

# CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS AUSTRALIA

Newsletter September 2025

## From the National Chair

A time of beginnings....

Often springtime bursts with new beginnings. In this Jubilee Year where we are called to be Pilgrims of Hope, I am reminded that a seed contains all within it to make it grow.

Ten years after Laudato Si, the cry of the earth remains urgent. Laudato Si framed care for our planet not just as environmental stewardship, but as a moral and spiritual imperative.



Amid the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Laudato Si, Pope Leo VIII has introduced a liturgical innovation: a “Mass for the Care of Creation”.

What new innovations are emerging now? Particularly I am thinking about the Conference of Spiritual Directors Australia as we move to our General Meeting.

My time of reflecting has led me to let you know that I will not be renewing my time as National Chair. Over the past five years, I have had the privilege to serve in this role, and now is the time for new leadership. I will continue to support the new National Chair in whatever way I can. Just like the innovation to introduce a new Mass setting, I’m filled with hope as a new National Chair carries forward the mission and leadership of the Conference of Spiritual Directors Australia – surrounded by supportive people.

To that end, within this newsletter, is a link to enter into a time of reflection, and to call for nominations for the leadership of CSD Australia. Our prophets will continue to carry us forward.

Laudato Si, the new Mass Setting, and the change in leadership in CSD Australia calls for a personal transformation, communal witness as we journey forward together. May those who will be called into leadership do so with humility, gratitude and courage. As we continue to be called to be Pilgrims of Hope.

With every blessing on your ministry  
Rita Malavisi rsj  
National Chair

# CSD Australia News

## CSD Australia Upcoming AGM

We invite you to mark your calendars for the upcoming CSD Australia Annual General Meeting, to be held via Zoom:

 Tuesday, 11th November 2025

 6:00pm AEST

Further details, including the agenda and Zoom link, will be shared in the coming weeks. If you have any questions please contact [Rita](#).



## Nominations for AGM

In preparation for our upcoming CSD Annual General Meeting, we are now inviting nominations for the roles of Chair and Communications Person.

The process is simple; just complete the online form, which you can find [here](#).

Before submitting a nomination, please take a moment to speak with the person you wish to nominate, to ensure they are open and willing to receive it.

 **Submissions Close: October 31st, 2025**

For any questions, please reach out to Rita.



## Invitation for CSD Reflection Magazine Submissions

It's that time of year again as we begin creating our CSD Reflection Magazine.

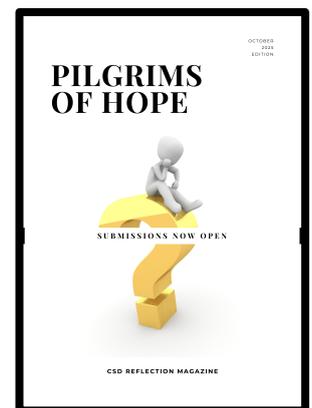
This year's theme is: *"Pilgrims of Hope."*

We warmly invite all members to contribute, whether through a reflection, poem, artwork, photography, book review, or even a movie review. Share with us whatever speaks to you of being a *Pilgrim of Hope*.

 **Submissions close:** 28th September

 **Magazine release:** Early October

You can submit [here](#) or by emailing Karen.



## Membership Renewal

We offer our heartfelt thanks to each of you for helping the membership renewal process flow so smoothly this year. I, Karen, find such joy in these moments of connection — even in the small exchanges, there is a sense of gathering together in our shared love for the ministry.

A few members have reached out after realising they had missed the renewal, often through a conversation with another member. What a gift it is to see how our community looks out for one another, ensuring no one is left behind.

Thank you for being present, for belonging, and for continuing to nurture the life of our CSD community.



## Membership Statistics

155 members were sent membership renewal requests.

Made from:

127 members have paid and completed their forms.

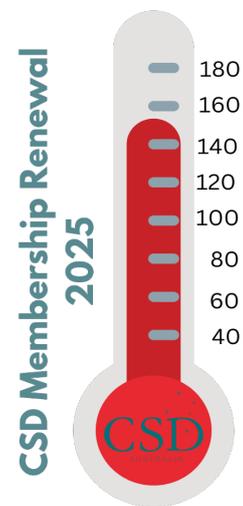
5 members have changed circumstances deciding to leave CSD.

2 becoming honorary members due to retirement.

10 New Graduates.

10 members have made no response.

*(These figures are until 31st August, 2025)*



## Membership Certificates

Rita has been diligently preparing and sending out all membership certificates. We are grateful for your patience as this important work has been completed.

## New Member Drive

Now is a wonderful time to invite new members into the CSD Australia community.

Do you know someone who has recently graduated from a recognised spiritual direction program? Or perhaps a qualified spiritual director who isn't yet a member of CSD Australia?

We'd love for you to encourage them to connect with us. It's a chance to share what our supportive CSD community looks like in action and how being part of it can enrich and sustain their ministry.

More details are available on our website, or they can simply reach out to [Rita](#) for a friendly conversation.



# CSD Australia Members

## VALE Bruce Crowle

Rev. Bruce Crowle, who served both within the United Church and as a spiritual director with great warmth and dedication. Ordained in December 2016, Bruce greeted the people of Glenroy and Pascoe Vale with open arms when he returned in September 2023 to minister among them. Over the years, Bruce's ministry embraced creativity, compassion, and deep commitment. At Narre Warren North Uniting Church, he played an instrumental role in revitalizing community life introducing contemplative chants, fostering community gardens, and supporting initiatives like the community plant sale and local outreach, with proceeds often directed to those in need.



Bruce's contributions extended to vibrant communal events such as the Narre Warren North Christmas carols; an annual highlight that brought hundreds together in celebration and fellowship. His ongoing spiritual direction companions were deeply touched by his presence. At our CSD Professional Development, Bruce brought his bright spirit, insight and wisdom.

Rev. Bruce Crowle's legacy is one of faithful service, loving presence, and heartfelt community-building. In those whose lives he touched, his spirit continues to shine.

## CSD Australia Professional Development

You are welcome to join all or any of the monthly sessions planned for 2025. There is no cost or need for members to book. A zoom link will be sent to all members in the preceding week. If you would like a friend to join, who is a non member - please use the trybooking link listed below..

### **Becoming: Enabling Attention with Ann Zubrick**

Saturday 20th September 9:30 - 11:00 am (AEDT)

Join us for a reflective morning exploring a different way of thinking about the word 'becoming'. We often hear it used about older age, becoming frail, isolated, or confused. But what if 'becoming' could mean something else entirely, becoming more, becoming spiritually enriched?

Spend the morning exploring the theme of Becoming through the lens of spiritual direction. Joining Ann Zubrick as she shares her lived experience of accompanying individuals living with dementia, a journey of presence, attentiveness, and spiritual enrichment.

If not a member, please sign up [here](#).

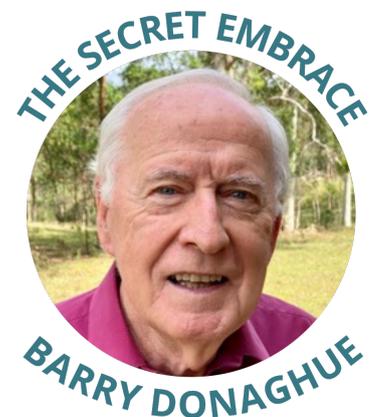


### **The Secret Embrace: The Emergent Spirituality of Thomas Keating ocsa with Br Barry Donaghue cfc**

Saturday 11th October 9:30 - 11:00 am (AEDT)

Join us for a reflective morning exploring Thomas Keating writings with the guidance of Barry Donaghue. The Secret Embrace which explores the poetic legacy of Thomas Keating, the person who most extended the practice of Centring Prayer. In the last couple of years of his life he wrote eight poems which trace and open out his spiritual journey. A morning of personal prayer interwoven in small group discussion.

If not a member, please sign up [here](#).



### **Spread the Word**

We encourage you to extend this invitation to others who may be interested in joining us for a morning of formation and reflection. All are welcome, simply register interest via our Trybooking link. There is a small cost to contribute towards cost of running the session. By sharing these opportunities, we not only open space for new voices and perspectives, but also help nurture and strengthen the wider CSD community.

## Article Review

### Congratulations to Angel Lam

We are delighted to celebrate our CSD member, **Angel Lam**, whose co-authored book will be published this November, what a wonderful achievement!



While the book itself is in Chinese, Angel has also authored a paper in English that many of you may find both rich and thought-provoking. The paper explores themes of **Defences, Human Nature, and Spiritual Awakening** from a Christian Counselling perspective. A reflection is below and [here](#) you can read the full article.

*Defences, Human Nature, and Spiritual Awakening: A Christian Counselling Perspective  
by Angel Suet Man Lam*

This article invites us to pause at the meeting place of two tender realities: the movements of the Spirit within, and the complexities of mental health. The author, CSD Member Angel, reminds us that discernment of spirits is not simply about identifying consolation or desolation in prayer, but about holding the whole person: body, mind, and spirit, with compassion and attentiveness.

What is striking in Angel's work is the gentle insistence that spiritual directors need not shy away from the language of psychology. Instead, we are encouraged to see how the insights of mental health can deepen, not diminish, our capacity to listen for God's presence. Desolation may sometimes reflect spiritual struggle, but at other times it may mirror depression, trauma, or anxiety. The gift of discernment is learning to hold these possibilities together with humility, seeking not to diagnose but to accompany.

For those of us walking alongside others, the article serves as a reminder that the Spirit speaks through both faith and human experience. Our role is to create space where directees can name what they carry without fear of judgement, trusting that God is present both in their longing for wholeness and in their wrestling with brokenness.

In the end, the authors offer not a set of answers, but an invitation: to cultivate a discerning heart that is spacious enough for prayer and psychology, mystery and medicine, hope and honesty. This feels especially timely for our ministry, as more people seek spiritual accompaniment while also carrying mental health burdens.

May we, as spiritual directors, continue to walk this delicate line with reverence, trusting that the Spirit guides us in our listening, our questions, and in the silences where healing often begins.

## AECSD News



Australian Ecumenical Council for  
Spiritual Direction

Serving the Spiritual Direction  
Community of Australia

The Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction warmly invites you as Association representatives to discern and nominate people you may recognise as leaders in the ministry of spiritual direction to join the AECSD in 2026. At this time, there are two vacancies to be filled, and one vacancy for a CSD representative.

The commitment is a four-year term, and involvement includes attendance at Council meetings (approx. 4 per year, 2 in-person and 2 via Zoom), involvement in the recognition process for formation programs, planning and participation in events, and other roles associated with the work of Council as discerned.

We reach out once again with an invitation for anyone who feels the Spirit's call to step forward into this opportunity. Please don't let the idea of a four-year commitment hold you back, there is room for flexibility. What matters most is having someone from within our CSD community present to share insights and happenings with us all. It is a wonderful chance to deepen your connection with others in the Spiritual Direction sector and to contribute to the life of our community. We ask you to hold this in prayer, and if you feel drawn, please reach out to [Rita](#) for more details and a conversation.

Further criteria for nominations and associated information are all available on the [AECSD website](#). Nominations are due by 31st October, 2025.

## Other News

### Santa Casa's 40 day Sabbatical Program

“Honouring the Soul: Deepening our Encounters with God, Self, Others and Creation”

1 September - 12 October 2025

This year's program is now **FULLY BOOKED**.

For your future planning, dates for next year's 40 day sabbatical are:

**19 September - 30 October 2026**

[For more information](#) please contact Cathy Solano rsm



### Marist House of Welcome

Retreat Centre, NSW

Open for private

In the heart of the Northern Rivers, the Marist House of Light in Lismore offers a tranquil space for prayer, solitude, and renewal. With private retreats, spiritual direction, and a nurturing environment, it's a place to rest and encounter God's presence.

[For more information](#)



### Heart of Life

Applications now accepted for 2026 formation programs

**Siloam Program** – full-time in-person program or part-time in-person or online program, for the formation of spiritual directors

**Emmaus Supervision Program** – part-time, in-person or online program for the formation of professional supervisors

**Damascus Spiritual Leaders Program** – part-time, in-person or online program for the formation of spiritual leaders

**Let the Heart Listen Program** – part-time, in-person or online formation program for people involved in listening to and supporting others in life's journey

[For more information](#)



## St Francis College

### Professional Supervision for Spiritual Directors

This course is intended to train people to work as:

Clinical supervisors of counsellors, therapists, social workers, youth and community workers

Pastoral supervisors of clergy, church workers and pastoral carers

Supervisors of pastoral care workers in hospitals and aged care facilities

Supervisors of students in training

This course will also allow for:

Supervisors to upgrade their skills and knowledge

Individuals to qualify for membership of professional supervision associations.

[For more information](#)



## Kardia

### Grace Upon Grace: Eight Day At Home Retreat

October 13th - October 18th

Kardia is offering you an invitation to join them in forming a community of prayer during an eight-day retreat while you are at home.

The retreat will be drawn from the book *Grace Upon Grace* by Marlene Marburg. You can make this a silent retreat or a retreat in daily life. You can choose to pray with one or

more readings from the daily suggested readings.

Each day the group will meet on zoom for group sharing (no more than five people) with a spiritual director. Upon registration, you will be given simple instructions on how to access and use Zoom.

[For more information](#)



## From Eremos Institute:

### Intensive Journal Workshop : Our lives are vast, multifaceted and profound

Intensive Journal workshops hosted by the Eremos

Institute are offered online and in person. The Intensive Journal helps connect us with this vastness and depth by engaging the process created by Dr Ira Progoff.

See upcoming workshops, including our newest offering, *Introducing the Intensive Journal*, a 3 hour online workshop

[For more information](#)

