



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Media Release July 18, 2006

New Appointments made for ACBC Office for the Participation of Women

Collaboration among women and men, clergy, religious and lay people will underpin the operations of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference newly named Office for the Participation of Women, according to its new Director, Kimberley Davies.

Bishop Michael Malone, a member of the Bishops' Commission for Church Ministry (BCCM), announced the appointment of Kimberley today and said she will also be the Executive Secretary to the BCCM. He also announced the appointment of Sue Doepel as Project Officer for the BCCM. Sue will be working with Kimberley in the Office for the Participation of Women (OPW).

The Office was formerly known as the Commission for Australian Catholic Women and was renamed to conform with the recent restructure of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference bodies. Bishop Malone said he was delighted at the new appointments and excited about the future of the OPW.

“Kimberley and Sue are both extraordinarily talented, experienced and faith-filled people who bring a great deal of energy and ideas to this very important aspect of Church Ministry,” he said. “I am confident that they will work together in enhancing the participation of women in the life of the Church in creative and practical ways.”

Kimberley has spent her career in Catholic education in Queensland and was most recently Assistant Principal – Religious Education at St Mary's Primary School Ipswich. She has a Masters in Educational Leadership and recently completed the CACW's initiative, the Graduate Certificate in Interfaith Relations.

She said she was excited by the opportunities which lay ahead of her in the OPW.

“I believe the future is about women and men - clergy, religious and lay members of the Church working together in partnership; recognizing the unique gifts of each other that will enhance the life and mission of the Church,” she said.

“Dialogue and collaboration are keys which can be used to bring about this participation and I look forward to working with and meeting Catholics across Australia. I am mindful of the women who have walked before me who have paved the way for this work to continue and look forward to the life giving experiences that will unfold in the future.”

Sue Doepel is mother of four, and currently living in Canberra. Her background is in teaching, both primary and secondary and she has a Graduate Diploma in Religious Education.

“I am a woman, passionate about living and sharing the Gospel, and reaching out to others with the love of Christ,” she said. “My interests lie in social justice, inter-faith dialogue, building community relationships and seeing lives transformed through meaningful participation in the Catholic Church.”

“I feel inspired by the work already completed by the Bishops Conference and the vision of those before me who have acted with integrity and conviction. I am looking forward to working together, with courage, faith, commitment and humility in the Church of Today, the Church of the Future and the Church of Inclusion.”

The Chairperson of the OPW, Geraldine Hawkes said she was pleased that the new working arrangements for Kimberley and Sue allowed for work/home/community balance and said this flexibility would model the very values that encourage the greater participation of women in the life of the church.

For more information contact Kimberley Davies on 02 6201 9864.