

# ANZATS NEWS

*The Australian and New Zealand Association of Theological Schools*

*President: Rev Dr Chris Mostert; Secretary: Rev Dr Harold Pidwell*

## Special points of interest:

- Council identifies issues
- Conference 2003 report
- Conferences 2004, 2005
- WOCATI Executive to meet in Melbourne
- Consortia make news
- Australian Higher Education Reforms affect Colleges
- Staff movements
- Principals' Conference
- New Associate Degree

## COUNCIL IDENTIFIES ISSUES FACING THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES

At the ANZATS Council meeting in May each State & NZ representative introduced one item as an issue facing theological colleges/educators today. The following were noted:

1. The relationship and tension between theological education and ministerial formation. An issue made more acute by the presence of large numbers of part time students.
2. The casualisation of theological teaching staff and the rise of the administrative model against the previous scholarly model.
3. The role of theological staff in public debates and the need for more 'opinion' articles.
4. The ethnic background of students. What informs the curriculum and what pre-suppositions exist? The context of multiculturalism.
5. Publications. The paucity of appropriate journals. Possibilities may include an expansion of *Colloquium* and the establishment of a monograph series.
6. The increasing administrative load, due often to accreditation procedures.
7. Curriculum development. What will be the requirements in the next decade? An issue highlighted by the move from a chaplaincy to a missional model.
8. Lay ministry preparation.

## CONFERENCE 2003

The annual conference, jointly sponsored by ANZATS and ANZSTS, was held in Sydney from 29 September till 3 October 2004. The original location of this year's conference was to have been Brisbane, but the local planning committee was unable to proceed with its plans. A Sydney committee was established and began plans for a Conference in September, instead of the usual month of July. Late initial publicity is the most likely explanation for the number of participants being around 30, lower than usual.

Nevertheless, it was a good conference, largely because of the excellent series of major lectures, given by Dr Al McFadyen, of the University of Leeds (UK). The Conference theme was 'Theology and Ministry: Making the Connection.' The lectures were focussed on the sexual abuse of children, a theme which was developed in terms of 'sexual abuse as spiritual abuse', on 'naming it as sin' - with the intriguing sub-title, 'Augustine in Bed with Feminist Theologians' - and 'abusing forgiveness'. By common agreement, we were extremely well served by this gentle and thoughtful theologian from Leeds.

Despite the smaller numbers, there was a good number and range of participants' papers. The quality of papers, from both experienced and younger scholars, was impressive and bodes well for the future of theology in Australia and NZ. The organisers had planned a full programme, allowing for two free evenings. However, the location of the Conference at The Southern Cross College of the Assemblies of God, in Chester Hill – a long way from anywhere – restricted the use that could be made of this free time by most of the residential participants. As usual, the annual meeting of ANZATS (and ANZSTS) were held during the Conference. Financial and other reports were received, constitutional amendments made, a new fee structure set and office-bearers elected.

## CONFERENCE 2004

The 2004 ANZATS/ANZSTS Conference will be held in Melbourne 5-9 July. Originally planned for Darwin the location was moved to Melbourne when staffing and other changes at Nungalinga College made it impossible for them to host the Conference.

The focus of the conference will be on the contribution Orthodox theology has made and is making to the Church but will not be limited to that exploration. Invited speakers are Dr Paul Tarazi, a biblical scholar from St Vladimir's Seminary, New York and Bishop Hilarion Alfeyev, Russian Orthodox bishop in Vienna.

This conference gives us the opportunity to explore facets of theology with scholars not usually available to us. The theme is *The glory of God is humankind fully alive*.

## CONFERENCE 2005

Perth, 4-8 July 2005. Speaker: Prof John P Meier.

## WOCATI EXECUTIVE TO MEET IN MELBOURNE

The Executive of the World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions has decided to hold its Executive meeting in Melbourne 5-11th December 2003. ANZATS welcomes the opportunity to meet the WOCATI Executive and will host a dinner on Tuesday 9th December when Australian and WOCATI members can mingle.

## CONSORTIA MAKE NEWS

In 1983 both the Brisbane College of Theology and the Sydney College of Divinity came into being. Celebrations this year marked the 20th anniversaries of those occasions. The SCD took the opportunity to install its first Fellows of the College.

In Auckland in 1985 the Auckland Consortium for Theological Education was formed by the faculties of the Anglican, Methodist and Baptist Colleges, who were very soon joined by the Catholic Institute of Theology. First linked with the Melbourne College of Divinity as one of its Associated Teaching Institutions, ACTE also established links with the University of Auckland which this year opened its School of Theology with Dr Elaine Wainwright installed as its first Professor. ACTE therefore voted itself out of existence in August and celebrated the new relationship that theology and theological colleges have with Auckland University at a dinner on August 8th hosted by the President of ACTE, Dr John Salmon.

## APPOINTMENTS

Andrew McGowan has taken over from David Cole as Director of Trinity College Theological School, Melbourne. John Olley retires at year's end as Principal of the Baptist Theological College of West Australia. Brian Harris from Auckland will replace him. Peter Matheson will retire next year from his position as Principal of the Uniting Church Theological Hall, Melbourne. Douglas Milne is now Principal of the Presbyterian Theological College, Melbourne replacing Allan Harman who has become Research Professor.

## AUSTRALIAN COLLEGES AFFECTED BY HIGHER EDUCATION REFORMS

The reforms to Australian higher education announced by the Commonwealth Government and enshrined in three bills currently before the Senate will profoundly affect Australian theological Colleges. While many aspects of the reforms are subject to protest and have created controversy they do for the first time recognise the significant contribution made by private providers of higher education.

Students will be able to access FEE-HELP, an income contingent loans scheme for the payment of fees and colleges will be required to report to the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training and also be audited by the Australian Universities Quality Agency.

Staff will also have access to the proposed National Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education. ANZATS is involved in further consultations about this in late November.

Colleges will be required to install the Higher Education Management Information System (HEIMS) and also allocate each student a Commonwealth designated student number (CHESSN).

The full ramifications are yet to be understood, and will not be known until and if the bills pass the Senate, but the scene from 2005 will certainly be different.

## **PRINCIPALS' CONFERENCE**

After a consultation with Heads of Colleges received an overwhelming endorsement and support for the concept ANZATS is preparing a conference for Principals of Australian and NZ Colleges to be held in 2004.

A small committee, made up of Principals and ANZATS Executive members is working to finalise date, location and program. Early indications are that it will be held in either Sydney or Melbourne in June 2004.

## **ASSOCIATE DEGREE APPROVED**

A new qualification, the Associate Degree, has been approved by the Australian Education Ministers' Council and is now in effect. It is designed to replace the Advanced Diploma. A two year course which is both complete in itself and also articulates into a full degree, the new program will appeal to many institutions enabling a new cohort of students to begin study. Accreditation authorities are now processing the first applications to offer the new qualification.

## **MESSIANISM, APOCALYPSE AND REDEMPTION:**

*in 20th Century German Thought* is the theme of a conference that will take place at the University of Adelaide, South Australia, from Monday July 19 to Thursday July 22 2004. For all proposals and further information, please contact Dr. Wayne Cristaudo ([wayne.cristaudo@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:wayne.cristaudo@adelaide.edu.au)) & Dr. Engelhard Weigl ([engelhard.weigl@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:engelhard.weigl@adelaide.edu.au)) Keynote Speakers include: Rev Dr Robert Jenson. author of Systematic Theology (OUP)