



NCCD NEWS — DECEMBER 2014

NCCD News in Brief

Welcome to the final NCCD News for 2014. Well what a year it has been. 2014 has been quite a successful year for the NCCD. Our year began with our face to face conference in March, hosted by the Diocese of Parramatta at the Baulkham Hills St. Joseph's House of Spirituality. At this gathering the NCCD Constitution was ratified and a new Management Committee elected with Pina Ford (Chairperson) Paul Worthington, (Vice-chairperson), Rickie Withers (Secretary), Patricia McDevitt (Treasurer), and Lorraine Wynne (Liaison Officer).

The Management Committee has met a couple of times through the year either by teleconference or a face to face meeting in August at Chatswood. Pina has been following up the development of a relationship with the Bishops Catholic Education Commission, Paul has been gathering national statistics re the number of catholic students outside the Catholic school system, Patricia has been organising the finances and Lorraine has been following up the development of a website for the NCCD.

The members of the NCCD also met 'virtually' via the Adobe Connect platform on the 24th November. This was a very successful gathering with fruitful discussion. A brief summary of the discussion from this 'virtual' meeting is on the following page of this newsletter. The link to the recording of the meeting is below. It is planned that there will be another 'virtual' gathering in March/April 2015 with the next face to face NCCD Conference scheduled for October 2015—see 'Claim the Date below'.

As this year draws to a close, thank you everyone for your ministry, your support and friendship through the year. May God's blessings of peace and joy be with you all during the Christmas season. (Rickie Withers)



Date Claimer

NCCD 2015 Face-to-Face Conference

Dates: Tuesday 6th October (evening) —
Friday, 9th October, 2015.

Venue: Caroline Chisholm Centre, Pennant Hills, Diocese of Broken Bay.

Further details to come early in 2015

Recorded Meeting:

NCCD Virtual Meeting—24th November, 2014

A recording of the NCCD Virtual meeting held on the 24th November, 2014 can be viewed by going to the following website:

<https://connect.arm.catholic.edu.au/p5vz1eq6r9e/>

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER:



Loving God, Help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts. May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen. (Robert Louis Stevenson)

May the peace and joy of the Holy Family be with you and your families this Christmas.

A Brief Summary:
NCCD ‘Virtual Meeting’ via Adobe Connect
24th November, 2014

Present: Pina Ford, Paul Worthington, Rickie Withers, Patricia McDevitt, Carole Danby, Sharon Freeman, Lyn Breen, Barbara Durand, Amanda Smith, Kaye Clancy, Helen Ryan, Doug Mawhinney, John Donnelly.

Apologies: Alison Newell

Key Points of Discussion:

Chairperson’s Report: Pina read out a letter received from Bishop O’Kelly and gave a brief report on the development of the relationship between the NCCD and the Bishops Catholic Education Commission. BCEC is open to further dialogue with the NCCD exploring areas of national interest and ways of support the work of NCCD at a national level.

It is hoped that the NCCD website will be finalized soon and will be able to be launched in 2015.

Treasurer’s Report: Patricia presented the Treasurer’s report for 6 months up to the 15th September. Members agreed to the proposal to increase the subscription fees slightly in 2015 to help cover the costs of the development of the website. The increase to the annual subscription fees are: Archdiocese - \$50.00, Diocese—\$25.00 with no increase for remote dioceses.

National Statistics: Paul Worthington explained the document he had arranged to be prepared outlining statistics regarding the number of Catholic students outside the Catholic School system in each Diocese in Australia. The document included figures based upon the 2001, 2006 and 2011 ABS Census data.

NCCD Survey Tool: Rickie explained the draft of a NCCD Information ‘survey’ tool he has prepared to help gather information about the ministry of NCCD in all its forms across Australia. Members were invited to forward any suggested adjustments and questions to be included with the view to the survey tool being distributed for completion early in 2015.

2015 NCCD Conference: Pina and Paul reported on the preparations for the 2015 NCCD Conference. The conference is scheduled for 6th-9th October, 2015 at Pennant Hills, Diocese of Broken Bay. More details to come early in 2015.

Pina then thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution to a successful ‘virtual’ meeting.

A Christmas Reflection

(taken from Mary MacKillop e-News, 8th December, 2014)

What Should You Treasure This Christmas?

Christmas in Peru is a wondrous event, filled with prayer, song, dance, fireworks and shared food.

I remember vividly my first Christmas there. It was very hot and dusty and we met on Christmas Eve in the Chapel in Los Libertadores for Mass. The church was packed with squirming, excited kids all wanting to get near the elaborate crib, to wonder at what they saw and to welcome the baby Jesus, poor like them. One little boy said to me, “I’m asking baby Jesus to send us some water so that we won’t be thirsty and dirty.”

The singing, both on and off key was truly from the heart, the joy contagious. After Mass the women had prepared a cup of warm chocolate and a piece of panettone for everyone.

As I was walking home with some of the children a little boy pulled from his pocket a treasure he had found in the garbage, a small dirty piece of red plastic. He looked me in the eye and said to me: “this is for you... if you look through this, everything is beautiful!”

No more precious gift have I ever received. This is what Christmas is about. A little boy, with nothing, gave to me his most precious treasure. A sharing that is all embracing.

At midnight, noisy and colourful fireworks are enjoyed in the streets. A meal is shared and the Christ Child is welcomed with music and dance.

Marj Crossman rsj

