



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC
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NEWSLETTER

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Program for 2016. The starting time for most meetings this year will be 2:00pm.

This information is correct as at 27 September 2015, but changes can occur.

March 20 *1:30 pm start	*1:30pm Annual General Meeting 2:00pm Presentation: <i>Religious life: flight from, or race to reality?</i>	Presentation: Dr Moira O'Sullivan RSC. Sisters of Charity, Sydney.
April 17	<i>Remembering the 1916 Easter Rising.</i>	Dr Frances Flanagan. Sydney Environment Institute, University of Sydney.
May 15	<i>Dr Herbert Michael ("Paddy") Moran - the contribution he made to Australian social history, and the disruption he caused in Catholic and medical circles in Australia's inter-war period</i>	Ms Anne Thoeming. Formerly Director of Research Services Australian Catholic University. Currently MA student (Macquarie University)
June 19	<i>Some second thoughts on The Sectarian Strand: Religion in Australian History.</i>	Associate Professor Michael Hogan. Dept. of Government and International Relations. University of Sydney.
July 17	<i>Marco di Bartolomeo Rustici's Amazing Adventure: How a Florentine goldsmith travelled to Jerusalem in 1448 and to Australia in 1998 and met two popes.</i>	Emeritus Professor Nerida Newbigin. Dept. of Italian Studies. University of Sydney.
August 21	<i>Divine Light: the primary determinant of the configuration and adornment of the church building</i>	Dr Harry Stephens. Architect, Secretary of the National Architecture and Art Board. Formerly Senior Lecturer (Architecture) University of NSW.
September 24 Saturday	ACHS CONFERENCE (Registration is required).	ACU North Sydney. Welcoming event on Friday evening 23 September: St John's College Missenden Rd. Camperdown.
October 16	<i>Killing Conscription: the Easter Rising and Irish Catholic attitudes to the conscription debates in Australia, 1916 -1917.</i>	Dr Jeff Kildea. Adjunct Professor in Irish Studies. University of NSW.
November 20	<i>Thomas More's Utopia: war and peace in early sixteenth century political and religious thought. [2016 is the 500th anniversary of Utopia]</i>	Dr Catherine Curtis. Honorary Senior Research Fellow School of Political Science and International Studies. University of Queensland.
December 3 (Saturday)	Annual Mass and Christmas Lunch at Mary MacKillop Centre Mount Street North Sydney. Cost and booking details to be advised. Mass: 12:00pm. Lunch: 12:30pm	Speaker: To be advised.

ACHS Sydney meetings are held on Sunday afternoons at 2.00pm (unless otherwise stated) in the Crypt Hall of St Patrick's at Church Hill [Grosvenor Street], The Rocks. Admission is free and does not require membership of ACHS, but a donation is welcome. Enquiries to: Dr John Carmody, President ACHS [john.carmody@sydney.edu.au] For further information see: ACHS website. [<http://www.australiancatholichistoricalsociety.com.au>].

Remaining ACHS Sydney functions for 2015.

15 November	10:30am ACHS 75th Anniversary Mass. St Mary's Cathedral Sydney. Celebrant: Archbishop Fisher, Archbishop of Sydney and Patron of the Society. 2:30 pm Presentation: <i>Political machinations and sectarian intrigue in the making of Sydney University.</i> (Crypt St Patrick's Church Hill).	Celebrant: Archbishop Fisher. Presentation by: Assoc. Professor Julia Horne. University Historian University of Sydney.
5 December (Saturday. Booking required).	Annual Mass and Christmas Lunch at Mary MacKillop Centre Mount Street North Sydney. Cost and booking details to be advised. Mass: 12:00pm. Lunch: 12:30pm.	Speaker: Professor Greg Craven. Vice-Chancellor Australian Catholic University

Melbourne Chapter ACHS will meet at 2:00 pm on *Monday 9 November in the Seminar Room at Dorish Maru College, Yarra Theological Union, 100 Albion Road, Box Hill. The speaker will be: Michael Francis. His topic will be: *The Australian Church and World War I.* . Enquiries: Dr Larry Nemer. nemerlarry@gmail.com

Melbourne Meetings dates for 2016: March 7th, June 6th, September 2nd, November 7th.

NOTICE FOR THE 2016 ACHS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Australian Catholic Historical Society Inc. will be held at 1:30 pm on Sunday, 20 March, 2016 in the Crypt Hall of St Patrick's at Church Hill, Grosvenor Street, The Rocks. All Council positions will be declared vacant and the election of Councillors will take place. Nomination forms are included with this Newsletter. Nominations and agenda items should reach the Secretary by Monday 25 January 2016. Postal address: The Secretary ACHS, PO Box A621, Sydney South NSW 1235.

Membership renewal for 2016

Membership renewal / subscription forms are included with this Newsletter. There are currently four categories of membership: Individual \$50, Family \$50, Institutional \$60 and Full Time Student \$25.

ACHS Conference September 2016 and CALL FOR PAPERS

The Society will be holding a conference in 2016 on Saturday 24 September at the North Sydney Campus of the Australian Catholic University, with a welcome event on the evening of Friday 23 September at St Johns College within the grounds of Sydney University, 10 Missenden Road, Camperdown NSW.

The conference theme is *To and from the Antipodes: Catholic missionaries over two centuries*. This theme covers *all* aspects of Catholic missionary activities within and originating from Australia and New Zealand over the past 200 years, including (but not limited to): the context of decisions to undertake or cease missionary activity; the purposes and practices of missionary work (especially if these varied amongst the various orders); the challenges and the support provided; changes over time in these perceptions and approaches.

Abstracts of presentations (up to 300 words, including title, author affiliations and address [including e-mail

address] are sought with a receipt deadline of 31 May, 2016. They should be in *Word* format and be submitted to achs2016conference@gmail.com

A brief biography of the presenter (100 words maximum) should accompany each abstract.

The abstracts will be selected by the ACHS academic program committee and published (together with the biographies) in a booklet which will be distributed to participants at the conference.

It is planned to have the provisional program finalised and announced by 30 June 2016.

The Council of ACHS anticipates that the registration fee (which will include the welcome event, conference lunch, as well as morning and afternoon teas) will be \$100. There will be a concessional registration fee for full-time students. All participants, including presenters, will be required to register (*John Carmody*).

Melbourne. Tuesday 7 September 2015. Presenter: Peter Price Topic: *The Australian Bishops at Vatican Council One.*

Peter Price gave a fascinating presentation. He began his talk by commenting on some of the principal primary sources (e.g. *Mansi*, the *Collectio Lacensis* and

the Diaries of + James Alipius Goold, along with William Bernard Ullathorne's letters) and presenting a critique of some of the secondary sources (e.g.

O'Farrell, the recent work of Christopher Dowd OP, and others). What sparked his interest in pursuing this topic was the remark made by the historian John Neylon Maloney in his book, *The Roman Mould of the Australian Catholic Church*, that the Australian Bishops took no active part in the Council Proceedings and basically voted along the lines of the Irish Bishops. Peter began by putting the Council in the context of the European situation at that time (e.g. Enlightenment, French Revolution, successive revolutions, struggle between liberals and conservatives, formation of Germany, *Risorgimento*, etc.) and describing the Church's response to these movements (e.g. Ultramontane/Conservative tendencies in the Churches, a general conservative response to the 19th century as seen in the Syllabus of Errors and Vatican I pronouncements, as well as the continuing strains of Gallicanism, Conciliarism and Liberal Catholicism). He argued that the conservatives (Ultramontanes) were primarily concerned with papal primacy, and only secondarily with Infallibility. The multiple concessions made to reach the final decree were testament to this.

He nuanced the responses given to the decrees of Vatican I.

He described each of the Australian bishops present (three with the title Bishop of Perth), identifying their key concern with establishing a strong statement of Papal authority to emphasise an Australian Catholic identity in an age old sectarian conflict. Most of them did not have much of an impact on the work of the council but two were elected members of Conciliar Commissions and at least one bishop, Joseph Serra OSB, made an intervention in the debate concerning the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Dei Filius*. Serra, and others wanted the word "Roman" removed from the phrase "Roman Catholic" in the first chapter of the Constitution on the basis that it confused the unique identity of the Catholic Church in Australia and in other places.

Following the presentation there was a lively discussion. (*Fr Larry Nemer*)

**Sydney meeting, Sunday 20 September 2015. Preasenter: Sr Patricia Madigan OP (Executive Director: Dominican Centre for Interfaith Ministry, Education and Research, Strathfield.).
Topic: *Nostra Aetate and fifty years of interfaith dialogue – changes and challenges..***

The document known as *Nostra Aetate* ("In Our Time") was the shortest of all sixteen documents of Vatican II, and perhaps the most fiercely fought over before it was promulgated in October 1965. Originally conceived of as a statement "On the Jews," each draft was accompanied by intense controversy and political manoeuvring both inside and outside the Council. According to Cardinal König "*Nostra Aetate* "almost did not happen" and it was "almost a miracle that it was ever passed."

The main points of contention throughout the debates surrounding *Nostra Aetate* were the common Christian labelling of Jews as "Christ-killers," (the charge of "deicide"), and Christian mission when it was directed towards conversion of the Jews. Both were related also to "supersessionism" or "replacement" theology in which the Christian community is depicted as having superseded or replaced the Jews as God's chosen people.

A significant aspect of *Nostra Aetate* was the contribution made by representatives from the Jewish community - Jules Isaac (1877-1963), French Jewish historian and Holocaust survivor, and Abraham Heschel (1907-1972), a Polish-born American Jew. A second layer of influence was that of a number of Jewish converts to Catholicism who had become

Catholic priests, such as Johannes Oesterreicher (1904-1993), who acted as experts advising the bishops.

Another point of contention was where the draft belonged – in the schema on ecumenism or on the church? Eventually it became a document in its own right and, influenced by bishops from Asia, included references to other world religions as well as Judaism. When the dust settled, it was recognized that *Nostra Aetate* represented a "radically new understanding of the relations of the church to the other great world religions." The Church continues to grapple with the theological implications and practical challenges which emanate from this document (*Sr Patricia Madigan*).

Addendum: An interesting Q&A session followed. Richard Connolly mentioned his encounter with Cardinal Ottaviani. Parallels were noted between the tensions among bishops when developing *Nostra Aetate* and the reported tensions associated with the current Synod of Bishops. The situation in the Middle East and giving preference to Christian asylum seekers was raised. Aspects of the very positive inter-faith relations and activities in Australia were also mentioned. Sr Patricia's presentation gave an excellent insight into the development and implications of *Nostra Aetate* and was greatly appreciated.

(*Geoff Hogan Editor*)

Sydney meeting, Sunday 18 October 2015. Presenter: Dr Ann Maree Whenman. Topic: *In Good Faith: Providing religious education for Catholic children not attending Catholic schools in NSW - 1880-2000.*

Dr Whenman outlined her connections with Religious Education and the work of catechists going back to the 1960s when her parents were catechists, her role as Director of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine [CCD] in Broken Bay Diocese and now as a lecturer in Religious Education at the Australian Catholic University. Her PhD thesis focused on this topic. Dr Whenman went on to discuss the influences and practices associated with what she identified as five distinct historical periods related Special Religious Education (SRE) in public schools.

Between 1872 and 1885 the Australian colonies established "free, public and secular" public schools and withdrew funding to non-government schools, but provision was made for SRE to be provided by visiting religious teachers. The Catholic bishops opposed this development directing that Catholic parents who sent their children to public schools were to be refused the sacraments and Catholic clergy were not allowed to enter government schools.

The 1905 Encyclical *Acerbo Nimis* (On teaching Christian Doctrine) of Pope Pius X established the CCD and called for a renewal of parish catechetical ministry. The Australian bishops were not enthusiastic, but some individuals began to respond including Bishop O'Connor in Armidale and Fr Klein in Drummoyne. In 1935 Pope Pius XI issued *Provido Sane Consilio* (On Better Care and Promotion Catechetical Teaching) which also promoted catechetical activity.

In the 1920s and 1930s the Theresians and the Children of Mary were active in providing religious education. Training programs and lesson plans were developed for "catechists" who were mainly lay women volunteers. Dr Whenman described the 'Religion by Letter' program introduced by Archbishop Sheehan in NSW based on a Western Australian program. In the 1930s

the Catholic hierarchy officially allowed the laity to teach SRE in public schools but maintained the prohibition for clergy. Catholic parents were still prohibited from sending their children to public schools. While the bishops' policy of opposition continued up to about 1955, there was some movement, but local responses varied considerably. In 1938 the CCD was officially established in Sydney.

From 1955 demographic, social, financial and political realities caused the Australian Catholic hierarchy to remove the prohibition of Catholic children attending State schools and initiated planned action to provide religious education for these children. Cardinal Gilroy undertook a number of initiatives, but response by the clergy was initially slow. An appeal was made to religious congregations and the response was positive. One initiative was the "Motor Mission". The CCD was also funded and supported in developing educational programs and resources for both students and lay volunteers. Peter Ivers was appointed as CCD Director.

From 1972 the Federal Government provided funding for Catholic schools and the focus on the work of the CCD shifted. In 1972 a relationship began with other Christian Churches. This developed into the Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools (ICCOREIS). The work of CCD in New South Wales has been and continues to be sustained by its local leadership and the thousands of volunteer lay catechists who demonstrate a strong commitment to providing SRE for Catholic children in public schools.

During the Q&A session a number of members spoke of their involvement as catechists and in presenting CCD programs. When commenting on ICCOREIS, Dr Whenman mentioned that the initial tolerance between different religious groups involved with SRE extended to dialogue which is far more productive.

(Geoff Hogan Editor)

RIP Br Frederick McMahon FMS

Br Fredrick McMahon, a Marist Brother, died on Tuesday 29 Sept. aged 87. He was an ACHS member from the mid-1990s, after returning to Australia from the Marist Provincial House in Rome, until about 2004 and attended meetings occasionally. He wrote the books "*Strong Mind, Gentle Heart*" which was about the life of St Marcellin Champagnat, and also "*Abundance of the Heart – A study of St Marcellin's correspondence*"

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