamp

Lanterns, Lighthouse and Elephants (Instructions)
Mission Directorate Basecamp

2014 Ministry Leaders Conference Evaluations
(Collated Responses)
Mission Directorate Basecamp

"2014 Ministry Leaders Conference" ~
Post-Conference Booklet
Mission Directorate Basecamp and Christian Brothers Oceania Province Intranet - <http://intranet.edmundrice.org/>

Mission Directorate Banners
Mission Directorate Basecamp

2014 Ministry Leaders Conference Banner
Mission Directorate Basecamp

Mission Directorate and Oceania Province Booklets

"Drawn By Mystery, Destined for Life" 31st Congregation Chapter (2014) ~ Booklet
Christian Brothers Oceania Province Intranet - <http://intranet.edmundrice.org/>

Christian Brothers Oceania Province Chapter Statement 2014 ~ Booklet
Christian Brothers Oceania Province Intranet - <http://intranet.edmundrice.org/>

"Our Way into the Future" ~ Booklet
Christian Brothers Oceania Province Intranet - <http://intranet.edmundrice.org/>

"A Message to Accompany Our Way into the Future" ~ Booklet
Christian Brothers Oceania Province Intranet - <http://intranet.edmundrice.org/>

"The Good Seed Will Grow" A Framework for Edmund Rice Communities in Oceania ~ Booklet
Christian Brothers Oceania Province Intranet - <http://intranet.edmundrice.org/>

"Living the Vision" Ministry Accreditation ~ Handbook
Christian Brothers Oceania Province Intranet - <http://intranet.edmundrice.org/>

"Inspiration for Mission" Formation Programs for 2015 ~ Catalogue
Christian Brothers Oceania Province Intranet - <http://intranet.edmundrice.org/>

"In You I Am Doing Something New" Mission Engagement (Mission Directorate Information) ~ Booklet
Christian Brothers Oceania Province Intranet - <http://intranet.edmundrice.org/>

"Walking Humbly With Our God" Mission Integrity (Core Statements and Strategic Directions) ~ Booklet
Christian Brothers Oceania Province Intranet - <http://intranet.edmundrice.org/>

"Choose Life!" Living Mission (Key Documents for Edmund Rice Ministries) ~ Booklet
Christian Brothers Oceania Province Intranet - <http://intranet.edmundrice.org/>



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