



The ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE The Social Responsibilities Committee April Newsletter 2015

The SRC Website:

<http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/Search/default.aspx?k=sOCIAL%20RESPONSIBILITIES%20COMMITTEE>

New Chair and Executive Officer



Let me introduce myself. My name is Gordon Preece and I was appointed Chair of the SRC and Executive Officer by the Archbishop in July 2014 not long after both Bishop Philip Huggins and Dr Stephen Ames signalled their respective intentions to resign after several years of sterling service as Chair and Executive Officer respectively. I want to thank them heartily on your behalf. They both leave big footprints behind them.

My qualifications for this joint job, besides being a Cats supporter like Bishop Philip, and having been a co-opted member of the SRC for two years, are over thirty years teaching Ethics at Morling Baptist College NSW and Ridley College. I've also been Director of the Centre for Applied Christian Ethics at Ridley; Macquarie Christian Studies Institute, and now Ethos Centre for Christianity and Society. My executive role is in effect a part secondment from Ethos to the Diocese. I am also Minister of Yarraville Parish and author/editor of a dozen or so books on ethical issues ranging from sexuality and bioethics to ecology, work and business.

Assisting me very ably with Research, Admin. and communications is fellow member of the SRC Denise Cooper-Clarke, PhD, who is Researcher for Ethos. Denise is also Chair of the steering committee of the SRC's Prevention of Violence Against Women (PVAW) program of the Diocese, strongly led by Dr Ree Bodde who is currently developing a submission with the Brotherhood, Anglicare and Lifeworks, for the Victorian Government's Inquiry into Domestic Violence. It's good that the church has been on the front-foot with this issue for a while.

One of our goals is to work closely with our outstanding agencies to make the Diocese and the wider public aware of their enormous practical and research contribution to social issues. We also hope to add some theological input to this contribution, in dialogue with, for instance, Lord Maurice Glasman's brilliant Brotherhood Sambell Oration on The Common Good (see link below). All of this is part of our charter.

We hope that this quarterly Newsletter will give you a good idea of our areas of action and research in serving the Diocese, its agencies and parishes, in engaging society with the reconciliation and justice of Jesus. David Peake's piece on Churches Educating and Engaging Disadvantaged Young People is a good sample of the work of the SRC's reflective practitioners. We welcome your feedback.

In Christ's service,

Gordon Preece, gordon@ethos.org.au

The SRC's charter is to:

- Reflect on and engage in social and ethical issues which impact on the community
- Identify and act on opportunities for informed dialogue that build a community that values social cohesion over marginalisation, fear and difference; and
- Stand with and give voice to the oppressed and voiceless in our community.

(Formulated at SRC Special Meeting, February 2008)

The Social Responsibilities Committee (SRC) is a Committee of the Synod of the Diocese of Melbourne. The SRC assists the Archbishop, clergy and people of the Diocese to discern and fulfil their collective and individual responsibilities as Christians in society.

In establishing the SRC, Synod recognises that the Church, together with its members, has a responsibility in a democracy to engage in debates relating to the common good, giving voice to our belief that all people are created in God's image.

The SRC aims to:

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- Identify and act on opportunities for informed dialogue that build a community that values social cohesion over marginalisation, fear and difference; and
- Stand with and give voice to the oppressed and voiceless in our community.

The chart below expresses the SRC's charter in the top horizontal row, and on the vertical row recent Synod motions we are actioning in line with the charter, as well as broader research into challenging meta issues of ecological and economic change in ways that help the diocese, communities and parishes manage transition ethically and missionally.

SRC WORK CHART 2015	Resource for the Archbishop/Pri- mate	Formulate Diocesan responses to social issues	Research on social issues	Education in the Diocese (includes Synod)	Communication: Diocese, agencies, organisations, groups, and individuals	Assigned to:
ACTION Divestment of Diocesan Funds from non-renewable energy equities		3 rd meeting on 23/6 with Anglican Funds		Synod report by Sept.	TMA article -8/15	Gordon Preece & Chris White
Education - what can this synod do to promote equal education opportunities in Australia			Winter 15 Zadok Perspectives	Synod report by Sept.	Meet heads of schools by June	Hans Christiansen, S. Ames & David Peake
Economy – unemployment, youth unemployment & education			Article by D. Peake		TMA article 6-15	David Peake
Homelessness						Shane Hubner (leave)
Refugees - collation of Church documents & views on refugees			Zadok Autm Papers, Perspectives		Iranian network, Interview & TMA?	Gordon Preece & Christos Kastaniotis
RESEARCH						
Transition from a high to low carbon energy economy			Climate of Hope book.			G. Preece, Mick Pope
Transition Parishes - employment, ecology			Chapter in Mission bk			G. Preece
Transition to a post neo liberal economy			Autumn Zadok Paper			Ian Barns
Theological reflection on the Divine economy						Ian Barns, G. Preece

Churches Educating and Engaging Disengaged Young People David Peake

Children and young people [especially those in middle years] are disengaging from school in vast numbers. Those who are most at risk are those who, when their life circumstances, learning experiences and/or behaviours impede learning, reduce school success and discourage participation. Students become disengaged from education for many reasons, including the learning environment not meeting their needs, homelessness, family breakdown, poverty, mental health problems, low self-esteem, previous poor educational experiences, low educational achievement and challenging behaviours.

Disadvantaged young Victorians are over-represented among those who are at risk of disengaging or already disengaged from school. Children and young people who disengage early from school are subject to yet further disadvantage. Evidence suggests that those who disengage early from school tend to be significantly more disadvantaged in later life with: an increased likelihood of experiencing

unemployment; poorer outcomes in health, accommodation and social status; greater risk of offending behaviour; greater susceptibility to the influences of drug and alcohol misuse, homelessness and anti-social behaviour; and lowered lifelong income.

The co-existence of “poverty alongside plenty” is the driving reality for our nation’s Social Inclusion agenda. It’s a situation in which, as Tony Vinson has told us, the people growing up in Australia’s poorest postcodes are up to *seven times* more likely to suffer from low incomes, long-term unemployment, early school leaving, physical and mental disabilities, prison admissions and to be at risk of child abuse and neglect.

Nelson Mandela says *‘poverty is not natural, it is man-made ... and overcoming poverty is not an act of charity. It is an act of justice.’* The response to a man-made problem is a man-made solution. This response must be seen as an act of justice. No one action, policy, project, vision, individual or approach can fix this Country’s social problems. Indeed, no grand scheme suggests itself. But a variety of small ideas from people who are passionate about change can drive progress and make a real difference in our various small parts of our nation.

Where is the church in all this? Will our response be an act of justice for the increasing numbers of those becoming disadvantaged?

The Church’s orientation won’t just come from social statistics – by themselves they dull our minds to the human stories and circumstances behind the numbers. We must always return to the Gospel and healing parables of hope.

Story 1: A new primary school entrant - a little frail boy, who the teacher said only knew two words. Tony Vinson said to him, ‘You know two words – what are they?’ The boy started slapping his wrist, while uttering the two words: ‘Bad Boy’!

Story 2: From the 2004 Senate Inquiry into poverty and financial hardship:

‘Like millions of other low-income Australians, I am one of the hidden poor, just keeping afloat. We are flat out treading water out here ... making very little headway towards our aspirations, ... one crisis or catastrophe away from the poor box. We are living on the edge’.

*‘We live in the shadows of the dismal statistics. We are not mad, bad, sad or totally **dysfunctionally** overwhelmed by our life circumstances. Our poverty is poverty of resources, services, opportunities... it is getting too hard to make ends meet, let alone work towards our dreams’.*

Nothing seems to have changed in nearly 10 years! Those who start their schooling well behind others, whose participation is spasmodic and who leave at the earliest opportunity, face an uphill battle – unemployment, low income, poor health and ‘making ends meet’ by criminal means, resulting in high rates of convictions and imprisonment.

John Embling once wrote that ‘kids’ from families in distress *‘were the road kill of affluent Australia’*.... doomed in his stark words *‘to homicide or suicide, prostitution and addiction’.*

But an indigenous Brazilian proverb reminds us of the change that can come from communities coming together with imaginations fired by hope. *‘When we dream alone it is only a dream. But when we dream together it is the beginning of reality’.*

Churches establishing 'learning environments' to engage disadvantaged children and young people can encourage them to achieve the best possible educational outcomes for themselves in the short term whilst improving their life opportunities and community wellbeing in the long term.

We must not cop out by saying it's someone else's responsibility. Each of us, especially church-members, working together, can change their part of the world. Is Social Inclusion an illusion? – it might well be if we choose not to advance a fairer Australia.

In economic boom times there are no excuses for communities - and their children - to be suffering from unemployment, lower standards of mental and physical health, or social conditions causing alienation and rising rates of crime. Poverty is not natural - overcoming poverty and its trappings demands an act of will towards justice by all parties – particularly the Church.

For the Church to engage the educationally disengaged is tantamount to transforming lives - building meaning -bringing hope. Additional/ alternate learning environments [created by the Church in local church buildings /communities] must reflect the following words written by a young man living on the margins yet engaged in a new way of learning: 'Those who trust us, educate us'.

Ernest L. Boyer once spoke of 'Making the Connections':

I know how idealistic it may sound, but it is my urgent hope that in the century ahead students in the nation's schools will be judged not by their performance on a single test, but by the quality of their lives. It's my hope that students in the classrooms of tomorrow will be encouraged to be creative, not conforming, and learn to cooperate rather than compete.

Alternative education environments have traditionally formed part of the range of flexible student-centred learning options offered to re-engage vulnerable young people in education. Alternative education offers intensive support to students who are experiencing significant difficulties attending mainstream schools.

According to the OECD a student-centred approach to teaching and learning is one that

- * Is based on a *challenging curriculum connected* to students' lives
- * Caters for *individual differences* in interest, achievement and learning styles
- * Develops students' ability to take *control* over their own learning
- * Uses authentic tasks that *require complex thought* and allows time for exploration
- * Emphasises *building meaning* and understanding *rather than completing tasks*
- * Involves *co-operation, communication and negotiation*
- * Connects learning to the community.

Student-centred learning is expensive and demands high levels of professionalism and pedagogical understanding from educators. Resources and support for school, community and church-based programs providing student-centred learning choices for at risk students are required.

Suggested actions:

- * Provide alternative and creative courses targetting the learning needs of up to 5% of the compulsory age secondary school population in any one year
- * Strengthen teacher capacity to offer student-centred learning
- * Increase the core teacher staffing of schools in disadvantaged communities
- * Deepen the measures of student achievement and engagement

* Develop a research, sound evidence and good practice agenda and clearinghouse for student centred learning

When we evaluate the effectiveness of the national Social Inclusion Agenda we must not be deluded by figures and graphs – statistics and fancy diagrams – our anger should not be assuaged until all people have the opportunity to be fully immersed into their community, have access to learning and earning, be adequately housed, and where no one lines up for baked beans or one minute noodles for their evening meal.

A local model: E QUBED Engagement /Education / Entrepreneurship

E QUBED is a partnership program with the local community, with national and international service and welfare providers, and driven by the local Anglican church of Broadmeadows/Dallas.

E QUBED is a social and economic, risk-management initiative, designed to reduce the injustice of disadvantage through *enterprise education models* providing learning experiences, skills, opportunities and resources fostering self-determination, self-worth and hope for the future.

Objectives

E QUBED addresses the injustice of disadvantage by:

- improving opportunities to learn
- increasing capacity to earn
- improving individuals' self-worth
- increasing participation in the workforce
- decreasing participation in destructive behaviours
- increasing the volume of community leaders
-

E QUBED develops *local partnerships* with service providers (schools, agencies, disability service providers etc) and works innovatively across and the City of Hume to engage disengaged youth.

E QUBED provides a series of *locally-driven and/or student-driven enterprises*. It is a community *resource and advocacy* centre: a hub to engage the community in creative and innovative ways.

E QUBED has developed a lifelong learning culture in the Broadmeadows/Dallas community through:

- businesses, education providers, community capacity builders, health workers and youth service providers working together to provide *enhanced learning and employment programs*
- supporting parents, community leaders, indigenous Australians and culturally diverse communities in education and learning opportunities
- supporting people in their learning by establishing mentoring networks and programs
- providing access to (and support in) technology use

Program direction

E QUBED has worked locally to construct these partnerships for change within the community. Its programs have:

- built on the capabilities of individuals through a focus on enterprise education, numeracy, literacy and through encouraging and supporting successful experiences in life
- empowered individuals and communities through building self-esteem, values and motivation through personal development and leadership programs

- provided young people with access to resources so that they can build their futures, improve their own lives and those of their families
- built a network that mends the broken and supports individuals facing life's challenges
- provided counselling and support services (with partner organisations) ensuring support and encouragement for participants
- improved the availability, community acceptance and utilisation of family health and mediation and counselling services
- developed positive employment and training opportunities for youth, unemployed, and disabled
- developed community capacity to affect change
- provided computer training within an enterprise education framework
- explored new employment possibilities through E Qubed's enterprise education program: **ASPIRE**.

E-Qubed has established a network for social entrepreneurship which would increase 'social profit' for our community. This network could include creative partnering with federal, state and local governments, NGOs, businesses, churches, charities and other local and national institutions.

Conclusion

The E Qubed Initiative is a model of enterprise education (incorporating numeracy and literacy) for disadvantaged youth and families of Broadmeadows/Dallas. It has offered an innovative and relevant approach to learning and the gaining of meaningful experiences and skill building within an environment of community awareness and co-operation. The objective is to offer purposeful learning experiences, and new challenges, resources and opportunities that will create motivation for success and self-determination within the individual while raising the productivity, dignity and spirit of the community at large.

This initiative is a replicable and sustainable model that can be rolled out across Melbourne Diocese, to offer hope and viable solutions for disadvantage and disengagement in our neediest regions.

Augustine of Hippo once said of hope: *'Hope has two beautiful daughters. Their names are anger and courage: anger at the way things are and courage to make sure that things do not remain the way they are'*.

Vision is not seeing things as they are, but as they will be.

Rev David Peake OAM is Anglican Priest—in the parish of Dallas /Broadmeadows; CEO EQUBED Inc; Executive Director MALPA and a member of the SRC

References

- 'Moved to Compassion', Dr John Falzon, St Vincent de Paul Society, July 2009
- 'The Forgotten', Dr John Falzon, St Vincent de Paul Society, May 2009
- 'Dropping off the Edge: the distribution of disadvantage in Australia', Professor Tony Vinson, February 2007
- 'Social Inclusion as a determinant of mental health and well-being', Vic Health, January 2005
- 'An Australian Social Inclusion Agenda', Julia Gillard MP and Senator Penny Wong, Election 2007
- 'Social Inclusion: origins, concepts and key themes', Australian Government, October 2008
- 'Social Exclusion –The Sydney Experience', Anglicare Diocese of Sydney Policy Unit, June 2009
- Hume Social Justice Charter 2007

Sambell Oration 2015



It is relationships - not programs - that will truly transform the lives of the poor, argues English social thinker Maurice Glasman.

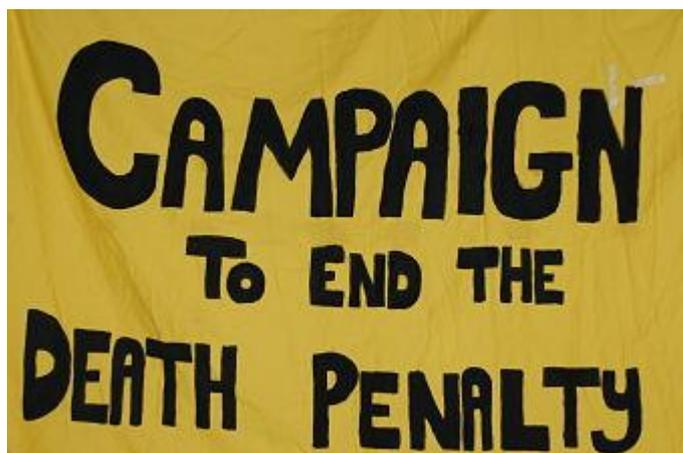
Drawing from the pragmatism of Machiavelli as well as the theology of Thomas Aquinas, he goes searching for 'the common good' in an increasingly polarised world. The long-time community organiser and member of Britain's House of Lords delivered the 2015 Sambell Oration, a keynote speech in the Brotherhood's calendar of public events.

Lord Maurice Glasman, Baron Glasman of Stoke Newington and Stamford Hill, is not your average member of the British House of Lords. For one thing, he chooses to live with his family in a flat over a clothes shop in north London. The Labour peer calls himself a 'radical traditionalist'. A former director of the Faith and Citizenship Programme at London Metropolitan University, Glasman's call for a new form of social and political life has influenced the British political debate.

Read Maurice Glasman's speech: <http://www.bsl.org.au/media-centre/sambell-oration/>

Andrew Chan & Myuran Sukumaran and the death penalty

Brian Johnstone



Campaign to end the death penalty, savetookie.org, flickr cc

The lives of these two men has long hung on the outcome of pleas to end the death penalty. The key argument of President Joko Widodo is that this lethal means (death by firing squad) is justified for

the purpose of saving his people from the addiction and death caused by drugs. The Indonesian government claims that, in that country, approximately 50 victims of drugs die every day. The number of persons who die each year as a consequence of drugs in Australia is around 1,500. The damage to lives from drugs is amply documented by the recent book by Dr John Sherman and Tony Valenta, *Drug Addiction in Australia*. There can be no denying the harm caused by drug trafficking; the moral question is whether capital punishment is an effective and morally acceptable way of dealing with it.

For more, see:

http://www.socialpolicyconnections.com.au/?p=8541&utm_source=social+policy+connections&utm_campaign=9707ba2e92-

Capital punishment – some 2006 SRC reflections with adaptations, updates and links

The Anglican Church has a dubious connection with the history of capital punishment. The thirty-nine Articles of Religion - originating in the theologically and politically turbulent sixteenth century - allowed for capital punishment by the State “for heinous and grave offences”. As contemporary Anglicans, we share this link with a tradition that affirmed the right to take life in certain situations. However, just as Christians have repented for Christianity’s role in upholding slavery, racism and sexism, it may be timely for Christians to repent of our collusion in capital punishment. In the light of the recent sentencing to death by firing squad of two of the “Bali Nine”, the Diocese of Melbourne Social Responsibilities Committee (SRC) believes that human beings do not possess the right to take another human being’s life.

It is in this context that the theological concept of the sanctity of all life must function alongside judicial measures for punishment. As a consequence of this, the SRC is totally opposed to the principle of capital punishment particularly the application of mandatory death penalties (without discretion), whichever nation or state carries out such sentences. It follows from this principle that the executions of Bali Nine members, Saddam Hussein and [Bali bomber] Amrosi would all be equally opposed.

It is a fundamental tenet of judicial processes to allow people to have their cases considered on their individual merits – mandatory death sentences do not permit this. As Christians, we believe that there is a potential for radical transformation in all people, a capacity to transcend human limitations and circumstances in ways that bring about repentance (literally, a “turning around”). Capital punishment is a practice that denies this potential.

As Christians, we also acknowledge the power of hope in our lives. We appeal to the power of forgiveness and healing, rather than retribution. All criminal justice systems should be about reconciliation. Undoubtedly offenders should be held accountable for their actions and reparation should be made to both the victim/s and society who have been hurt for any law breaking. However, in the spirit of the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, we should, while still holding them accountable, endeavour to restore the offender so that he/she can be included again in the community. Jesus’ justice shows that reconciliation is only possible by inclusion in the community.

To cast people out by death or alienation may make those in power feel safe and virtuous, but it diminishes their humanity. As Christians, we also have a responsibility to offer our perspective on these issues. At the 2003 Synod meeting of the Melbourne Diocese, (in the context of the Bali bombings and the Amrosi case), Synod members passed a motion affirming that “every human being is of eternal value as an end for whom we should work rather than as a means to some other end and therefore: (a) upholds the abolition of the death penalty as a punishment for crimes against our society in Victoria and Australia, (b) supports the call of the 1988 Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops to speak out against all governments who practice capital punishment, and encourages

these governments to find alternative ways of sentencing offenders so that the divine dignity of every human being is respected and yet justice is pursued.” Jesus was once asked his opinion of the death penalty ... he replied, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone” (John 8:7).

Links: Debate: Is the death penalty wrong?

Conversations among Christians on the death penalty have emerged as Australia awaits a decision on whether Bali Nine duo Andrew Chan and Myuran Sukumaran will be executed in Indonesia. Chan has been ordained as a minister while in prison and reportedly professes strong Christian faith. Here, Eternity republishes two arguments from either side of the debate on the death penalty.

<http://www.biblesociety.org.au/news/debate-death-penalty-wrong>

Simon Longstaff, ‘Ugly parallels between two merciless policies’ [Refugees and Capital Punishment], *The Age*, 5/3/15.

Links Relevant to the recent Synod Motion concerning Fossil Fuel Divestment.

Within two years the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne will take all reasonable steps to divest its shares in corporations whose revenues from fossil fuel extraction or production exceed 20 per cent of their total revenue. SRC Chair Gordon Preece and Ethos Business colleague Chris White are assisting the Diocesan Trusts Board in their discussions.

Below is some recent material from a global Anglican bishops meeting re divestment , where seventeen bishops and archbishops say that Anglican church investments in fossil fuel companies are incompatible with a just and sustainable future:

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/mar/30/anglican-bishops-letter-urging-fossil-fuel-divestment>

and an article outlining the issues from a pro-divestment Guardian Weekly perspective

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/mar/09/10-myths-about-fossil-fuel-divestment-put-to-the-sword>

Postscript: As a body elected by Synod, the Social Responsibilities Committee explores issues on behalf of the Melbourne Diocese. The SRC is aware that there is a wide range of views across the Anglican Church in Australia on these issues. Like other diocesan committees, the SRC does not claim to represent all of these views.

Events

70th Anniversary of the death of Dietrich Bonhoeffer 9/4/1945.

See Gordon Preece:

<http://www.ethos.org.au/Online-Articles/Engage-Mail/recovering-bonhoeffer-from-his-betrayers>

Anzac Day 2015

11 a.m. St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne

Truly We Will Remember Them : An Ecumenical service of lament, repentance and hope for the Centenary of the Gallipoli landing



- ❖ to lament the destruction and waste of so many young men and women on all sides,
- ❖ the pain and anguish suffered by those who returned,
- ❖ and by their families and communities
- ❖ to repent of the ongoing war and violence in our world and in our hearts;
- ❖ to hear again the hope of God's gift of peace,
- ❖ given to us in the Crucified and Risen Lord,
- ❖ being lived out in many scenes of conflict.

Sponsored by St Paul's Cathedral and Pax Christi Australia, The Victorian Council of Churches, the Melbourne Catholic Office for Justice and Peace, The Uniting Church in Australia, The Anglican Social Responsibilities Committee, Social Policy Connections, and the Anzac Centenary Peace Coalition

Please make this invitation widely known through the poster & handout attachments.

Also see the excellent article by Katharine Massam, *Commemorating the Centenary of Gallipoli*:

[http://www.socialpolicyconnections.com.au/?p=8547&utm_source=social+policy+connections&utm_campaign=9707ba2e92-SPC Newsletter April 2013&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_28e2d8da4d-9707ba2e92-182899265&ct=t\(SPC News April 2015\)](http://www.socialpolicyconnections.com.au/?p=8547&utm_source=social+policy+connections&utm_campaign=9707ba2e92-SPC+Newsletter+April+2013&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_28e2d8da4d-9707ba2e92-182899265&ct=t(SPC+News+April+2015))

Faith in the Media? Barney Zwartz's Faith & Work Award Dinner, 23/5/15

This year's recipient of the Faith and Work Award is eminent journalist and former long-term Age Religion Editor Barney Zwartz. He, along with his wife, fellow-journalist and author Morag, show neither fear nor favour in their reporting. This was most evident recently in Barney's challenging

reporting of the sexual abuse issues in relation to various churches. I heard him give a powerful and moving address on that vexed issue to the Australian Media and Engagement Project (AMEP). Reporting on such a tragic and visceral issue must have taken a toll.

With Barney's retirement from *The Age* there is now no full-time religion editor in Australian mainstream media. He is hence uniquely qualified to ask if there still a place for faith in the media or if it is of little public interest. Also, do we still have faith in the media?

FOR YOUR DIARY - REGISTRATIONS AT WWW.RIDLEY.EDU.AU/FAITHWORK

FAITH & WORK

AWARD DINNER

SATURDAY 23 MAY / 6:30 FOR 7PM -
RIDLEY COLLEGE, 170 THE AVENUE, PARKVILLE, VICTORIA / \$75 FOR 3-COURSE MEAL & DRINKS



BARNEY ZWARTZ
2015 Award Recipient & Speaker

Barney is the former Religion Editor for *The Age*, and is now with The Melbourne Anglican and Centre for Public Christianity. Barney is a truthful, fearless, and prophetic voice in the media. He is also an occasional music critic and reviewer, and Manchester United supporter.



PROF. SEAN MCDONOUGH
Pre-Dinner Speaker
"Serious Play: Work as Sub-Creation with God"

Sean is from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Boston. Sean worked for McKinsey Consultants, and taught at Pacific Theological Seminary, Fiji, and is biblical editor for the Theology of Work Project www.theologyofwork.org. He is author of *Christ as Creator: Origins of a New Testament Doctrine* (Oxford, 2010) and co-editor *Cosmology and New Testament Theology* (Continuum, 2008).

