

Companions

In the Ministry of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises

March 2021 News Briefs

Dear Companions,

As we are now into March of 2021 and many COVID restrictions have been relaxed, I would like to bring you up to date with committee activities including:

- **dates for your diary**
- changes to the Committee
- finalised version of the Code of Ethics
- disclaimer for website
- work in progress, and
- exciting news about the joint proposal to the Patrick and Anthony Wright Foundation and Education Fund by representatives of the Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction (AECSD), the Conference of Spiritual Directors (CSD), the Australian Network of Spiritual Direction (ANSD) and Companions.

Companions Connecting via Zoom in 2021

- **March 27th – 11am -12.30pm – Theme & Trybooking details will be forwarded shortly.**
- **July 31st- 11am – 12.30pm – feast of St Ignatius, 500th anniversary of conversion**
- **December 4th – 11am – 12.30pm**

Changes to the Committee and Companions AGM on Saturday 28th August 11.30am – 1pm

Following representation to the new Provincial of the Australian Province, Fr Quyen Vu SJ, for a Jesuit to replace Iain Radvan SJ on the Committee, I am pleased to announce that Michael Smith SJ, an initiator and great supporter of *Companions* has accepted the role. We welcome Michael and look forward to his participation and contribution to the mission of *Companions*.

Sadly, at our February meeting, we received the resignation of Frances Tilly due to the demands of her full-time role with JISA and her intention to pursue further studies this year. Frances has been a gentle, creative and grace filled presence on the committee and a major contributor in a variety of ways, utilising her knowledge and experience in diverse cultures and settings, organising, presenting, planning, and delivering training and support in this ministry, directing the Spiritual Exercises, and giving Spiritual Direction. We will miss her friendship, wisdom and support though know that she will continue to be a great supporter of *Companions* and an important link with JISA. We wish Frances every grace and blessing in her studies and the many roles she undertakes.

As a result of Frances resignation and my completion of the maximum 6 years on the committee at the AGM, we will be seeking two new members. I encourage members to consider nominating to serve on the Committee. It is an enriching experience working with others with similar desires as we listen to the Spirit to discern the way forward in promoting Ignatian Spirituality and the Spiritual Exercises. Nominations should be submitted to the Secretary by 16th July 2021.

Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics has been finalised almost 12 months after the process began. We initially sought feedback from members and received 7, 2 of which were from the committee. A subsequent late submission suggested we adopt the AECSD Code of Ethics for clarity and consistency and include a separate section for Givers of the First Spiritual Exercises. This gave

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further food for thought and recognising that Spiritual Directors who graduate from any AECSD recognised program are bound by the same requirements for ethical practice and behaviour as those who train as Ignatian Spiritual Directors/Givers of the Exercises, there was a strong case for Companions to adopt the AECSD Code of Ethics with a couple of inclusions sourced from SDI Code of Ethics with references included.

The revised Code (attached) has been separated into two under Part Four.

A. Companions – Code of Ethics for Spiritual Directors.

B. Companions – Code of Ethics for Givers of the First Spiritual Exercises.

Disclaimer

Following advice from the Province that Companions is not a Province ministry we sought legal advice on a statement for Companions website and agreed on the following .

“Companions have strong links with the Society of Jesus but is itself an independent entity”.

Work in Progress.....

Development of a new Logo

Review and renewal of Apostolic Plan

Review and rewriting of Formation Standards.

Application to Patrick and Anthony Wright Foundation and Education Fund (PAWFED)

The Associations joint application was awarded \$30,000 by the PAWFED Board with an additional grant of \$5000 as possible ‘seeding money’ for the establishment of a National register. The way forward includes providing budget details to PAWFED, timing of project proposals and funding for a symposium at a key consultative stage. This is a long-term project with many areas to explore.

As a beginning, the AECSD Gathering to be held online, from 16th – 18th July this year, will focus on: ***Unity in Diversity: Audacious Dreaming for Spiritual Direction in Australia***. Contemplative conversations with reflections and considerations from the spiritual direction community will lead up to the Gathering. The Gathering will focus on telling the stories of our past origins, present diversity, and future possibilities.

George Warren, past President of AECSD, will present information to AECSD to seek interest from several people with project management experience to contribute to and develop a plan for the project during 2021. George will work with the group. If you are interested, please let me know and I will put you in touch with George. There will be administrative support for the group.

In conclusion, may your Lenten journey open your heart to the joy and blessings of Easter.

Mary