

MARY WARD GRANT RECIPIENTS 2017

The Mary Ward Grant Committee, on behalf of the Loreto Sisters, is pleased to announce the recipients of the Mary Ward Grants for 2017.

True to the vision of Mary Ward and her belief in the pivotal role of women in leadership, the Loreto Sisters established the Mary Ward Grant in the year 2000 to support specialist and post graduate study in theology, spirituality and pastoral ministry.

This year's successful recipients are:



SARAH AGNEW is a Minister of the Uniting Church, currently undertaking doctoral studies at Edinburgh University in Biblical Performance Criticism. Sarah is a story teller, learning biblical texts and performing them for live audiences, interpreting the texts through body and emotion. Her thesis emerged out of her practice as a storyteller, in response to the question, how is embodied performance a way of interpreting biblical texts? She writes: "Into the field of biblical studies which privileges rationality and objective intellectualism, I invite the whole human person – integrated physical, emotional and relational – to speak, and to move us deeper in our engagement with those stories of mutual love".



KATHLEEN CARD is approaching the completion of a degree in Master of Arts (Theology) and research. Kathleen has been involved since her teens as children's liturgy leader, youth group leader, RCIA sponsor, Captain with a street/homeless youth mission, in social justice groups, as voluntary lay hospital chaplain, and principal actress in a Christian musical. This catalogue of commitment, as well as theological studies over a number of years, gives no hint that Kathleen has suffered from chronic debilitating illness since age twelve, with repeated hospitalisation and surgery. Her referees speak of her as a leader and role model, with amazing faith, who will not sit back with her health issues. Kathleen pays tribute to the strong support, guidance and encouragement she receives from her mother and family.



CHRISTY HONEYSETT was a Mary Ward Grant recipient in 2013. Christy currently is working to complete her studies for Masters in Theology online, while balancing family life with three children aged six, five and two, the oldest of whom has autism, and part-time teaching. She brings to her studies her experience as a Catholic Youth Minister for five years, Diocesan Youth Coordinator for two years, and Religious Education Teacher for over two years. Her degree will assist in her aspiration to become a Religious Education Coordinator.



JULIE MITCHELL is a committed member of an evangelical Anglican Church. She writes: “I became acutely aware that my faith, while strong in intellect, was affectively weak and felt increasingly it was unable to sustain me”. She attended prayer and reflection evenings at an Ignatian spirituality centre, undertook spiritual direction and subsequently the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life. Currently she is engaged in the Kardina Spiritual Direction Formation Program, and companioning two members of her congregation in spiritual direction. Having taught at secondary and now at tertiary level, Julie aspires to bring the graces of spiritual direction to people in the evangelical Anglican tradition, and especially to provide opportunities for teachers to have access to spiritual direction in their workplace.



ELISSA ROPER recently commenced doctoral studies. The working topic of her thesis is “The Catholic Church as Synodal: Taking Responsibility as the Body of Christ”. Elissa is involved at parish level in liturgy and music ministry, including children’s liturgy, in writing articles for the parish bulletin, a Lenten study group and parish presentations. In addition, Elissa assists the Mercy Sisters as Coordinator of a program that provides theological education to women religious of PNG. She writes: “These experiences, as well as my love for my husband and four young children, really ground my theological study. Ultimately I hope that my studies will be of benefit to the Church and theological academic community”.



BELINDA SKETCHLEY is a Leading Teacher and Primary Coordinator in a Catholic Primary School. Her years of teaching, since graduating in 2004, include three years in the Aboriginal community of Wadeye in the Northern Territory, where she was received into the Catholic Church, and completed Graduate Certificate in Religious Education online. Belinda is currently studying for Master of Theology with a major in Religious Education. She writes of her sense of appreciation and commitment to the philosophy of Catholic Education, and of being enabled through her studies to teach Religious Education “with passion and knowledge”.