

# Conference of Spiritual Directors, Australia

Newsletter, December 2020



## *The Body is Like Mary - Rumi*



The body is like Mary, and each of us has a Jesus inside. Who is not in labour, holy labour? Every creature is.

See the value of true art, when the earth or a soul is in the mood to create beauty;

for the witness might then for a moment know,

beyond any doubt, God is really there within,

so innocently drawing life from us with Her umbilical universe ~ infinite existence ...

Though also needing to be born.  
Yes, God also needs to be born!  
Birth from a hand's loving touch.  
Birth from a song, from a dance,  
breathing life into this world. The  
body is like Mary, and each of us,  
each of us has a Christ within.



What a year we have lived through? For some of us 2020 has been a difficult gestation with COVID 19 and its consequences. We have accompanied others who have struggled to know where the Divine is present. We have learnt that the pandemic has tested us and enabled or forced us to make choices that were unforeseen at the start of this year. As we sit in this Advent time, we are waiting to see what will be born in us this Christmas. Like Mary, and all women who have given birth we wait patiently to see what is being born in us and in others. The poem above by Rumi invites us to ponder God being born in us. Despite the struggles of 2020, may we be grateful for the waiting and for what comes to birth these Christmas days.

Tim Moloney

Chair CSD



## Chair CSD

### Interim Chair Rita Malavisi rsj

Rita Malavisi rsj has agreed to be interim National Chair of CSD. Rita is a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph. She brings creativity, energy and enthusiasm to this role. Rita has many gifts that include Spiritual Direction, retreat giving and technology. Rita has a passion for social justice and is a strong advocate for asylum seekers.

Rita has asked to be called interim until the next CSD Triennial meeting in July when a gathering of CSD members can endorse her formally as Chair. On behalf of all CSD members, I thank Rita for accepting this role, and wish her well in taking on this position as leader for our association. Tim Moloney



*Welcome Rita*

### GRATITUDE A GREAT SPIRITUAL LEADER OF CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS AUSTRALIA TIM MOLONEY CFC

By Kevin Hennessy CP

I was asked to give the final thanks to Tim Moloney CFC representing 175 members of Conference of Spiritual Directors Australia for Tim's leadership over nine years. As Brian Gallagher MSC, tapped, Yvonne Harte RSJ and myself back many years ago to recreate CSD from the ashes into a new and creative energy and to be a support to Spiritual Directors; Tim would be tapped on the shoulder by Brian Gallagher. Brian assumed that Tim maybe too busy, lacked confidence but knew that he could be an excellent leader in Spirituality.

Out of the ashes came embers that emerged into flames of hope. This CSD National Online Conference 2020, was a mark that provided a life-giving opportunity in this Pandemic COVID-19 crisis.

It has been a flame of encouragement, in support to the 85 people who attended the National Conference, from all the states in Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia. The CSD newsletter that Tim published, his reflections, have encouraged others to do the same. Along with his team, people placed their dreams, their poetry, writings within the CSD ways of communicating in going deeper into the heart of God. Tim also tapped people on the shoulder who had hesitations to respond because of their commitments. We all appreciate that



*Tim. Thank you*

they with their creative giftedness responded positively to Tim.

Tim you have been a leader in CSD, inspiring others to register. You have encouraged us to be professional in our ongoing education, supervision and personal spiritual direction. You called us to account by registering our accreditation to be part of CSD ongoing requirements and also to seek and obtain insurance cover as part of our individual membership.

Tim you are now called to leadership in the Christian Brothers Oceania. It will be I am sure challenging and demanding. We wish you well. The energy and integrity you brought to CSD will be appreciated by your fellow brothers and those who follow the Spirit of Edmund Rice.

In gratitude, Tim

Kevin Hennessy CP

## Notices

### Patrick and Anthony Wright Formation and Education Fund (PAWFED)

CSD members would be interested to know that AECSD, ANSD, Companions and CSD having been meeting on a regular basis for the past two years to converse on common issues for our associations. Three of the issues we have been discussing are:

- the establishment of a common register of spiritual directors,
- supervision for spiritual directors and
- promoting unity in our diversity.

The four national associations have submitted a joint submission to PAWFED for funding to grow these three themes. We will see in the new year if we will be successful in our application. Thus far it has been a worthwhile and valuable experience having the associations speaking and working together on common matters.  
Tim Moloney

### CSD Australia Conference 2020

CSD Australia Conference 2020 has come and gone, but the richness and energy of the days all 85 of us spent together across the airwaves, will continue to empower us well into the future. When the original planning commenced in mid-2019 little did we dream of the challenges that lay ahead in bringing this event to fruition. However, the wonderful cooperation of our keynote speakers and workshop presenters enabled us to move forward with confidence and anticipation. Integral to the implementation of this virtual conference was the expert technician (Jamie Sgherza) who walked with us, mostly unseen (somewhat like the Holy Spirit) before, during and after the two days. Jamie engendered confidence in even the most timid of zoom users. The high quality of the input has given us much to ponder in coming months. The opportunity to connect with other spiritual directors from Australia and beyond has given us new impetus to continue to grow this special ministry in these times of uncertainty and spiritual thirst.

The need for ongoing support and connection expressed by many – especially the membership – has been critical in affirming a desire for the organisation to continue. This goal will encourage the new executive of CSD to collaborate and network with others so that the ministry of spiritual direction in Australia is sustained and promoted. It seems that the way forward is the establishment of an Australasian Spiritual Direction Community.

Grateful thanks to one and all - Tim, the Reference Group, the presenters, our technician and especially the participants for a truly satisfying and inspiring Conference.

## Forthcoming Survey 2021

The Reference Group is planning a 2021 survey for CSD members who did not attend the Conference so we may serve you better.

## New Leadership for ANSD

The Australian Network for Spiritual Direction has recently elected new leadership. Beth Robertson is the new President, the Secretary is Rosa Covino and the Treasurer is Liz Palmer. We also acknowledge Liz Anne Smith who was Secretary and a CSD member for many years. We wish Beth, Rosa, Liz and Liz Anne all the best for the future.

## Honorary Membership

Over the past few years, we have awarded Honorary Membership to retired members of CSD. The two criteria for this are (1) having served a minimum of fifteen years as a financial member of CSD and (2) formally retired as a spiritual director. The main purpose in offering honorary membership is so former financial members can still be invited to and participate in CSD gatherings. Honorary members do not pay the annual fee but can attend CSD events at members' rates if a cost is charged. By doing this we hope to keep our esteemed colleagues within our ranks after all their years of generous and life-giving service.

## CSD's Professional Indemnity & Public Liability Group Insurance Policy

Twenty-three CSD Members have currently renewed their participating in CSD's Group Insurance Policy for Professional Indemnity & Public Liability. The cost for the year to 31 October 2021 is \$145. It is simple to join with a one-page form to sign, and advice of the addresses where you provide spiritual direction. To join, please email [treasurer@csdaustralia.com](mailto:treasurer@csdaustralia.com). Cost will be pro-rata'd to your Join Date.

## Heart of Life Relocation to The Kildara Centre, Malvern Vic

After over a decade co-located with Yarra Theological Union at Box Hill, and this past year in the Vicarage of St George's Anglican parish in Malvern, Heart of Life Centre for Spiritual & Pastoral Formation has moved to a longer-term premises in Malvern. Heart of Life is entering into a lease of the Kildara Centre at rear of 41 Stanhope Street, Malvern Vic, and is delighted to be partnering with the Brigidines in this way and will commence Siloam and other formation programs and reflection events from the new Kildara Centre in February 2021.

## CSD Website Upgrade—[www.csdaust.com](http://www.csdaust.com)—Have your say

2021 will bring a new look and feel to the CSD website as we seek to both promote Spiritual Direction to others and provide support to the CSD community. Most importantly our hope is to have a functional members' section; restore the "Find a Director" service; and set up an efficient way to email the bi-monthly newsletter from the website database.

This upgrade will begin in February 2021. We invite members to send in comments on the current website and suggestions for the new one. What would you like retained, changed, added etc? Perhaps you've seen another site with a look and feel you liked, or a particular feature that might work for us. Please email any responses to Bernadette at [treasurer@csdaustralia.com](mailto:treasurer@csdaustralia.com) by the end of January 2021.

If anyone would like to be part of a small advisory group as the new site is developed, please let us know also by the end of January. Working collaboratively, we hope for the best possible outcome.

[Please note: If you use a search engine to find the site, type in [csdaust.com](http://csdaust.com), although [csdaustralia.com](http://csdaustralia.com) will take you there, clicking the link will take you to the site.]

## Spiritual Directors Group, Tasmania

On 7th November, we had our second meeting for the year, via Zoom. The use of technology has helped us to maintain connection during this most unusual year.

After a gathering prayer and reflection that enabled us to place our burdens and ourselves in God's hands, we shared the experiences of our journey since our last meeting, with a focus on highlights/ significant events and learnings.

For several of us, these past months have been a time of quiet reflection and discernment, searching, listening and acknowledging that in the life stage we are each living, God is calling us towards change. In this there is recognition of the Spirit as "disrupter" and also acknowledgement of hope and trust in God's love and guidance whilst transitioning towards the new.

Two of our members have been led to resign from their ministry of Spiritual Direction. This has brought deep gratitude and wonder for the experience of walking with many people who entrusted so much of their lives in their sharing as directees. Gratitude is accompanied by grief at the loss of these relationships, and also the loss of the Spiritual Direction community. Our remaining members spoke of their experience of those who are leaving, with the love and gentleness that comes from many occasions of deep sharing and holding of each other in community.

Learnings have come with the processes of quiet discernment. Some have been challenged with practising patience and discovered the fruits of this learning. Opening up to having more directees has been the fruit of acceptance and some have received new requests for Spiritual Direction.

Looking ahead as a smaller group, it was acknowledged that there would be challenges, and that the loss of Emmanuel as our spiritual home is still painful. Along with this, there is hope for the future, and trust that God has a vision that will keep the group connected and loving each other. There are still directees in each region, so there will still be State wide gatherings, and there is certainty that the Divine will be present and life-giving in all activities. There is gratitude for the development each has experienced over the years in their role as directors, and encouragement to move out into the world and share the fruits of this development. Next year the Directors located in the South of the state will organise and lead the gatherings for 2021. There were no volunteers for the role of CSD Representative, so this is the last article from Tasmania until such time as one of our members feels called to take on the role.

### Vale Sister Dawn Bang rsc



Sister Dawn Bang died 18 September 2020 at St Catherine's Residential Care Balwyn where she had lived for the past ten years. Dawn was an integral and much-loved member of the Religious Sisters of Charity of Australia for seventy-three years. Her early years of religious life were spent in secondary education and then she moved into Novitiate Formation, retreat and spiritual direction ministry for many years. Dawn accompanied and inspired many, drawn to her deep faith, warmth, humor and especially her deep spirituality. Dawn was a gracious woman, genuine in her full attention in her interactions with others. She was a great encourager, especially when speaking about her love and others' love of God. Whether a new insight in prayer or something from spiritual reading Dawn was alive in its sharing. She interacted in ways that bore witness to the effect her relationship with God had on her. It was not only what she said but how she said it. She graced lives, young and old with her goodness, her conversations and her sense of humor. She was a great storyteller.

Dawn believed in God's unconditional love and always wanted to share that message. She saw Jesus as Lover and Giver and Mary as a very human mother. Our lives are blest for having known her. May she now rest in peace.

# Reflection



PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD ...

'It is said  
that the door to the stable  
where the Christ-child has been born  
is very low -  
and only those who kneel find access'...  
(Celtic Daily Prayer Bk1 page 228).

Jesus  
Help us by your humble Spirit  
Of truth telling and of comfort  
To make ready  
The pathway for the Coming  
Of you into our heart's home  
In this Advent season.

Wise Helper Spirit,  
Let our heart ears  
Cock to that urging voice of  
John the Baptiser  
To prepare our dwellings  
For the Guest.  
Sweep the path ...  
Own up to with heartfelt sorrow  
The tripping-up boulders blocking the path -  
The things that should not have been done -  
The falling-down potholes -  
Things that could have been done but weren't ...  
Iron out the crinkled places ...  
Straighten out the hard-to-admit-to twists and  
turns ...  
Open up the block-out window blinds!

Jesus  
In this Advent Season  
In this time of your fresh Coming  
Focus us  
And hold us up.  
By your accompanying Spirit of Love  
Energise us  
To be  
Humbly going about  
Our interior housecleaning  
So we may throw open  
The doors of our hearts  
To you  
Afresh.  
Be it so!

Elva Neale, SE Qld

## Welcome New Members 2020!

*Reverend Canon Barbara Logan*

*Ms Teresa O'Connor*

*Dr Susan Ciccotosto*

*Janette Mychajlyk*

*Donna Beningfield*

*Br Gerard Bennett*

*Mrs Brianne Falconieri*

*Mrs Joanne O'Connor*

*Anne McCutcheon*

*Mrs Bernadette Micallef*

*Bernadette Miles*

*Jovito Dales MSSC*

*Ms Gemma Schooneveldt*

*Mrs Paola Cheng*

*Mrs Lidia Rovira-Duch (2021)*

## Messages from the CSD Reference Group

### *Bernadette Micallef—Welcome!*

I'm very pleased to be the new Treasurer for CSD and looking forward to meeting and working with the members, promoting and supporting the practice of Spiritual Direction. Since graduating from the part-time Siloam program in 2011 I've been working with The Carmelite Centre Melbourne as a Spiritual Director and in a number of other roles supporting the work of the Centre. In 2021 I'm also very pleased to be returning to part-time study to work toward completing a Masters in Spirituality through CTC with units at YTU. On the home front, I'm married with three adult sons, two daughters-in-law and two grandchildren – so far! Wishing you all a joyful celebration of Christmas and we'll be in touch in the New Year.



*Tim Moloney cfc* I have enjoyed my time as CSD Chair, particularly working with the other members of the Reference Group. In recent years our focus has been promoting professional development and encouraging our members to be in supervision. I think, in these times, these two focuses have the potential to enhance our standing as spiritual directors.

*Kathleen Spokes sgs* When Tim invited me to be part of the Reference Group for CSD in 2013 I happily agreed to support him for what I thought was to be a three-year appointment. The timeframe was extended thanks to Tim's generosity to support CSD at a critical time of its development. I've appreciated being part of CSD's evolving story. Most rewarding was the spirit of mutuality and companionship I experienced with others on the Team as we endeavoured to find creative ways of supporting and growing the ministry of spiritual direction. During our meetings I often marvelled at how a way forward or creative idea would emerge from felt confusion and uncertainty – surely the gift of working with others. Thank you to the Team and to the Members I wish you a peace-filled Christmas and ongoing joy in your ministry.

*Pia Pagotto* My time in the CSD Reference Group has been an honour where, in the company of gifted people and the leadership of Tim, we helped steer CSD through a time of re-shaping into a more accountable body. The commitment and generosity of the group to CSD and to the best that it could be, the care for its members, the attention to the Spirit's guidance in it all, and the good fellowship throughout, has been a real pleasure to experience and be part of.

*Jill McCorquodale* What a joy it's been to be part of the CSD Australia Reference Group over these last few years. It's been a time of looking to the future and working to professionalise and evolve CSD into new pathways in response to the times. The energy, insight, commitment and creativity of Tim, Kathleen, Pia, Cecilia, Pat and Katherine has contributed to much satisfaction and inspiration through our time together. Many thanks to all for this opportunity to contribute to the unique and special ministry of CSD in this capacity. I'm on 'the edge of my seat' now, watching for the future that's already emerging over the horizon!

*Carey McIver* I have appreciated the chance to work with the Reference Group over the past 4 years in my capacity as the CSD representative on AECSD. I have worked with and learned from some wonderful people in that time. They epitomize energy, creativity and a deep passion for our shared ministry of Spiritual Direction. And they have been great fun too!

One of the first tasks of the new Reference Group will be a consideration of the future CSD representative on AECSD as my initial terms finishes in February 2021. I remain grateful to each member of the Reference Group for the life and growth you have enabled in me. Finally, my sincere blessings to all members of CSD and your families at this special time of reflection and recuperation.



## *Cecilia Rogers*

Dear Members, it has been my sincere pleasure to serve you during my time at CSD, 2012-2020. It has been enriching to be part of the CSD spiritual direction community, to participate in the Reference Group, and engage with you all over the years. I share with you a vision for CSD's continuance and development, supported by hope, courage and wisdom. Best wishes to you all and thank you, Cecilia.

## *Katherine Blyth*

Seeing and meeting some of you at the CSD Conference on Zoom was a highlight for me, perhaps for you too. It was a big year wasn't it? my first secretarial year with CSD; I might wonder at my surprise that we had such a good time. You have been wonderfully supportive and I thank God for the Reference Group and all the CSD Members! Peace



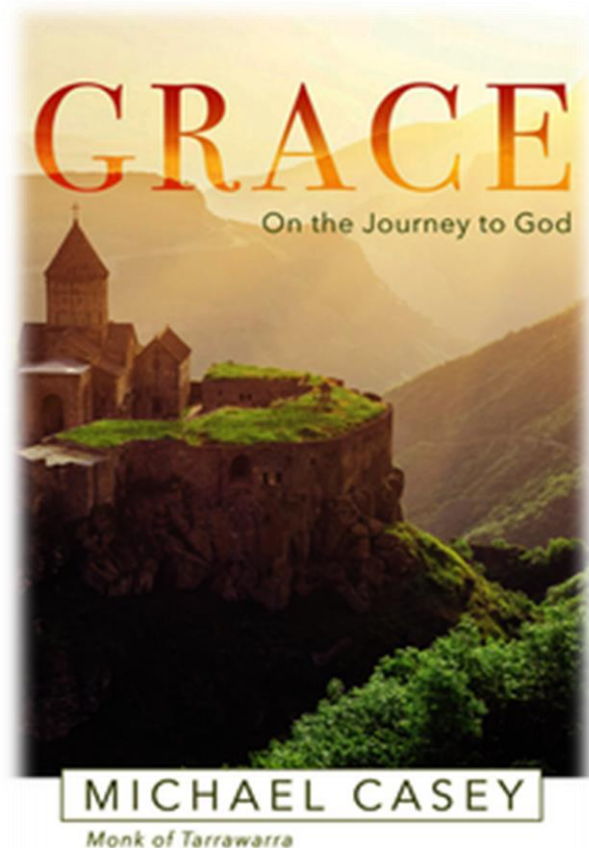
## Tim Moloney CFC reviews 'Grace' by Michael Casey OCSO

Many travellers to Tarrawarra Abbey would know Michael Casey and value his wisdom and scholarly approach to spirituality. Michael invites the reader to listen to the voice of God in their heart and to look back and wonder at what God has done in their life. He invites the reader to look at the way Grace appears in one's life, whether it appears in the dark recesses or in the places of great life and see that whatever comes is a gift from God and not the result of our actions.

Michael approaches *Grace: On the Journey to God* from so many angles starting from discontinuity and desire through to community and communion.

These last two themes appealed to me. He invites the reader to ponder that one is given gifts to share with others. We are the better for sharing who we are in our strengths and our weaknesses. As Michael says, we do not travel alone, we travel together (p199, *Paraclete* 2018). This journey was started by our ancestors and will be continued by generations to come.

Michael writes in an engaging and uncomplicated manner which is very accessible. I recommend this book highly.







**Dish and Spoon Cafe, Camberwell Melbourne, 1 December**

Kathleen Spokes, Tim Moloney, Pia Pagotto, Bernadette Micallef, Jill McCorquodale, Cecilia Rogers  
 (Not in attendance: Carey McIver, Katherine Blyth)

*Thank you CSD Reference Group 2020!*

**CSD Contacts 2021**

Interim Chair	Rita Malavisi rsj	chair@csdaustralia.com
Secretary	Katherine Blyth	secretary@csdaustralia.com
Treasurer	Bernadette Micallef	treasurer@csdaustralia.com
Regional Co-ordinators	(Contacts TBA for Vic, ACT & Sth NSW, Sydney & Nth NSW, Tas)	
West NSW	Ann-Maree O'Beirne	anmaree.obeirne@gmail.com
Qld Nth	Margaret Trevethan	margtrev26@gmail.com
Qld Sth	Elva Neale	eneale@optusnet.com.au
SA	Mary Cresp	Mary.Cresp@sosj.org.au
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First Reference Group Meeting for 2021, Tuesday, 2nd February at 1.30pm

CSD Opening Hours Closed from Christmas Day to 31 January inclusive

**CSD Australia PO Box 171 Surrey Hills Vic 3127 [www.csdaustralia.com](http://www.csdaustralia.com)**