



LORETO

Australia & South East Asia

Institute of The Blessed Virgin Mary
Province of Australia and South East Asia

LORETO FORMATION FRAMEWORK

Foreword

The Loreto Province of Australia and South East Asia is a network of dedicated individuals and communities committed to the flourishing of the vision and mission of the Gospels through the lens of Mary Ward. We foster her mission to seek truth and do justice, particularly through the education of women and 'other means congruous to the times'. The shared desire of staff, sisters, volunteers, board and committee members to deepen this collective vision is a constant source of pride and inspiration.

Over the years, our network has been strengthened by formative experiences, such as the Mary Ward pilgrimage, staff conferences, the Loreto Ministries Colloquium, strategic planning days and the significant contribution of many people. It is my deep desire that we continue to work together to promote a creative approach to formation in a more structured and cohesive manner across Australia, the Philippines, Timor-Leste and Vietnam.

The Province therefore provides this Loreto Formation Framework: a programme for the use of boards, committees and leadership teams. This Framework provides a common foundation for knowledge, experience and reflection, based on the Ignatian spiritual tradition, that is essential for the work of formation to take place in both heart and mind. Within the Province, collaboration around the ongoing work of formation is an integral part of our shared leadership. The Framework will enable Board Chairs, Principals and Executives to work together in their own contexts to plan for the delivery of these resources each year, with the support of Loreto Ministries.

May the words of Mary Ward to her first companions continue to inspire, encourage and accompany us on this journey:

I commend to you the practice of your vocation, that it be constant, efficacious and affectionate.¹

Wendy Hildebrand ibvm
Province Leader
December 2020

Cover Image: Mary Ward Sculpture, Meliesa Judge | Liquid Metal Studios

¹ Adapted from Poyntz, M. & Wigmore, W. *A briefe relation of the holy life & happy death of our dearest mother, of blessed memory, Mrs. Mary Ward.*

Vision

Mission is at the heart of who we are, and love is the driving force that urges us on.²

Formation in our tradition is the experience of being immersed in the story, beliefs, spirituality and teachings of Mary Ward. This process occurs in dialogue with the gifts brought to the table by all members of our network: professional experience, ethical and moral frameworks, and a desire to use one's strengths in the service of others.

In our tradition, the mystery of God's love is at the centre of our formation as human beings. We draw upon our personal and communal experiences in a life-long search and exploration of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. In the tradition of the Institute, we enter into the ongoing work of formation through dialogue, conversation and sharing of wisdom, experience and insights. Through the practice of Ignatian spirituality, we are invited to encounter the holiness of our daily lives and the challenges of our world.

Formation strengthens our collective mission and is critical to supporting stewardship of our mission into the future. We are called to this task through the diverse education and social ministry works of Loreto in Australia, Vietnam, the Philippines and Timor-Leste. We work in partnership and collaboration across our province network, with the global Mary Ward Institute and in communion with the wider family of the Church.

Leadership in formation belongs to those with key roles in our Mary Ward Circle of Friends. This responsibility will be particularly taken up by Board Chairs, CEOs, Principals, Leadership Teams and those with director, mission leadership, governance and formation roles across our network.

Each one here has a gift to bring, each one here has an experience to bring. If we come to listen deeply and to learn and be inspired by one another, we too will be transformed.³

² Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *Constitutions of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (Rome, 2009), Vol II, Ch 2.1

³ Noelle Corscadden ibvm, "Opening Talk" (conference paper, Loreto International Schools' Conference, Pretoria, June 2017)



Principles for Formation

Spiritual formation in the Catholic Christian tradition is a dynamic process of growth in following the way of Jesus in becoming one with God. 'Formation' generally refers to a set of experiences designed to prepare a person or a group for a particular purpose. In preference to a word like 'training', formation is most often used in the context of spiritual development and conjures images of deep learning that involved attitudes, values, commitment to particular life directions, as well as knowledge and skills. It is the 'who' and the 'why' that informs the 'what' and the 'how' questions of our particular work ...⁴

Our formation framework will be:

- Grounded in a sacramental view of life and in Mary Ward's faith that God is experienced in all aspects of our lives. We are invited to respond with verity, freedom and in relationship with a loving and creating God
- Gospel centred, explicitly Christological and reflective of contemporary theology, Catholic liturgical life and the realities of our Church and world
- Reflective of our baptismal call, sense of personal vocation and responsiveness to mission and leadership
- Nurtured by prayer, reflective practice, spiritual conversation and Ignatian discernment
- Enriched by significant Church, Institute and Province documents on the nature and purpose of Catholic ministry
- Integrated through head, heart and hands; in dialogue with and enriched by the culture and context of each community
- Cognisant of the history, traditions and stories of Mary Ward, her early companions, followers and communities around the world; their past, present and future
- Framed by a global awareness of the potential of Mary Ward's mission and vision today in line with the Province's justice priorities

⁴ Jill Gowdie, *Stirring the Soul of Catholic Education: Formation for Mission* (Vaughan Publishing, 2017), 20

Outcomes of Formation

A Christian's mission in the world is splendid, it is a mission intended for everyone, it is a mission of service, excluding no one; it requires a great deal of generosity and above all setting one's gaze and heart facing on High, to invoke the Lord's help. There is a great need for Christians who joyfully witness to the Gospel in everyday life. The disciples, sent out by Jesus, "returned with joy" (v. 17). When we do this, our heart fills with joy.⁵

Throughout our formation program participants will:

- Recognise and encounter the belief that God is present in the ordinary and extraordinary moments of our lives
- Understand relevant principles of scripture, Christology, contemporary theology and the liturgical life of the Church
- Identify their own personal response to stewardship and leadership within the Loreto network
- Experience an integrated formation approach of head, heart and hands and acknowledge the importance of diverse community contexts within the Loreto network
- Understand key themes of significant Church and Institute documents regarding education, pastoral care and social teaching
- Experience different types of prayer, reflective practice and elements of Mary Ward and Ignatian spirituality
- Know, discuss and reflect upon key aspects of the Mary Ward and IBVM/CJ story; and be inspired to work collaboratively for our future
- Be empowered to act upon the core Mary Ward and Gospel imperatives to justice, particularly relating to women and children, First Nations People, climate change, refugees and human trafficking

⁵ Francis, *Angelus - Regina Caeli*, Vatican website, July 3, 2016, http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2016/documents/papa-francesco_angelus_20160703.html

Framework

Three central foci – *story*, *spirituality* and *scope* – act as a springboard for the sequential exploration of nine topics:



A topic from each focus is to be considered each year across a three-year cycle using a variety of modes. Across three years all nine topics will be considered according to local context and in relation to the mission-informed induction offered to new leaders and board members across our network.

The outer circle integrates the annual topics through a continuum that: honours the experience of all participants, the context of the organisation, our Catholic Loreto tradition and our connection to the Divine. This continuum will guide the integration of the material presented across the formation experiences:

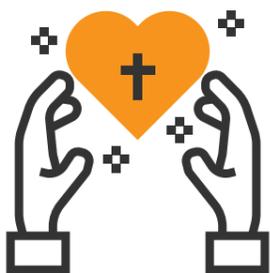
... Life-giving mystery ... Living tradition ... Local context ... Lived experience ...



Core Content

STORY

Core Concern	Content
Institute Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic context and narrative of Mary Ward's life and vision, mission and ministry • Early companions, key leaders (eg M Teresa Ball) and spread of the Institute (C17-C21) • Contemporary overview of the global Institute
Province Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story of Founding Sisters, particularly Mother Gonzaga Barry • The educational and social vision and leadership of Australian Loreto leaders • Contemporary overview of the Loreto network in Australia & South East Asia, e.g. our Province, Loreto Ministries, MWIA, Loreto Vietnam, Loreto Timor
Ministry Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The story of the establishment of the relevant school/ministry • The contemporary reality, strengths and challenges of the relevant school/ministry in living as a Mary Ward community • Significance of ministry's crest/logo, motto, key symbols, physical markers



SPIRITUALITY

Core Concern

Content

Gospel Vision

- Gospel stories and values relating to teaching, healing and welfare ministries
- A scriptural & theological vision of justice
- The call of the Gospel for leadership, service, transformation and life-affirming relationships

Mary Ward Spirituality

- Mary Ward's major insights: Glory Vision, Just Soul, Take the Same and five major virtues: felicity, freedom, justice, sincerity & verity
- Spiritual sources: the Painted Life, Mary Ward's writings, contemporary commentary
- Mary Ward's spirituality as lived and experienced today

Discernment

- Examen: personal and communal
- Spiritual conversation and meeting practice
- Discernment: principles and practice





SCOPE

Core Concern	Content
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our personal and community response to the universal call to holiness/wholeness • Spirituality of leadership and governance • The role of Catholic ministry (eg education, social ministry) in the overall mission of the Catholic Church
Contemporary Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding as Church in our land: child safeguarding, Plenary Council, role of women, future leadership, engagement with young people • Responding as Mary Ward's global Institute: union of Mary Ward's Institute, canonisation process, Five Calls, human trafficking, justice priorities • Responding as Australians: on matters of diversity, inclusion, justice, equity
Ethics and Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary Ward global and province justice framework and priorities • Promotion of human rights and global citizenship through Catholic Social Teaching and the agenda of the United Nations • Integration of mission and business outcomes

End Notes

The Loreto Formation Framework was endorsed by the Province Leadership Team and Loreto Ministries Board in 2020.

The Framework is supplemented by a live resource list and planning document. Loreto leaders (Board Chairs, Principals, Mission Leaders, CEOs and Executive Officers) will be supported by Loreto Ministries in the implementation of this framework and will reflect upon the impact of formation experiences in their Annual Reports.

The Framework will be updated annually and reviewed formally across the latter part of 2022.

Discernment and Writing Team | January-October 2020

Wendy Hildebrand ibvm, Rachel McLoughlin ibvm, Michelle McCarty, Anne Muirhead and Paul Ould

The Church will have to initiate everyone – priests, religious and laity – into this ... the “art of accompaniment” which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other (cf. Ex 3:5). The pace of this accompaniment must be steady and reassuring, reflecting our closeness and our compassionate gaze which also heals, liberates and encourages growth in the Christian life.⁶

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⁶ Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium: Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World*, Apostolic Exhortation, Vatican website, November 24, 2013, http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html



Loreto Australia and South East Asia
PO Box 4082
Auburn South
VIC 3122

Phone: +61 (03) 9813 4023

Email: admin@loreto.org.au

Website: www.loreto.org.au

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For further copies of this document please contact:

Phone: +61 (03) 9813 4023

Email: communications@loreto.org.au

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