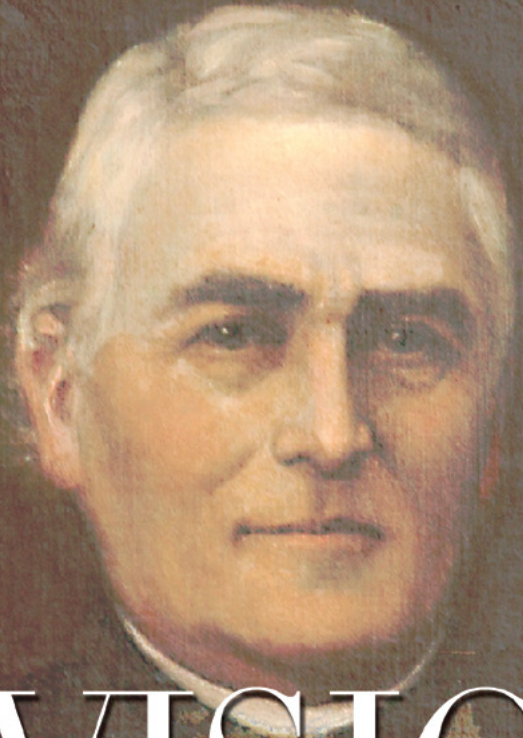


A portrait of an elderly man with white hair, looking directly at the camera. The portrait is set against a dark, textured background.

A VISION RESTORED

LAY MSC IN AUSTRALIA



James Littleton MSC

A VISION RESTORED

LAY MSC IN AUSTRALIA

James Littleton MSC

**A Vision Restored
Lay MSC in Australia**

© James Littleton MSC

ISBN 978-0-9953840-3-3

Published by Missionaries of the Sacred Heart
Tread House, P.O. Box 252, Coogee, NSW 2034
October 2018

Printed by Elect Printers
112 Wollongong St, Fyshwick, ACT

CONTENTS

<i>Introduction</i>	<i>X</i>
<i>The Vision of Our Founder.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Revival of the Charism.</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Chapter Decisions.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Developments 1981 – 1986.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Consolidation 1987 – 1992</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Provincial and General Chapters</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Further Developments 1993 – 1997.....</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>National and International Meetings 1998 – 1999</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>Into the New Millennium.....</i>	<i>54</i>
<i>Significant Events 2004 – 2008</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>MSC Lay and Professed Council and Heartworks</i>	<i>71</i>
<i>Other Developments in Recent Years</i>	<i>74</i>
<i>One Heart – Many Bodies</i>	<i>79</i>
<i>Third International Meeting, 2017.....</i>	<i>82</i>
<i>The Groups in 2018.....</i>	<i>85</i>
<i>In Memoriam.....</i>	<i>87</i>
<i>Appendix.....</i>	<i>88</i>

Introduction

The French and the Australian provinces of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart can claim to be the first provinces to initiate the restoration of Fr Chevalier's vision to have a lay branch of our congregation. Sadly all reference to that aspect of our charism was dropped from the second set of our Constitutions approved in 1907. It was not until over 60 years later, after the Second Vatican Council had requested all religious congregations to rewrite their Constitutions in the light of the charism of the Founder, that we realised that an integral part of Fr Chevalier's vision had been abandoned. Gradually that vision has been restored.

These lay people were initially referred to as Associates. We came to realise that this was not an appropriate title. It was officially abandoned at an international meeting in 1999. Since then we have used the title Lay MSC, although it took many years to be accepted in practice.

Today all MSC provinces have a lay branch and there would be several thousand Lay MSC throughout the world. Some, but not all, would have made an official commitment. When we think of the other two Chevalier congregations, the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, we refer to the Laity of the Chevalier Family.

In writing this history I have adopted a chronological approach. In this way I have recorded developments and events year by year. I could have chosen to write separate chapters on each group, but this would have become repetitive. However I have endeavoured to name all those people who have been in regular attendance at group meetings over the years. The sources for this historical piece of writing can be found in the MSC Archives held at Kensington monastery.

For the future, the Lay MSC movement in Australia should become more independent. This has begun with the formation of the MSC Lay and Professed Council in 2009, and that process will continue. It has been my pleasure and privilege to have been involved with this movement over several decades and to have met with so many dedicated people who live out a Spirituality of the Heart in their personal lives.

I wish to express my thanks to the following for their assistance in preparing this booklet for publication:

- Anthony Caruana MSC for his help with research
- John Walker MSC for collating the photographs
- Annette Webb for her assistance with typing
- Bernard Kane for the final set-up of the booklet.



*James Littleton MSC
October 2018*

The Vision of our Founder

The Third Order

The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart take as the date of their foundation, December 8, 1854, although their official establishment by the archbishop of Bourges as a religious society in his diocese occurred on September 8, 1855. Both dates are feast days of Mary, the mother of Jesus, for whom our Founder had a very deep devotion.

Fr Jules Chevalier adopted as the motto of our congregation: *May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be everywhere loved*. From the very beginning he was very much aware that this motto could not be effectively implemented solely by a community of male religious. He needed the involvement of religious women, diocesan priests and lay people, who would share in this mission.

Hence Fr Chevalier established an Association of Diocesan Priests of the Sacred Heart. This group became relatively widespread throughout France and some of them joined our congregation. The Association of lay people he called a Third Order. To explain this term, older religious congregations such as the Dominicans (OP – Order of Preachers) and the Franciscans (OFM – Order of Friars Minor) had three Orders. The first Order was the male religious; the second Order was the female religious; the third Order was a group of non-religious but devout laity.

Fr Chevalier's Third Order would appear to have begun in 1864 when he met Louise-Therese de Montaignac in Montluçon, a city in central France, less than 100km from Issoudun. Louise had

established an association of lay women centred on devotion to the Sacred Heart and dedicated to various charitable works. She thought that a union with the MSC as a Third Order, which Fr Chevalier wanted to establish, would give her work more standing. However that group had a life of its own. The MSC were only minimally involved and the connection was broken in 1874, but her work prospered and she was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1990.

Nevertheless Fr Chevalier was very committed to the concept of a Third Order. In a brochure published in 1866 he wrote:

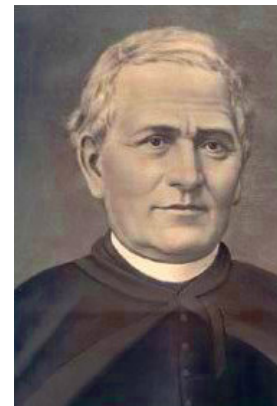
They [Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus] must be truly religious in order to resemble Him more closely whose Kingdom they want to spread. At the same time they must keep as close contact as possible with the clergy, in order to spread everywhere the divine influence of the Sacred Heart ... And finally, a lay third order will penetrate where the priest would not be able. In this way, if it is possible, nothing will be allowed to escape the rebirth that comes through the influence of the Heart of Jesus.

For Fr Chevalier the Third Order was an entity in itself with its own rules and structures of authority. He envisaged it as much more than a confraternity in which members might say a daily prayer which they did in the Archconfraternity of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, which he established in 1864 and which acquired thousands of members throughout the world. His own thoughts about the Third Order were very clear, even though they might be expressed in language different from that used today:

This Association is not a simple confraternity, nor a sodality, similar to those whose aim is to provide people who belong to them extra means to gain their salvation in the midst of the world. Nor is it a Religious Society so called, where one could attain perfection only by renouncing the world. The members of this Association desire to steer a middle course between people who lead a Christian life in the world satisfied with the observance of the commandments, and those who leave

the world to lead a more perfect life. In as much as from an external point of view they resemble the first group, they have to resemble the second group by their interior dispositions.

The sort of life to which members of the Third Order of the Sacred Heart of Jesus devote themselves is this: to remain in their families, to carry out the duties of their state of life, to retain freedom of activity in the world and nevertheless to aim at perfection, to put no limit to their devotion to Our Lord, and to carry out in society an apostolate which is all the more useful in that it does not give rise to mistrust.



In preparing documentation (the Formula Instituti) for Vatican approval of the MSC as a religious congregation in the Catholic Church, Fr Chevalier included the concept of three branches of the congregation. The official examiners wanted him to abandon the concept, but he was advised by his friend, Fr Henry Ramiere SJ, that unless he maintained his vision the MSC would be no different from hundreds of other religious groups in other dioceses throughout Europe.

Fr Chevalier followed that advice. When the Formula Instituti was approved on March 8, 1869 it contained explicit paragraphs on the association of lay people and the association of diocesan priests:

- *As regards the laity, there are not a few who, moved by divine grace towards greater perfection and desirous of defending the Church in these times, would be helped most effectively in the attainment of both these aims if they were to form an intimate society whose bond would be the love of the Heart of Christ.*
- *Likewise secular priests can be fitted to attain the perfection of their sublime calling and to fulfil its duties by no better means than this: to strive, with common endeavour, to honour and imitate the Heart of Christ the High Priest.*

The first Constitutions of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, written principally by Fr Chevalier, were approved by a General Chapter in 1877. The Third Order received special mention:

Our Society will endeavour, with special zeal, to bring together religious-minded people of both sexes, who are devoted to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in a group under the name of this same Heart.

Fr Chevalier is recorded as having written that at that time there were about 300 members spread through several countries of Europe. During the next 25 years the Third Order continued to grow, and in 1904 it was estimated that there were about 2000 members scattered throughout most of the Catholic countries of Europe.

In the first years of the 20th Century the Vatican carried out a reform of canon law and required all religious congregations to rewrite their Constitutions in the light of the new canon law. The new laws made it clear that religious congregations such as the MSC who took only simple vows could not have a Third Order because only congregations who took solemn vows were Religious Orders, strictly so called.

Hence when our second set of Constitutions was approved at the 1907 General Chapter there was no mention of our Third Order. Why our leaders at that time did not persist with the group under another title such as the Association of Lay Missionaries of the Sacred Heart is not clear. It must have been very sad and disappointing for Fr Chevalier to learn of all the changes that were occurring in the Constitutions which he had written. He was no longer the Superior General and his health was declining. He died some months later on October 21, 1907. In the years that followed, the Third Order died a natural death and the vision of the Founder was abandoned. It was not revived until over 60 years later.

I wish to conclude this section by quoting from the writing of Dennis Murphy in *The Missionary Charism of Jules Chevalier in Relation to the Laity*, #52:

It may appear that I have spent too much time on Father Founder's idea of mission, but it is essential if we are to understand the importance for him of the laity. Reading his early publications about the nature and mission of his Society, I have the strong impression that he would have found it unthinkable, or perhaps even impractical, to speak of changing the world and its values without involving laity, for they were the ones more intimately immersed in that world. Religious priests, brothers and sisters, together with secular priests, had an essential role to play, and Father Chevalier stressed that; but if Christ's mission was to be continued in the world on all levels of society, the role of the laity was at least equally as essential and at times even more essential.



Basilica of our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Issoudun

Revival of our Founder's Vision

The 1970 Provincial Chapter

The Second Vatican Council, 1962-1965, had a profound effect on the Catholic Church. Among the many blessings that came with the Council was the revitalisation of religious life. All religious congregations were encouraged to reflect on the charism of their Founder and then to rewrite their Constitutions in the light of the charism of the Founder. That was necessarily a lengthy exercise involving a world-wide consultation. It was not until the 1981 General Chapter that our third set of Constitutions was approved.

However in Australia in the late 1960s we became aware of the vision of our Founder to have three branches of our congregation, one of which was lay people associated with us in the form of a Third Order. The Provincial Chapter of August 1970 affirmed this, as is recorded in #48 of the Acts of the Chapter:

This Chapter accepts the desirability of having Associate Members of our Society and makes the following suggestions for the purposes of experimentation:

- *an Associate Member is taken to mean a man or woman who shares in and thus widens the mission and apostolate of our Society. Such a person does not necessarily leave the world or his occupation in it.*
- *Lay teachers in our Colleges could be Associate Members of the Society. This would require in them:*
 1. *professional competence and a dedication to increasing such competence;*

2. *a willingness to commit oneself to education as an apostolic end of the Society;*
 3. *a desire so to deepen personal Christian commitment.*
- *some Lay Missionaries may wish to share more closely the spirit and apostolic ends of the Society. These could well be Associate Members.*
 - *this Chapter encourages local communities to experiment with ways in which they can help people who are not members of the Society to share in its spirituality and work.*

In the light of this decision of the Chapter I was asked by the Provincial Council to survey our various communities to ascertain what might be common expectations about such members and what might be their rights and obligations. The survey occurred in February-March, 1971. It was clear that three types of Associate Membership were envisaged:

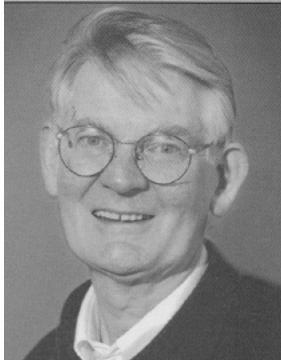
- those who actually live in one of our communities as did Vincent Henschke at Douglas Park at that time;
- those who work with us in one of our ministries such as lay teachers in our schools or lay missionaries in our missions;
- those who wish to deepen their spiritual life by sharing in our charism and spirituality.

The Provincial Council encouraged individuals and communities to promote Associate Membership. In the decade up to 1980 three Australian MSC experimented in different ways: Michael Fallon with groups of students attending the University of New South Wales; Jim Littleton with staff and parents of students at Daramalan College; Albert Yelds with the Sacred Heart Family.

Early Developments in Sydney in the 1970s

The Catholic chaplaincy of the University of New South Wales was the centre of much religious activity in the 1970s. Michael Fallon was appointed there as an assistant chaplain in 1972. He became part of a team led by John King MSC who had been the principal chaplain for about 15 years. The team lived at the former MSC Mission Procure in Coogee, then known as Mission House.

Then and in the years that followed there were normally about 40 people at Mass each day in the chaplaincy chapel. Groups would go away for weekend reflections. Many were involved in Student Union affairs as well as social justice activities such as the St Vincent de Paul night patrol.



Michael Fallon

Michael spent many hours talking with students and praying with them. To understand their spiritual needs better, Michael moved into rental accommodation with a few like-minded people at 31 Meymott Street, Randwick in 1974. It became a drop-in place for students. When John King was appointed to parish ministry in 1975, Michael Fallon received approval to move back to Mission House and use it as a community house for religiously-minded UNSW students. Ten students came to live there, where they gathered for morning and evening prayer, frequent Masses and weekly meetings.

When Mission House became the Provincialate in 1976, Michael moved to 41 Centennial Avenue, North Randwick. This was a large house and about ten people lived there at different times. They had good memories of prayerful Masses, challenging conversations, open-house, weekends away at Wooglemai (near Oakdale) and retreats at Douglas Park. Michael thought that many of them were looking for a new form of religious life. They wanted to live a life of gospel simplicity (poverty), a life of fidelity to love (chastity) and of commitment to community, making decisions in common (obedience). At the same time they did not feel drawn to celibacy as a way of life.

Hence in May 1977 they decided to have a special meeting at Wooglemai to discuss the topic, "Religious Life without Celibacy". A large group of about 30 people came to that weekend, but had difficulty in coming to any decision. However, many of them followed it up with a retreat at Douglas Park from November 23 to December 5, 1977. Here they came to a conclusion that they were not called

to a common task so much as to share a common spirit, the spirit of the Heart of Jesus.

They attached great importance to community as is reflected in one of their favourite Scripture texts from the Letter to the Philippians, 2/1-5:

If our love in Christ means anything to you, if love can persuade at all or the spirit that we have in common, or any tenderness and sympathy, then be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. That is the one thing that would make me completely happy. There must be no competition among you, no conceit; but everybody is to be self-effacing. Always consider the other person to the better than yourself, so that nobody thinks of his own interest first, but everybody thinks of other people's interests instead. In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus.

Meantime in 1977 Michael and some of the group moved to 31 Cowper Street, Randwick, a house rented from Norma Compton. They also had access to the underneath part of the Compton home at 29 Cowper Street, an area which had been used as a kindergarten.

By 1979 there were over 100 people on a mailing list. About 50 of these lived in small groups in houses on Cowper Street, Hockham Avenue, St Paul's Street, Dutruc Street, Reservoir Street, Frances Street and Milford Street. A number of these young people later (in 1981) made an official commitment as MSC Associates.

I might conclude this section by quoting the introduction to an article that Paul Compton wrote for Province News in 1986 about the first Sydney MSC Associates. It expresses the spirit of the group with a flavour of its own.

... The Sydney MSC Associates grew out of Michael Fallon's community which consisted mainly of university students and recent postgraduates. It was a very idealistic group, being made up of people who were at a stage in their lives where virtually anything was possible!

For the first few years, around the mid-70s, the group would spend one weekend a month at Douglas Park, as well as longer periods from time to time ... We ate with the MSC community rather than with the retreatants. We spent our time in prayer with a lot of quiet, together with discussion of what our directions in life should be. We did not want to just drift off into jobs. We wanted to forge some sort of community of ideals that would last.

We grew used to the openness and welcome of the community at Douglas Park, and the spirit of prayer there. We had a very definite spirit of belonging. Soon, under Michael's leadership, the idea of linking in with the MSCs emerged and was found very appealing.

We saw the possibility of our lives being an extension of the MSC apostolate, and the jobs we took up as being MSC work in the world, - though, at that stage, not many had jobs. We also saw the possibility of us working directly for the MSCs in apostolates the MSCs set up.

However, no particular works or jobs were ever specified. Though we had a lot of argument over this, we always came back to the idea that the 'works' of the Associates must be unspecified.

Always the emphasis came out on the side of sharing in the spirit and prayer life of the MSCs, of taking this MSC spirit out with us into the world.



Therese and Paul Compton

However, this did not imply some sort of pious society where we would rest content to pray for MSCs, or merely take on a list of special prayers to recite. To put it simply, our aim was

not so much to pray for the MSCs but rather to pray with the MSCs, to share their spirit, and so be strengthened in our own lives as we took this spirit, on their behalf, into the world.

Early Developments in Canberra in the 1970s

It is customary in most schools for a newsletter to be sent to parents on a regular basis. Jim Littleton was Principal of Daramalan College, 1971-1979 and Superior of the MSC Community, 1971-1976. In this capacity in 1974 I used the newsletter to invite staff and parents to become part of a prayer group that might meet regularly to deepen their spirituality. From a group of up to 900 families and over 100 staff I received up to 20 expressions of interest, and that was enough.

Over the years that followed a group of about 20 middle-aged people emerged. They had a meeting in the MSC residence chapel on the evening of the first Sunday of each month. It normally included a Mass as well as a shared reflection on some aspect of Sacred Heart spirituality, or a Scripture passage or some other relevant topic. The meeting always concluded with a supper.

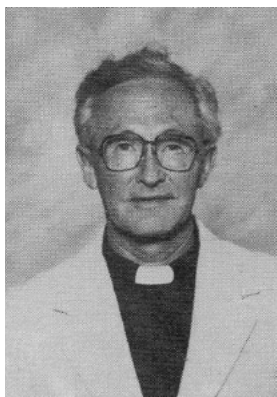
Members were also invited to attend the community Mass in the residence chapel at 5:45pm on Friday evenings during school term. The average attendance would have been about 10 or 12 people. During these early years membership varied as individuals dropped in or out depending on what they were looking for.

Initially it was hoped that teachers would be part of the group, but a Friday evening Mass did not suit them and they had different interests from parents. In the 1980s a separate staff group was established. The MSC community was very supportive of associate membership and the Associates felt accepted by the MSC community.

The Sacred Heart Family

The Sacred Heart Family was very much the work of Albert Yelds and was composed of several thousand people who practised a traditional devotion to the Sacred Heart. They prayed daily to the Sacred Heart with prayers supplied to them by Albert. They committed themselves to at least one hour of prayer each month in their homes or in groups or in a church.

Albert maintained contact with these people by a newsletter every six months and by visiting as many members as he could in school holidays. His travels would take him to over 100 towns each year. The members called themselves Sacred Heart people. They had a badge which was available in brooch form or as a tie bar. They did not look on themselves specifically as Associates, probably because they were not in regular contact with an MSC community. There were no office holders and no form of detailed organisation.



Albert Yelds

Albert deserves great credit for this work, which he continued during his own holidays from missionary work in Kiribati later in life.



Chapter Decisions

The 1975 General Chapter

The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart held a General Chapter in Rome in 1975. I was an elected delegate to that Chapter and I spoke about developments in associate membership in Australia. Fr Henri Caldelari spoke about developments in France and Switzerland where he had developed what was called the Fraternité MSC. His endeavours which began in 1972 were similar to ours and it can be claimed that the Australian and the French Provinces provided the impetus for helping to restore the vision of our Founder regarding the laity.

The issue of Associate Membership was not an urgent issue at the 1975 General Chapter as can be seen in the Acts of the Chapter, where the following cautious response is recorded:

Associate Membership – Fraternities

16. Associate membership and Fraternities should be regarded as a project of the Provincial Community. It follows from this that before commencing experiments in this matter approval should be obtained from the Provincial and his Council, especially if the group is given a name which includes our MSC initials.

17. According to circumstances of time and place, each Province should stimulate the interest of individuals and local communities in associate membership and fraternities. This could be done by appointing someone to promote and develop the work.

18. All Provinces and Regions should keep the General Administration well informed in this matter and the General Administration should also inform Provinces and Regions about various experiments and developments, including those discussed at this Chapter.

19. A study should be made of associate members and fraternity members who might want to bind themselves by vows or promises.

The 1977 Provincial Chapter

There was a brief discussion about the Lay MSC Association at the 1977 Provincial Chapter where the following resolution was accepted:

This chapter resolves to endorse the Lay Associate Movement and asks the Provincial Council to form a commission to promote the development of the concept and to work towards a definition of the principles of association.

This resolution resulted from the input of several speakers and was officially summarised as follows:

If we restrict our vision to the circle of religious MSC we have good reason to be concerned and anxious about our mission. The numbers joining us now cannot guarantee that we will continue to be present in all areas of our works in the same way as we were in the past. This issue confronts us in all our various ministries and works: we must increase our efforts to respond creatively to the word of God. The men and women who will help us to continue in our mission are already working beside us. It is up to us to share our vision and spirit with them so that in the future, whether we grow numerically or not, what we have shared with them will continue at the heart of all that they do. Our charism has been given to us for the sake of God's people. In no way can we set ourselves up as its exclusive ministers in any field of apostolic endeavour.

The chapter showed that there is a strong awareness that we are called to share the responsibility for our charism with others. ...

Instead of beginning with formal rules and other structures, it seems better to adopt a more flexible approach. Our spirit is felt to be very attractive by many different people and groups. We should do our best to let people share our spirit and let the structures (which are quite necessary) grow naturally. It is eminently desirable that associate members receive a genuine welcome from the whole community and share in appropriate ways in the life and spirit and works of the community.

We need to see that our spirit and our grace are given to us in order to be shared with other people and one way of doing this is the formation of groups of associate members. The impetus for this work comes directly from our mission to make the love of God revealed in Jesus' heart known and accepted everywhere, and not from our shortage of men. Our Founder never confined his vision to groups of professed members, but thought always in terms of wider circles of men and women who would share his vision, and spirituality. The chapter, therefore, endorsed the policy of working for the development of associate membership. In working in this way with and for those we call Associate Members we believe that we are being faithful to our charism and following the clear leadership of the Holy Spirit.

The 1980 Provincial Chapter

In preparation for the 1980 Provincial Chapter, Michael Fallon, in consultation with key members of his groups, composed a seven page document on the MSC Association. This document contained an explanation of the name, Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and what it meant to share in the spirit and mission of the MSC. This included an emphasis on such qualities as compassion, fidelity,

service, prayer and the spirit of the vows. It concluded with a section on sharing in the apostolic work of the MSC and a section on the organisation of the Association.

The document was accepted by the Chapter and the following is Appendix III of the Acts of the Chapter:

Association of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (MSC Association)

There have been many people over the years who have been intimately associated both in prayer and work, with MSC communities. In recent years, from some quarters, there has been a call to establish some form of official Association in order to strengthen the bonds uniting such people to the Society.

The Chapter unanimously decides to establish such an Association. A paper, expressing the spirit and aims of the Association, was tabled and accepted, and will be distributed to members of the Province, in the hope that it may be of some help and guidance. Here we include only a brief description of the Association, and the Chapter on Organisation.

MSC Association

This is an Association open to people who are committed to the spirit and mission of the MSCs, and who are in actual regular association with an MSC community in sharing this spirit and mission.

Some may actually share in an MSC apostolate, for example by working with MSCs in missions, schools or parishes.

Organisation of the Association

- 1. The Provincial Council of the MSCs determines who will be accepted as a member of the Association.*
- 2. Admission to membership will be celebrated in a religious*

ceremony with the MSC community with whom the member is associated.

- 3. Some form of appropriate preparation is necessary as a pre-requisite for acceptance to membership.*
- 4. While membership of the Association is normally envisaged as a lasting commitment, members will be accepted for one year at a time only, and the commitment will be renewable annually.*
- 5. The Provincial Council will appoint a liaison person responsible for the Association. Anyone wishing to apply for membership will make application to this person, who, if satisfied that the appropriate requirements have been fulfilled, will submit this application to the Provincial Council. The liaison person will also receive notification of ceremonies of entrance into the Association, and will register names and addresses and other relevant information, including the interests and qualifications of those members who wish to share in MSC apostolates. A copy of such information will be in the Provincial files.*
- 6. Retreats and other functions will be organised on a regular basis to provide opportunities for training members in MSC spirituality, and for the regular meeting of MSCs and Associates. Each local MSC community is encouraged to organise regular opportunities for the sharing of prayer with members of the Association.*
- 7. Material concerning Father Jules Chevalier, as well as material on the spirit of the Society and the life and work of the Province will be made available to Associates.*

The 1981 General Chapter

The 1981 General Chapter was held in Rome in September. It elected Cornelis Braun from the Netherlands as the new Superior General. This Chapter also approved our third set of Constitutions

which had been revised in the light of the charism of our Founder, as directed by the Second Vatican Council. Reference to a lay group was restored, although minimally, as follows:

#61 The Provincial Superior will promote the association of those men and women who share our spirituality and mission. He will also foster the collaboration of the members of the Province in this matter.

#62 Care will be taken to ensure that those lay people who work in or with the local communities in the Province are helped to understand the spirit and mission of our Society.



St Mary's Towers, Douglas Park

Developments

1981 - 1986

Formalising Membership

A new Provincial Council took office at the beginning of 1981. It appointed Michael Fallon as the first Director of the Lay MSC Association, Paul Compton as Assistant Director and Jocelyn Kramer as its Secretary. When Jocelyn went overseas to study, her place was taken by Susan Madden.

In order to assist our confreres towards implementing the decision of the Provincial Chapter, I was asked to visit each of our religious communities, schools and parishes to speak about the Association and to provide the necessary documentation. I had the time to do this in February and March since I was between appointments and was not due to take office as Principal of Downlands College until Easter of that year.

In the months that followed, groups slowly began to form. The first commitment ceremony took place in Sydney for a group of 11 people on May 2, 1981. Other Sydney groups made their commitment later in the year. Brian Gallagher started a group in Melbourne, composed mainly of members of the Croydon Monastery Auxiliary. Harold Baker recruited new members for the Daramalan group. Several members of the Douglas Park Auxiliary also made a commitment as did others who were actually living at St Mary's Towers. I formed a group at Downlands College while a smaller group emerged at Chevalier College.

In those days we referred to members of the Lay MSC Association as Associates. Historically it is correct for me to continue to use that descriptive until I come to that section of the story when the title was changed to Lay MSC by an International Meeting in 1999.

By the end of 1982, the number of people who had made a commitment had risen to 108. For the sake of history their names are recorded here. It should be noted that not all have retained their connection with the Association, and not all of those associated with Michael Fallon in the 1970s made a commitment. Some of those listed have died but remained committed to the end. Others are still very active members of the Association.

Sydney Associates:

Peter Atherden, Pilar Araullo, Ian and Sonia Benne, Terry Brennan, Christopher Chin, John Cogill, Norma Compton, Paul and Therese Compton, Frances Egan, Julia Ellis, David and Bernadette Flannery, Margaret Gray, Hi-sun Kim, John and Francey Kelliher, Jocelyn Kramer, Bernadette Mackay, Bill and Cath McEnnally, Adrian McKinlay, Geoff McLean, Peter and Susan Madden, Neil and Therese Ormerod, Lindsay Peters, Helen Peters, Bert and Mary Roberts, Joanne Roufeil, Louise Ryder, Vilma Smith, Anthony Stanfield, Ron and Thelma Stannard, Carolyn Starr, Lynn and David Taylor, Vera Tibbertsma, Margaret Wallace, Vickie and Colin Weekes.

Douglas Park Associates:

Bill and Shirley Clarke, John Duncan, Fred Grundman, Vincent Henschke, Len Marriott, Terry O'Brien, Bill Penn, Bill and Sue Summers.

Croydon Monastery Associates:

Anne Bramley, Frank Collins, Mary Duffy, Stella Lovass, Celia McMullan, Teresa Nunan, Margaret and John O'Loughlin, Christopher Parnell, Alan and Shirley Somers, Peter and Nance Steane.

Daramalan Associates:

Enid and Maurice Austin, Ted and Joyce Devine, Elizabeth and Richard Hall, Otto and Eunice Huszar, Paul and Adrienne Hemsley,

Edna and John Jamieson, Kevin and Alison Kennedy, Colleen Kiley, David and Denise Manning, Anne Mathas, Jean and Jim Reid, Brian and Joy Shine, Sheila and John Whigham.

Downlands Associates:

Aileen Doyle, Ron Klease, Doug McIntyre, Marie Menhinnitt, John and Jan Mulvihill, Elizabeth and Michael Phelan, John and Christine Ryan.

Chevalier Associates:

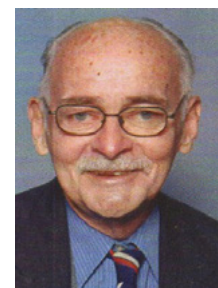
Alison and Lee Borradaile, Jean de Hossen, Leo Ross.

Other Associates:

Anne Marie Black (Brisbane), Keren Calvert (Daly River).

Further Growth: 1983 – 1986

Initially the Sydney Associates generally met at Treand House in Coogee in the evening of the first Sunday of the month. They also met at Kensington on the occasion of the Feast of the Sacred Heart. There were also one or two meetings each year at Douglas Park, attended by Associates from Sydney, Canberra and Douglas Park. As many as 50 adults gathered for these meetings, accompanied by their young children. Among the new Sydney members were Mollie Bubear, Annette Marskell, Geraldine Pierce, Edith Follows.



Paul Brooks

In 1983 Paul Brooks initiated student Associates at Downlands College. These were Years 11 and 12 students, initially male boarders. They met each Sunday in the chapel for night prayer and made a commitment similar to that of the adults. There were nine in 1983 and 36 in 1985. Ray O'Neill assisted Paul Brooks in leading the prayers and reflections. The Downlands adult group normally had an evening Holy Hour once a month, led by Jim Littleton.

During 1983 Pat Austin initiated a group of Associates at Monivae College. They made their first commitment early in 1984. The first group at Monivae included Maureen Dunn, Kay Hadden, Jean Hurley, Maree and Cliff Samuel. Others who later joined this group include: Marie Cook, Irene Donne, Cath Howman, Stephanie and Michael Kent, Kay Kerr, Graeme and Marie McGaffin, Pat and Ellen McNamara, Maree and Brian Rigney, Fay Rhook, Fay Rizzo,



Monivae group 1984. From left, back row, Maureen Dunn, Maree Samuel, Cliff Samuel, Bob Gardiner and Kay Haddon. Front row, Harvey Edmiston, Jean Hurley, Pat Kelly and Beth Kennedy

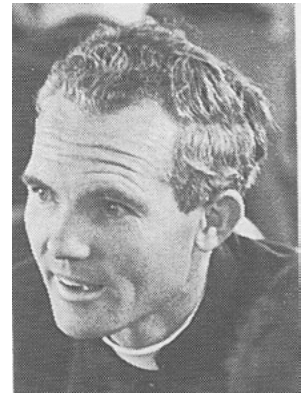
Trish Soawyer. Later in 1984 several of the Monivae group travelled to Melbourne for a meeting with the Croydon Associates, and in 1985 some of the Melbourne group drove out to Hamilton for a weekend together.

In 1984 a group was formed in Brisbane mainly of people who had been members in Sydney and Canberra. They met

initially at Camp Hill with Bill Welsh, but later moved to Stuartholme College where they were hosted by the Principal, David Manning; I provided the Eucharist for them. Other initial members were Denise Manning, Kevin Joynes and Sr Rosanne Quinn RSM. There was a meeting of Brisbane and Toowoomba Associates at Downlands College in 1984. Input was provided by Michael Fallon at this time Connie Brady and Joan Dwan joined the Toowoomba, and Patrick Quirk, a former Downlands student, joined the Brisbane group.

Meantime in 1984 Harvey Edmiston, who was the Deputy Provincial, had taken over from Michael Fallon as Director of the Lay MSC Association. Harvey attached much importance to this ministry and helped to provide clear organisation and support. He

produced a brochure to explain the nature of the Association together with guidelines for its operation. He also prepared a document regarding the structure for Associates who lived in a professed MSC community.



Harvey Edmiston

Harvey was very insistent that the MSC Association was not just a pious sodality but people who were given appropriate formation and who were very committed to MSC mission and spirituality. He initiated the practice of giving new Associates an MSC prayer book and badge. He visited many of the groups on a regular basis, despite other responsibilities and serious ill health.

The first Lay MSC Association Newsletter was produced by Harvey in 1984. It was brought out four times a year and continues to be so. It had four sections: news about Associates; news about professed MSC in Australia and elsewhere; comments on MSC spirituality; prayers and methods of prayer. In the June issue of 1984 Harvey asked Paul Compton to write about how being an Associate influenced his attitudes and behaviour in his work as a scientist. This is part of what he wrote:

I would first like to make some general comments about being an MSC Associate. To be a Christian means to take to my workplace not just Christian values but Christian values that are shared; I am not alone in my relationship with the world (and God) but belong to and represent the community of the Church. I carry the spirit of this community to the world I live and work in.

To be an MSC Associate is to do this on a more personal level. As well as belonging to the whole Church community, I belong to a smaller community with whom I share a particular spirit. The MSC spirit for me is both particular and general; it focuses on the particular aspect of Jesus' spirit which is universal: that God loves all people with a human love, and

wants in a human way to draw all people into personal union with him; but his ability to forgive, to tolerate weakness, foibles and sin is on a divine scale.

In 1985 John Mooney was responsible for inaugurating an Associates group at Chevalier College. The initial members were Zelda and Keith Williams, Maureen Cook, Pat Sewell and Cath Parry, who joined Jean de Hosson, Alison and Lee Borradaile who had made an earlier commitment. Pat Sewell served as coordinator of this group for many years.

In the initial years MSC parishes, while being supportive of the concept of associate membership, were hesitant to form groups. They thought that the movement would cut across the concept of parish community and could lead to exclusivity. The priests were also aware that on many evenings of the week they were already busy with various other meetings. However Bede Mooney made an attempt to form a group in Coogee parish and Pat Sharpe was responsible for starting the Lay MSC Association at Moonah when Elizabeth McInnes became the first Tasmanian to make a commitment in 1985.



Tony O'Brien

At this stage Tony O'Brien was an assistant priest at Kings Meadows parish. He saw that Harvey Edmiston's health was seriously declining and he offered to be an assistant to Harvey for the Lay MSC Association. Sadly Harvey passed away on January 31, 1986. Tony was appointed as the new Director of the Association soon after.

In 1985 Peter Steane formed a new group at Daramalan College made up of members of staff and their spouses. The following made their first commitment in 1986: Marea and Frank Clarke, Tony and Mary Dubois, David and Lorna Garratt, Judy and Michael Smith. Following Peter Steane's appointment to the Retreat Team for MSC schools in 1987, Denis Uhr acted as chaplain to this group. It increased in numbers and Denis continued as its chaplain

until he finished his term as Principal of the college at the end of 1997. Since then I have acted as chaplain for this group. Its current members are Judy and Michael Smith, Rita Daniels, Marie Clarke, Margaret Pfitzner, Joan Gunn, Jenny Fisher, Chris Fearon, Rene Sutherland, Angela Keneally.



A Canberra group 2018. Back row, from left; Michael Smith Chris Fearon, Judy Smith and Marie Clarke. Front row; Jim Littleton, Margaret Pfitzner and Rita Daniels

By 1986 the Sydney Associates had divided into five groups which met regularly each month: a Coogee group with John Kelliher; a Compton group with Bede Mooney; a Stannard group with Laurie Bayliss; a Peters group with Frank Fletcher; and an Ormerod group with Gerard McCormick.

The number of Associates at Downlands increased considerably in 1986. On the eve of the Feast of the Sacred Heart at a Eucharist 12 adults renewed their commitment while six other adults made their first commitment. Fourteen students renewed their commitment and another 36 made their first commitment. There were now both female and male day student Associates, as well as male boarders. One of the new adult members, Brian Powell, wrote to me that evening:

I write to you at midnight to thank you most sincerely for one of the most rewarding and moving days of my life. The service tonight was an inspiration and magic in so many ways. I'll never forget the fellowship we shared.

It is important to note that for the student Associates Paul Brooks always emphasised that they were more than members of a prayer group. They were expected to provide service in extra ways as well as providing leadership in living the Christian values espoused by the college. Paul also conducted mission experience tours for those students.

Meantime Tony O'Brien had moved from Kings Meadows to Randwick parish so that it would be easier for him to make annual visits to all groups. He also suggested to the Provincial Council that two Associates should be invited to attend the Provincial Chapter to be held at Kensington in August 1986. Therese Compton and David Manning had the honour of being the first Associates to attend such a gathering.

At the provincial Chapter the importance of the Lay MSC Association was again affirmed. In the September issue of the Lay MSC Newsletter, Therese wrote as follows:

It was a privilege for me to attend the MSC Chapter. ... The overall atmosphere of the Chapter was one of peacefulness, attentive listening to everyone, and a spirit of MSC unity that we were all in this together. ... I was asked a number of times, "What are Associates about?" The main thing I emphasised in my response was that we try to make real in our lives, in whatever situation we find ourselves, those human qualities of Jesus – fidelity, compassion, faithfulness and forgiveness. We are Associates because we see the MSC as clearly expressing this spirit. The aim of the Associates is to share the MSC spirit without necessarily working in MSC apostolates. However it can and does involve both. The emphasis is on the spirituality rather than the apostolate.

Consolidation

1987 - 1992

First National Assembly 1987

The concept of having a national gathering of MSC Associates was suggested by the Melbourne group in 1986. The proposal was readily endorsed by the Provincial Council, and the Melbourne group was commissioned to organise it. The organising committee consisted of Brian Gallagher, Chris Parnell, Margaret O'Loughlin and Anne Marie Black. It may be of interest to note that Chris Parnell was a pre-novice with us in Melbourne in the mid-1970s.

The Assembly was held at Douglas Park from the evening of Monday April 20 to lunch time Thursday April 23, 1987. It was completely subsidised by the Provincial Administration. 72 Lay MSC attended, many of whom had to take leave from work to participate and they brought 22 of their children with them. Some student Associates were also present as well as 15 professed MSC for all or part of the time.

This was the year in which I became Provincial, and probably because of that I was asked to give the keynote address entitled "Vision for MSC Associates". This was followed by prepared responses by Therese Compton, Paul Compton and Jean Hurley, and group sharing.

The second day had the theme of "Living our Vision in Everyday Life". It was led by Mary Scarf with similar group work. The third and final day focussed on "The Mission of MSC Associates" and resulted in the formation of on-going committees for the following topics:

- *To be an Associate is a major life commitment* [Paul Compton]
- *Initial Formation* [Brian Gallagher]
- *Ongoing Formation* [Cliff Samuel]
- *Hospitality and Communication* [Lynn Taylor]
- *Prayer and Heart Spirituality* [Maree Samuel]
- *Support for Younger Associates* [Therese Compton]
- *Outreach to Youth* [Jean Hurley]
- *Conversion to Compassion* [Lindsay Peters]
- *Bonding between MSC Religious and MSC Associates* [Sheila Whigham]

The Assembly was very well received, with several participants emphasising an increasing faith and a sense of identity and belonging. One noteworthy feature of the event was the first commitment made by eight students who had travelled from Monivae College for the occasion with Michael Herbert. A lengthy report on the Assembly was sent to all Associates.

There is very little in the archives about the work of the ongoing committees other than an ongoing formation program organised by Brian Gallagher at Heart of Life in Melbourne. This was held over a period of 20 days, January 4-23, 1988. It consisted of three segments: the first focussed on personal growth and prayer; the second on MSC spirit and life; the third was an individually directed retreat. The program was attended by a core group of six Associates, as well as five others for different segments.

Hospitality also received some attention in that eight members of the Association offered accommodation to Associates who might be passing through their region and wished to stay for a short time. However there is no record in the archives as to the extent that this generous offer was taken up.

Other Events 1987 – 1988

In 1987 Peter Wood started a group in Fiji which he preferred to call Friends of MSC. They met regularly for prayers and reflections,

but there is no record of their names. A group of eight emerged in Hobart of whom the long serving coordinator has been Marie Ogle. Others who later joined the group are Iris Burnett, Margaret and Ernie McGuinness, Maria Rogers, Carlene Larkin. A group of six was formed in Launceston including Peter van Tienen and Dot O'Connor. In Milne Bay Graham Furness became the first resident of Papua New Guinea to become a member of the Lay MSC Association.



Tasmanian group 2018. From left, Carline Larkin, Marie Ogle and Maria Rogers

The year 1988 marked the Bicentenary of European Settlement in Australia. I remember well the ceremonies that took place in Sydney on January 26 to mark the occasion. The only record in the archives of a Lay MSC group celebrating the Bicentenary is a weekend organised by the Melbourne group at Heart of Life on March 5-6. The principal presenter was Peter Malone with reflections on “Jesus for Australians”.

Another feature of the Lay MSC Association Newsletters in 1988 was reflections for each Sunday of the year written by several different Associates. There were also the usual retreat weekends at Douglas Park in April and October.

New National Director

The year 1989 was a significant year in the history of the MSC Association. Frank Andersen was appointed National Director of the Association, a position he combined with being the leader of a new lay contemplative community at Douglas Park. It was called the Community of Kindly Light. The name was based on the image of God as a Kindly Light leading and guiding them



Frank Andersen

along new pathways. It was composed of Frank and seven Associates: Sheila and John Whigham, Therese Curtiss, Oliver Caddish, Gai Puglisi, Deanne Elliott and Jacinta Sinclair. They were very committed to prayer both together as a group and with the MSC community. They were also involved in daily work on the property and in the domestic chores of the MSC community. In my opinion the Community of Kindly Light had the potential to become an alternate form of religious life.

In his newsletters to the Associates Frank raised the issue of the appropriateness of the title, "Associates". He was rightly concerned that it could give the impression that the Associates were merely appendages to the professed members. He suggested using the title "Member of the MSC Association". Maybe this appeared too cumbersome, because there was no significant request for change, although Frank always used his suggested title.

Frank was impressed by the diversity of the various groups and the commitment of the members to personal ministry in an MSC spirit. There had never been any attempt to establish a corporate ministry. The emphasis was rather on living out a Spirituality of the Heart and in that way to change society.

In the early part of 1989, March 27 – April 2, a national retreat was held at Douglas Park. It was led by Michael Fallon and attended by 40 members of the Association. In the course of the retreat several members shared stories of personal ministry endeavours. Some of these were recorded in the Newsletter.

In writing to members of the MSC Association in 1990 Frank Andersen stated that the Association had passed through the growth stage and was now moving into consolidation. He emphasised the importance of reflecting on the early numbers of

the MSC Constitutions which the MSC General Administration had now printed in a separate booklet. He acknowledged that there was diversity among the groups because it had never been MSC policy to impose a rigid formality. He commented on a remarkable sense of fidelity and belonging amongst the members and supported endeavours in social justice organised by Therese Ormerod.

Developments 1990 – 1992

The archives record that there were 13 groups in 1990: three in Sydney, two in Canberra, and one each in Bowral, Toowoomba, Hamilton, Melbourne, Hobart, Launceston, Darwin and Adelaide. It was the first year in which a group emerged in Adelaide with the support of John Rate and Brian White at Henley Beach. Maree and Cliff Samuel had moved from Hamilton; the others to make their first commitment on the Feast of the Sacred Heart were Janet and

Adelaide group 1994. Back row from left; Norbert De Rosario, Mary kitschke, Dean Kitschke, Liz May, Betty Wallace, Robin Trebilcock and Tony O'Brien. Front row; John Wallace, Maree Samuel, Jill De Rosario and Dorothy Lee



Kevin Chaplin, Mary and Dean Kitschke, Dorothy Lee, Betty and John Wallace.

Joint meetings continued at Douglas Park for NSW and ACT members. Likewise in Melbourne or Hamilton for those two groups. The student groups at Downlands and Monivae continued to flourish. Stephen Hackett took a group of Monivae students to MSC centres in NSW to give them a better understanding of MSC life and ministry. Efforts continued to be made by Liz Phelan, David Manning and Stephen Hackett to support past-student members at the University of Southern Queensland, Queensland University and Melbourne University respectively.

The Community of Kindly Light was reduced to four members in 1990: Sheila and John Whigham, Jacinta Sinclair and Frank Andersen. There were other temporary members including Brad Taylor who married Jacinta in 1991. After their marriage they saw their ministry at the Outreach Centre in Erskineville as an extension of the Kindly Light movement. The Community of Kindly Light also proposed a one-year Youth Development Program that they would run at Douglas Park in 1991 for past-student Associates. However this did not eventuate.

There were plans to hold a second National Assembly early in 1991, but it was decided in 1990 to postpone it to January 4-9, 1992 and to hold it at Chevalier College. Unfortunately this gathering did not eventuate.

Other developments in 1991 included the formation of a third Associates group in Canberra with Roland Kaupp as their chaplain. They met once a month in an office in the college but did not make their first commitment until 1993. The initial members of this group were Wendy Wade, Jenny Fisher, Ruth and Hugh Zochling, Ellen Murray, Julie Maher, Duncan Hinton, Peter and Denise Stubbs. Others who have joined this group over the years include Michael Kelly, Cheryl Hamill, Eileen Farrelly, Vince Markham, Jenny Cantlon and Steve Colbert. They still meet each month for reflection and prayer in Wendy's home.

In 1991 the focus of the Melbourne group shifted from Croydon monastery to Heart of Life with Brian Gallagher. The Monivae student group increased its membership to 35. Tyson Doneley started a group in Fiji, but there is no record of the names of the members. The university groups in Toowoomba and Melbourne continued to function, but more effectively in Toowoomba through the ministry of Liz Phelan.



A Canberra group 2018. From left back row; Hugh Zochling, Vince Markham, Mike Kelly, Jim Littleton and Steve Colbert. Front; Ruth Zochling, Eileen Farrelly, Wendy Wade and Cheryl Hamill

In 1992 there was an active group of eight members in Darwin where Brian Cahill was the chaplain and Christine Glass was the secretary. The Melbourne adult group was reduced to four members, mainly because of movements out of the city. The small group met in the MSC house in Kew and decided to suspend meetings in 1993. Meantime the Monivae student group met every Sunday evening, had a formation weekend at Cape Bridgewater, and a tour of MSC centres in ACT and NSW under the direction of Stephen Hackett.

It is also significant that in 1992 Jacinta Sinclair took over the editorship of the Newsletter and together with her husband, Brad Taylor, organised two retreats for members of the Association at Douglas Park in April and November. The April meeting was somewhat different to the extent that much of the input was provided by ten members who told their stories about their lives as members of the Association, emphasising their hopes and aspirations, met and unmet. The story tellers were Norma Compton, Jean Reid, Therese Ormerod, Jacinta Sinclair, Chris Chin, Pat and Paul Eccles, Lorna Garratt, Geraldine Pierce, Paul Compton. Their

addresses helped to identify the aspirations of the group for the future.

About this time Paul Jennings succeeded Laurie Bayless as chaplain to the south-eastern Sydney group based at Cronulla. The members of this group included Thelma and Ron Stannard, Fay and Ron Lane, Melinda Bisits, Pat McFarland and Shirley Villa. When Paul moved back to PNG several years later, Bishop Desmond Moore enjoyed many evenings with the group.



Cronulla group 1980s. From left back row; Melinda Bisits, Thelma Stannard and Ron Lane.

Front; Fay Lane, Mrs Bisits, Pat McFarland and Laurie Bayliss

Provincial and General Chapters 1992 – 1993

The MSC Provincial Chapter

Another important event in 1992 was the Provincial Chapter held at Kensington in September, at which Brian Gallagher was elected Provincial. Margaret O'Loughlin and Lynn Taylor had been selected by the Provincial Council to attend the Chapter as observers. Both Frank Andersen and Lynn Taylor reported to the Chapter on the status of the Association and issues connected with it. The following is the official summary of their reports:

At the present time there are about 200 adult members of the Association, most of whom meet regularly with an individual MSC or an MSC community. We have never insisted on any specific model of membership, because the aspirations and expectations of the members vary considerably.

There are groups of MSC student Associates at Downlands and Monivae, and Tertiary Students groups in Toowoomba and Melbourne.

The life of any group depends greatly on the quality of MSC involvement, and hence the transfer of MSC from one community to another can affect an Associate group for better or for worse.

Most groups have found reflection on Chapter 2 of our Constitutions very helpful. ... Some groups are interested in greater involvement in our ministry. There is possibly the need for a more structured program of formation.

Finally, there are different levels of acceptance of the MSC Association throughout the province, varying from warm acceptance and support to bare tolerance. It is very understandable that not all MSC have the time to foster the MSC Association. However it is important for all of us to reflect towards Associates both acceptance and hospitality. Otherwise we are not true to our charism.

The reports presented by Frank and Lynn led to a lengthy discussion and eventually to the acceptance of the following statement by the Chapter about the MSC Association:

The MSC Association is a genuine part of the MSC family. There is a healthy diversity in Association life around our Province. While groups are usually well supported by professed MSC, there is a clear need to clarify the relationship between professed and associate MSC. There is an equally strong call for an organized process of formation.

The Chapter recommends:

- The involvement of MSC communities, and not just individual MSC, in accepting responsibility for the Association and its involvement in MSC ministry*
- The appointment of a professed MSC Director who can give quality time to the Associates*
- An examination of the name, MSC Association, and its implications*
- A review of commitment, with a view to more significant and less frequent ceremonies.*

Both Lynn and Margaret provided reports about the Chapter in the November issue of the Newsletter. They were delighted with the welcome and acceptance that they received from the members of the Chapter and their ability to participate in small group discussions. Lynn concluded her report as follows (a very gracious report):

I came away from the Chapter more convinced than ever that the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart can truly state: "Ours is a spirit of family and a spirit of true friendship, formed by kindness and understanding, by compassion and mutual forgiveness, by gentleness, humility and simplicity, by hospitality and a sense of humour." [MSC Constitutions #32]

The 1993 General Chapter

Having concluded my term as Provincial at the end of 1992, I had overseas study leave early in 1993 before taking over from Frank Andersen as Director of the MSC Association. In my absence Jacinta Sinclair continued to produce the Newsletter. She advised that in preparation for the General Chapter, the General Council had asked for suggestions to improve the two numbers of the Constitutions dealing with the laity. We worked on this and produced seven new numbers.

The General Chapter was held in Rome in September: I attended as an elected delegate. There was considerable discussion about the MSC Association at the Chapter. A beautiful document was produced showing that the General Administration was now enthusiastically supporting the growth of the Association in all Provinces. It reads as follows:

The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart gathered in a General Chapter in Rome in September 1993, reflected on that aspect of the charism of Fr Jules Chevalier which envisaged groups of religious, diocesan priests and lay people sharing a common spirituality and mission in the world.

In this statement we wish to affirm our strong support for those lay people who in recent years have endeavoured to live our charism. We situate our comments in the initial context of the universal call of baptized people to both holiness and mission. This call is then localised in the MSC tradition and charism, and the independent character of the lay group is stressed. We indicate something of the nature and structure

of MSC Associations where a commitment is necessary, but structures are flexible. Then we offer some suggestions for mutual relationships.

The Chapter decided to make only limited reference to MSC Associations in our Constitutions, since such documents essentially concern ourselves. However, all Provinces are encouraged to initiate MSC Associations if they have not already done so.

It is intended that there be an International Coordinator as well as a Provincial Coordinator of these Associations, and that material concerning both Chevalier's vision and existing Associations be disseminated throughout the Society. Further study of these aspects of the charism of Fr Chevalier will be undertaken, including a vision for lay spirituality and lay leadership in the Church. The General Chapter envisions an international meeting of MSC Associations in the near future.

The Chapter documents include a further inspiring and lengthy explanation of the second paragraph of the above statement. As indicated above, the Chapter decided not to include great detail about the MSC Association in the Constitutions. As a result our suggestion of seven new numbers was not accepted. However #61 was significantly improved. It reads as follows:

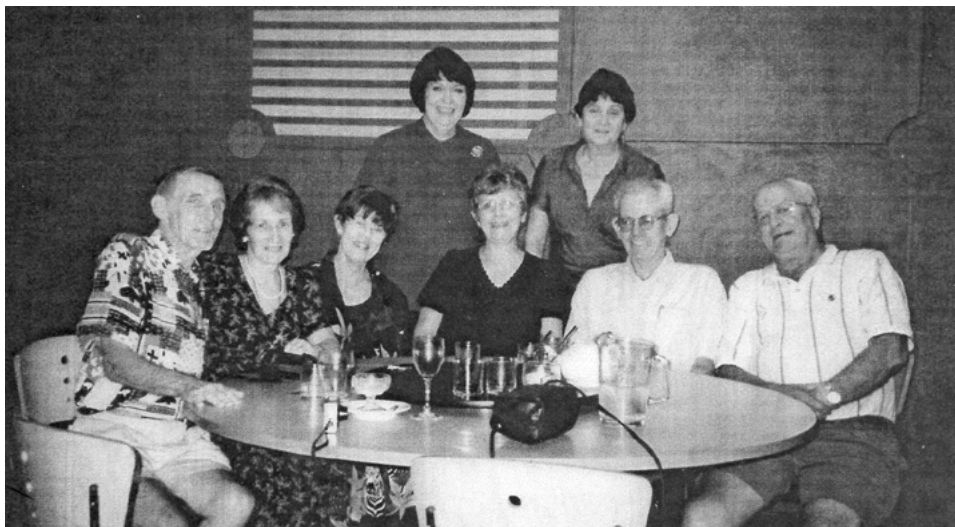
Our Founder wanted the fullness of mission to be realized in a global project with religious men and women, diocesan priests and lay people. He especially wished to have an association of lay people closely united with the professed members in their spirituality and mission (Constitutions 1877). For this reason, the Provincial Superior will promote this Association of Lay MSC. He will also encourage the members of the Province to collaborate in this work. He will appoint a coordinator to help in the development of this Association in relation to us, while respecting its lay character.

Further Developments

1993 – 1997

In 1993 and 1994

- There were exactly 200 adults who had committed themselves as members of the MSC Association in 1993.
- Dennis Murphy produced an excellent article, 80 paragraphs in length, in 1993. It was entitled "The Missionary Charism of Jules Chevalier in relation to the Laity". It was used for reflection by several groups.
- The Adelaide group had grown in numbers and reported that in 1993 at least 12 members gathered in a different home each month "come hell or high water". The host usually prepared the reflection while an MSC priest provided the Eucharist. They enjoyed sharing a meal and the companionship they had established. New members included Elizabeth May, Robin Trebilcock, Jill and Norbert de Rosario. Others who later joined this group are Mary Barton, Marilyn Trebilcock, Philip and Maryanne McMillan.
- After consulting the French Provincial, Jo Hegglin, I wrote to the General Council on November 30, 1993 suggesting that we should convene an international meeting of members of the MSC Association at Issoudun in July or September 1995. I received an immediate positive reply.
- In 1994 Lynn Taylor became editor of the Newsletter and served in this capacity for over 20 years.
- There was discussion in 1994 about a life commitment to the Association instead of regular renewals of membership. The Provincial Council agreed to this under certain conditions.
- Quite a large group of Associates met in Darwin in 1994 with Bill Brady as their chaplain. This group included the first



Darwin group 2002. From left back row; Joan Burke and Faye Austin. Sitting; Gerry McCormack, Helen McCormack, Glenda Liddle, Chris Glass, Gerry Burke and Peter Robinson.

indigenous member, Adrian Tunmuck from Port Keats as well as Helen and Gerry McCormack, Eileen Cossons, Glenda Liddle, Christine Glass, Mary Ehn.

- The Melbourne group attempted a revival in 1994 at Park Orchards with John Shallvey as their chaplain. However the revival lasted only briefly.
- Sydney and Canberra groups were very active.
- In May 1994 I produced a *"Handbook for Group Leaders"*.

First International Meeting of MSC Associations, 1995

The first international meeting of the MSC Associations was held at Issoudun, July 3-9, 1995. It was attended by over 160 people from places as diverse as Australia and Venezuela, Korea and Benin (Africa), France and Indonesia. Of these, 130 were lay people associated with the MSC, the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, and the MSC Sisters. The Australian group of 22 was the largest group, even though we had the furthest distance to travel. For the record their names are:

- From Canberra: Harold Baker, Anne-Marie Black, Mary Cummins, Adrienne Hemsley, Edna Jamieson, Brian and Joy Shine
- From Hamilton: Stephen Hackett, Cath Howman, Michael and Stephanie Kent
- From Sydney: Jim Littleton, Annette Marskell, Geraldine Pierce
- From Toowoomba: Brian Powell, Owen Wheatley
- From Bowral: Jean and Bert de Hosson
- From Adelaide: Robin Trebilcock
- From Japan: Frank Quirk, Don Smith, Yukio Yamaguchi

There were several keynote addresses, reports of developments in the various countries as well as statements by individuals. At the end of the conference the Australian group identified the following most significant aspects of the gathering:

- The historical perspective which enabled us to understand that the MSC Association is an integral and essential part of the vision and charism of Fr Chevalier
- Being an MSC, professed or lay, is a way of life, living the Spirituality of the Heart. It is not defined by any particular ministry. However spirituality and ministry should be integrated.
- We had the unique experience of being part of a large, joyful international family; a lived communion, sharing the one charism, praying, listening and socialising together
- We understood better the important and very significant position of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in the life and growth of our congregation.

We also recommended that a second international meeting be held in a few years' time, and that an international directorate be established and an international bulletin be produced. These were later implemented.

Many of the Australian group had the opportunity after the conference to visit the shrine of St Margaret Mary at Paray-le-Monial, the shrine of St John Vianney at Ars, the MSC Retreat centre at Miribel (Lyon), the MSC Association Centre at Chatel-Saint-Denis in Switzerland and the MSC communities at Innsbruck and Salzburg in Austria.

Other Activities in 1995

- Janet and Kevin Chaplin left the foundation group in Adelaide in order to start a second group. Members included Des and Terry Haydon, Josephine Mobley, Judy and Don Newham, Ronnie and Gerry Victory. They were accompanied by Michael Fallon. They made their first commitment in 1996. Pauline and Chris Cotton, Stella Hickey and Bernard Mobley later joined this group.



Tour group 1995. From left; Harold Baker, Owen Wheatley, Edna Jamieson, Mary Cummins, Geraldine Pierce, Anne-Marie Black and Adrienne Hemsley.

- A third Adelaide group was also formed with assistance from Des Holm, but this group lasted only a few years.
- Two editions of the MSC magazine, *Encounter*, Numbers 61 and 62, contained excellent reflections by 24 members of the MSC Association about *Being MSC*.
- Examples of the ministry of Associates with professed MSC in 1995 included the following:
- Brad Taylor moved from the MSC Justice office at Erskineville to Pastoral Assistant in that parish working with Frank Dineen.
- Jacinta Sinclair was re-appointed to chaplaincy at UNSW working with John Bosman.
- Barbara Rees moved from care of the Girls Boarding House at St John's College in Darwin to membership of the MSC Religious Education Team working with Chris Chaplin.
- Gai Puglisi, after a long association with the Douglas Park and Drummoyne communities, moved to chaplaincy at the Mater Hospital in Mackay, working with Gerry Burke.
- Cliff and Maree Samuel moved from Adelaide to take up management positions at St John's College in Darwin.
- Following Roly Kaupp's departure from Daramalan in December 1994, Gerard McCormick became chaplain to Roly's group.

Growth in 1996

A new group was formed in Drummoyne in 1996. Pat Austin had been looking after the parish on a temporary basis and spoke about the MSC Association at Masses one Sunday. A group was formed for which Doug Smith, who was the Superior of the MSC community in Drummoyne, later became the chaplain when Pat Austin left the parish. After appropriate preparation a group of 13 made their first commitment in the Navarre House chapel in 1996. This photo of the group was probably taken on that occasion. Beverley Tierney and Heather and Peter Burbridge became part of the group soon after. The group joined the MSC community for the evening Mass

on the last Friday of the month, and enjoyed the evening meal with the community after sharing a reflection with one or more professed MSC.

A second group was formed at Monivae College in 1996. This group included Carol Dyer, Judy Trompf, Bernadette and Ron Smith, Peter and Shirley Fotheringham. Others who later joined this group include: Terry Hurley, Patrick and Maria Kempton, Terry and Anne Nunan, Van Trompf, Tony and Angela Hutchinson, Bernadette Ferguson and very recently Bryan and Margaret Roberts. They were accompanied by Noel Mansfield. Meantime Stephen Hackett had been transferred from Monivae. John Shellvey assumed responsibility for the first adult group and for the student group.

In Japan Frank Quirk worked with great enthusiasm in promoting the MSC Association. He had four potential groups in existence and visited a different group on each Sunday of the month. He also produced a 60-page Handbook in both Japanese and English for MSC Associates.

Drummoyne group 1996



Standing: Jim Littleton MSC, Moira Baker, Roy Kelly, Eileen O'Neill, Robyn Strahan, Karl Elsener MSC, Kath Berry, Daisy Gill, Alan Gill
Sitting : Sheelagh Butcher, Pat Austin MSC, Myra Brown, Enid Brooks, Grace Smith,

I visited the MSC parishes in Fiji and Western Samoa in 1996 and spoke at Sunday Masses about the MSC Association. I did the same at the MSC parish of Lynwood-Langford in Perth, but nothing eventuated from these visits.

Meantime the Downlands student Associates continued to flourish. Owen Wheatley, Liz and Michael Phelan took a group of them for a tour of MSC communities in NSW and ACT.

Developments in 1997

In 1997 we celebrated the 90th anniversary of the death of Fr Jules Chevalier. In response to a request from the Provincial Council for suggestions about ways of honouring the occasion, I proposed that we have an exhibition of MSC and OLSH religious art work, and specifically paintings. The suggestion was accepted. The exhibition was held at Kensington. The principal artist on display was Otto Huszar, an MSC Associate at that time living in Queensland. He produced several large religious paintings based on Hungarian folk art. He also had a solo exhibition of the same paintings at Stuartholme College in Brisbane, courtesy of the Principal, David Manning.

Meantime the Sydney and Canberra groups were still very active. John Savage was now the chaplain to Geraldine Pierce's group and his input was always much appreciated. New members in this group included George Allen, Dorothy Brophy, Joy Callinan, Nobuko Konda, Eileen O'Donoghue and Ellen Walsh. The Melbourne group still remained in abeyance despite Peter Harvey Jackson's attempt to re-establish it. However Margaret and John O'Loughlin travelled each year to Hamilton to join with the Monivae groups for their annual retreat.

The MSC Association Newsletter continued to be produced four times each year. In the November edition of 1997 there is a lovely statement by Liz May from the Henley Beach group of what membership meant for her:

The MSC Association has given me an opportunity to be part of a loving caring group, sharing our faith and developing our spirituality at a heart level far beyond any expectations I may have had.

I feel loved and accepted as an individual, and quite free to share the ups and downs that everyday life brings. I am often deeply touched by the depth of sharing within the group. There is a real sense of trust in each other.

The celebrations of the Eucharist together is always a very special time. The feeling of peace and love in the group as we pray together is very precious to me.

I thank God for giving me the opportunity, and I thank all my MSC group for accepting me so lovingly.

An MSC General Conference, which is a meeting of the MSC General Administration with all the Provincial Superiors, was held at Santa Domingo in the Caribbean, October 1-15, 1997. Included among its decisions were the following affecting lay people:

- All provinces should acknowledge that the only way of fulfilling our mission is in mutual collaboration with lay people in all aspects of the mission ... Without lay people our religious life and works are incomplete.
- Search for a term or name which better expresses the togetherness of lay people in the MSC family.
- Have lay observers participating in the discussions at the next General Chapter in 1999 as well as at forthcoming Provincial Chapters.

National and International Meetings

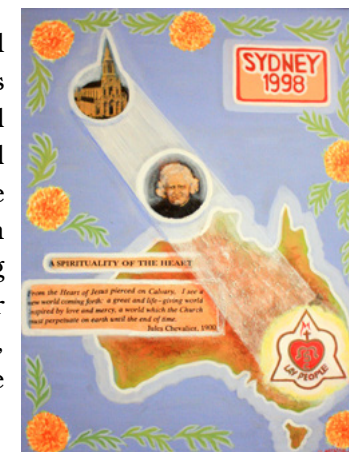
1998 - 1999

The Second National Meeting of the MSC Association, 1998

The second national meeting of the MSC Association was held at St Paul's National Seminary at Kensington on July 25-26, 1998. The theme of the gathering was *Being Lay MSC – Our Emerging Future*. 55 people attended from as far apart as Darwin and Fiji, Adelaide and Toowoomba, Hervey Bay and Hamilton. There were four key addresses on that theme by Lynn Taylor, Therese Compton, Liz Phelan and Jacinta Sinclair, while Julie Maher, Harold Baker and John Savage spoke on *The Spirituality of the Heart*.

The meeting provided an opportunity to celebrate MSC identity, both lay and professed. There were good discussions which highlighted the desire for continuing formation and to be of assistance in MSC ministries. There was a movement towards referring to members as Lay MSC rather than Associates, but no decision was made.

Otto Huszar produced a special painting for the occasion. It depicts the Basilica of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart at Issoudun, Fr Chevalier and his vision of a world renewed by the Spirituality of the Heart, and the union of lay and professed MSC in following that vision. The surrounding border of marigolds, as the name suggests, is a symbol for Mary, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.



The 1998 Provincial Chapter

The 1998 MSC Provincial Chapter was held at Downlands College in Toowoomba, September 22-30. Bob Irwin was elected as the new Provincial Superior to take office on January 1, 1999. Eleven MSC Associates attended in varying capacities: invited observers, secretaries and general support.

The following statement of affirmation about the MSC Association was approved:

We reaffirm the vision of Jules Chevalier to establish a family with a special charism.

We commit ourselves to exploring ways in which we can develop an expression of a distinctive Chevalier missionary spirit, as lived by lay members of this family.

We value the mutual bonds with all members of the Chevalier family. We reaffirm the role of these people (traditionally called MSC Associates) in developing warm relationships with other members of the Chevalier family – professed and ordained MSC, OLSH, MSC Sisters and Our Lady's Nurses for the Poor.

Other Developments in 1998

At the beginning of 1998 I was transferred from Navarre House in Drummoyne to Daramalan College in Canberra. This was the year in which Frank Fulton became the first lay Principal of the college. At this time there were four Lay MSC groups in



A Canberra group 2018. From left back row; Paul Hemsley and Keith McLaughlin. Front; Mary Cummins, Eula McLaughlin and Joyce Devine.

Canberra. Harold Baker was chaplain to the first group of which Anne Mathas was the coordinator. This group included new members not mentioned earlier: Mary Cummins, Anne O'Neill, Eula and Keith McLaughlin, Aileen and Darcy Walsh, Peter and Freda Naughton, Mary and Jerome O'Callaghan, Harry and Joan Phillips.

At this time I became chaplain to the other three groups which were coordinated by Judy Smith, Wendy Wade and Lorna Garratt. These were flourishing times when the total membership in Canberra was 41. The membership of Lorna's group has fluctuated over the years but in recent times the following have met every few months: Lorna and David Garratt, Creina Jarrett, Brian and Marilyn Garratt, Jan Yanopoulos and Barry Smith.

They were also flourishing times in Adelaide where again there were four groups and a total of 50 members. The coordinator of the initial group was Betty Wallace and the chaplain was Tony O'Brien with 13 lay members. The second group was one founded by Janet Chaplin; there were 14 members in that group and Jim Fallon was their chaplain. Michael Fallon was chaplain to the two newer groups, composed of 10 members with Mark Andrew as their coordinator and 13 members with Chris Adey as their coordinator. These last two groups did not remain in existence for very long.

The Toowoomba group also increased in numbers; there were now 20 members with Liz Phelan as coordinator and Denis Uhr as the chaplain. Regular members of this group since that time and who have not been mentioned earlier include Phil Cash, Con Foley, Geraldine Vering, Meg Hicks, Alf Mason, Maria and John Keightley, and only recently Ian and Saozinha Mendes. Liz also looked after the 19 student Associates.

Margaret O'Loughlin and Peter Harvey-Jackson were successful in reviving the Melbourne group in 1998. The new and continuing members were John and Margaret O'Loughlin, Patricia Dickson, Marita and Peter Duffy, Allan Flanagan, Daryl Marsh, Shirley McCartin, Nancy and Peter Steane. At this time in its history the Melbourne group held their annual retreat day at Mingarra, the



Toowoomba group 2018. From left; Alf Mason, Jim Littleton, Liz Phelan, Saozinha Mendes, Con Foley, Chris Ryan and John Ryan.

site of the former Croydon monastery.

The Second International Lay MSC Meeting, 1999

The Second International Lay MSC Meeting was held at Issoudun in July 1999. It was attended by 160 people from 23 different countries and it included Associates not only from the MSC, but also from the OLSH and the MSC Sisters. There were 17 Australians in the group. We heard two memorable addresses, one by Andre Mayor MSC on *The Spirituality of Jules Chevalier* and the other by Klaus Sanders MSC on *The Laity in the Church and the Vision of Jules Chevalier*.

There was some discussion about a proposed International Charter for the laity of the Chevalier Family, but no consensus was reached. A draft charter was later released to be used as desired.

There was also discussion about the name of the group. The Spanish speaking people had difficulty with Association which for them had connotations of trade unions. The English speaking people had problems with the French proposal of Fraternity. The OLSH Sisters naturally had difficulty with the term Lay MSC. The

majority accepted the name, Lay MSC, and that is what has been used officially in Australia since then, although many professed and lay members still use the word Associates. It has since then become customary for the General Administration to refer to the Laity of the Chevalier Family.

Something of the spirit of the meeting was captured by Margaret Wallace who wrote in the August edition of the Lay MSC Newsletter:

The joyfulness and sincerity of the gathering overflowed into the Eucharistic celebrations. I have never been to so many celebrations of the Eucharist which created in me so much emotion and tears of happiness. Each Mass showed the difference in our cultures. The lovely colourful national costumes and the enthusiasm of the singing enveloped everyone in the beautiful basilica.

For those who wished to participate I organised a two-week European tour prior to the gathering. We visited such places as Munich, Prague, Berlin, Munster, Cologne, Trier and Homberg; in most of the cities we also visited an MSC professed community.



Margaret O'Loughlin

The MSC General Chapter, 1999

The six-yearly MSC General Chapter was held at Issoudun in September 1999. For the first time Lay MSC were invited to attend and Australia was allocated one place. After expressions of interest were called, the Provincial Council selected Margaret O'Loughlin as the Australian representative. She was one of seven, who included Louis Joly of France who became the first international coordinator and Rita Cleuren of Belgium who took over this responsibility in later years.

Margaret wrote a report for the Lay MSC Newsletter. The following is a small excerpt from that report:

We were all made very welcome and were included in all discussions at all levels ... I was pleased to carry the

Australian flag in the opening Eucharist in the Basilica ... My lasting impression is of the many different Eucharists. Each day, prayers and liturgy were arranged by a different country with their own culture ... Overall it was a great experience. It was heavy going at times and heart-wrenching to hear some of the stories, but it was also a time of great hope for the future.

The Acts of the General Chapter included the following statement with reference to the laity:

In response to the request of the lay MSC to journey with them on their way as Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, this Chapter asks all members of the MSC religious congregation to consider the vocation of our brothers and sisters as a special gift from God to us and all his people. Therefore we will do all we can to welcome our brothers and sisters and give them opportunities to strengthen and spread the lay movement.

The Chapter urges that promotion and support of the Lay Missionaries of the Sacred Heart is a responsibility of all professed members.

The draft Lay MSC Charter which had been written at the international meeting in July was discussed at length and officially accepted as the Charter for the Laity. The following is the substantive part of this document:

Lay MSC Charter

The Association of 'Lay Missionaries of the Sacred Heart' is a communion of lay people, open to priests and deacons, animated by a spirituality that has its roots and concrete expression in the charism of Fr Jules Chevalier, founder of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, and the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

Purpose: The members of the 'Lay Missionaries of the Sacred Heart' share the mission of the Chevalier family which has as its purpose: to bring LIFE to the world by proclaiming to all people the LOVE of God manifested in the pierced heart of Christ according to the motto "May the Sacred

Heart of Jesus be loved everywhere"; to discover and make known Our Lady of the Sacred Heart who leads us to the Heart of her Son.

Spirit: The spirit is linked to the grace which is distinctive to the religious family of Fr Chevalier, which invites its members to follow Christ by imitating his Love, to be the Heart of Jesus in all circumstances in their life, sharing his sentiments and contemplating the loving person of Christ through the visible sign of his Heart.

Requirements: To live this vocation it is obvious that each brother and sister needs to be supported by a life of personal and community prayer.

Bonds with the religious family of Fr Jules Chevalier: The 'Lay Missionaries of the Sacred Heart' are composed of different groups of laity in the world, who are united in the same spirit and the same mission through their sharing the charism of Fr Jules Chevalier.

Formation: Each group will define its own structure in relation to its mission and its bonds with the Religious Chevalier Family (MSC, FDNCS, MSC Sisters) respecting the present Charter.

Name: This charter is a common working document. Each organization of communion on the continental level should, in the future, flesh it out and change it according to the different cultures of each country.

Other Events in 1999

- An Easter Retreat was held at Douglas Park. It was coordinated by Therese Compton and was well attended. There were 30 adults and 20 younger people. Michael Fallon was the principal speaker; his topic was "Jesus and the Beloved Disciple". This retreat replaced a national one that was planned for Adelaide, May 25-29, but which had to be cancelled because of insufficient numbers.
- In August 1999 I met with Sr Therese Farrell, the Director of the OLSH Associates, to discuss issues of mutual interest. We agreed that each congregation would maintain its own structures for admission to membership. We recognised the need for different identification titles. We saw real merit in celebrating festivals together and sharing retreats but we thought it inappropriate to have mixed attendance at monthly meetings. We agreed to share newsletters.

Into the New Millennium

There was much excitement all over the world to mark the beginning of the new millennium. On television we watched the celebrations of many different countries as the occasion moved from east to west.

One very significant event for the MSC family in 2000 was the MSC 2000 Jubilee Reunion. This was a reunion of professed MSC with former professed MSC and their partners and Lay MSC. About 50 of the 160 who attended were Lay MSC. It was conceived and organised by Brian Gagen, Bill Welsh and Jim Littleton, and held at Kensington monastery with the help of the Superior, Peter Hearn, on the weekend of October 14-15.

It was a wonderful occasion on which we celebrated our common MSC identity through the Eucharist, through organised discussions, through conversational reminiscences and through meals together. Therese Compton spoke on behalf of the Lay MSC at the Dinner, and Liz Phelan did the same at the Eucharist. A booklet, *Stories to Tell*, was produced for the occasion and many contributed to it.

Following the second international conference of Lay MSC held at Issoudun in 1999, an International Coordination of the Lay MSC of the Chevalier Family was formed. It was chaired by Louis Joly; Rita Cleuren was the secretary. There were nine people on this committee all of whom were from Europe. It met twice a year at the MSC House in Miribel (near Lyon) where Louis Joly lived. Unfortunately there was nobody on the committee from outside Europe, maybe because of financial reasons. The committee proposed a formation program based on Jim Cuskelly's book, *Jules Chevalier – Man with a Mission*. It also organised a Lay MSC website.

The year 2000 was also the year in which the Olympic Games were held in Sydney. Keith McLaughlin, a Lay MSC, was one of the people chosen to carry the Olympic Torch through parts of Canberra. By a wonderful coincidence his route took him along Cowper Street, Dickson, past the front of Daramalan College.

The Spring edition of Encounter in 2000 contained several articles written by Lay MSC on the theme "Why I became a Lay MSC". It provided some inspiring reading.

Reports from 2001 Newsletters

- Therese Compton reported that the Randwick Lay MSC group had been together for over 25 years. It now planned to meet only four times a year for the customary Eucharist, prayer and reflection.
- Christine Glass reported that the Darwin group met weekly in Lent to follow a Lenten Program. They maintained a close connection with St John's College and met each month for a Eucharist and a shared meal.
- The four Canberra groups came together on the Sunday after the Feast of the Sacred Heart to renew their commitment and share a meal in the Daramalan Residence. This has been an annual practice.
- On the occasion of the anniversary of the death of Jules Chevalier, October 21, the four Adelaide groups met in the Hindmarsh parish hall to pray and reflect on the spirituality of our Founder. Janet Chaplin, Robin Trebilcock, Terry Bowman, Noel Mansfield and Helen Armstrong all gave inspiring addresses. Most of the MSC community and some OLSH Sisters participated in the meeting.
- The Bowral group celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart at Hartzer Park with OLSH Associates. The

Bowral group also organised the October Lay MSC weekend at Douglas Park. Members of this group not mentioned earlier include Chris and Trish Topp, Charles and Margaret Vaughan-Smith, Warren and Dawn Glase, Mary Roberts, Marion Phillips.

- The Melbourne group reported that they were working their way through a book, *Tomorrow's Catholic* by Michael Morwood, taking a chapter at each meeting. Daryl Marsh told me that he prepared for these meetings by using a green pen for areas he agreed with, a yellow pen for parts about which he was unsure, and a red pen for ideas with which he disagreed. Excellent preparation. It was at about this time that Philip Malone became chaplain to the Melbourne group. Another book that they used for reflection was *Questions Catholics Ask* by John Thornhill SM.
- In September I took a group of 12 Lay MSC to Europe. After landing in Paris we visited the beautiful Gothic cathedrals in Chartres and Bourges. We recalled that it was the 150th anniversary of the ordination of Jules Chevalier in the cathedral at Bourges. We then spent three wonderful days at Issoudun where we received some inspirational addresses. This was followed by a very enjoyable nine day tour of Ireland.
- December 8, 2001 marked the official launch of the Lay MSC Association in Japan. The ceremony took place in the MSC church in Nagoya. 15 people made their first commitment after some years of preparation by Frank Quirk. They came from Nagoya, Fukui, Ogaki and Konan. Frank visited one of these parishes each Sunday of the month. Yukio Yamaguchi is the coordinator of the groups.
- The MSC Education Conference held at the Chevalier Resource Centre at Kensington in October was attended by several Lay MSC. Judy Smith reported that:

We were privileged to have such uplifting keynote speakers as Bob Irwin and Paul Collins to help to focus our deliberations about directions for our MSC schools in the face of declining numbers of professed MSC. ... The

resolutions of the conference indicated a need for greater formation of staff to continue the ethos and tradition of Jules Chevalier. The proposals for the way forward are exciting and challenging.

- In the early months of 2001, after many years of wonderful service, Lynn Taylor resigned from the position of Secretary to the Provincial. During that time she produced the Lay MSC Newsletter four times a year, encouraged groups to contribute to it and kept an accurate record of memberships. I wish to record my thanks for her excellent work. In December 2001 she and her husband, David, took up residence at St Mary's Towers and continued for several years a life of service to the MSC community. Nilda Gonzales replaced Lynn as secretary to the Provincial and as editor of the Lay MSC Newsletter.



Lynn Taylor

Events in 2002 - 2003

- Early in 2002, Pat Sharpe replaced John Savage as chaplain to Geraldine Pierce's Lay MSC group in Randwick. Pat's commitment to this group for the next 15 years was very much appreciated by them as was John Savage's earlier involvement. New members of this group about this time include Leo Carroll, Coralie Fallon, Heather Hardy, Toshiko Hitchings, Mary Bhalla, Gaetono Natoli



Randwick group 2018. From left Jim Littleton, Geraldine Pierce, Annette Marskell and Mary Bhalla.

and Annie Lau.

- A significant event in the history of the Lay MSC in Australia took place on September 3, 2002 at Wadeye (Port Keats), an aboriginal community cared for by the MSC in the Northern Territory. The Superior General, Michael Curran, celebrated the Mass at which five aboriginal men made their first commitment as Lay MSC: Deacon Boniface Perdjert, Aloysius Kungul, Damien Tunmuck, William Parmbuk and Mark Crocumb. Another, Adrian Tunmuck, made a permanent commitment as a Lay MSC. They were prepared for this occasion by Mark McGuinness. Michael Curran also met with several other Lay MSC groups throughout Australia.
- In September 2002 an international symposium to commemorate the work of Jim Cuskelly was held at Issoudun. There were 74 participants including 10 Lay MSC from around the world. Alison McKenzie was Australia's representative. In the first week they reflected on Jim's life and ministry; in the second week they shared reflections on the various MSC ministries worldwide.
- There were many glowing tributes for John Franzmann's presentations at the Lay MSC retreat at Douglas Park in October 2002.
- On December 7, 2002, another 11 Japanese men and women made an initial commitment as Lay MSC. They were followed by another four in 2003.
- The Alain de Boismenu Centre for Lay MSC at Miribel was closed in 2002 and the organisational centre of the Lay MSC movement later shifted to Belgium under the leadership of Rita Cleuren.
- In 2003 the MSC Retreat team for ministry in MSC schools became the Chevalier Institute with a wider focus. It was conceived as a joint MSC-OLSH project to facilitate formation in the Spirituality of the Heart for lay co-workers in MSC and OLSH ministries. The initial members were Julie Taylor,

James Maher MSC and Merrilyn Lee FDN. However Merrilyn withdrew from the team towards the end of the year. The ministry of James and Julie was much appreciated, especially in MSC schools and it lasted for several years.

- The October Lay MSC Retreat at Douglas Park in 2003 was conducted by Julie and James. The November Newsletter contains glowing reports from 16 participants including the following poem by Sheila Whigham:

St Mary's Towers

What is it that draws me back time after time?

It is so physically beautiful

with expansive grounds.

Aura of deep peace and stillness,

soothing and calming to body and mind.

I arrive hopefully, excitedly and explore

all the familiar places.

Some are reassuringly the same,

some evoke sadness as they deteriorate.

But I am here – I am home.

I unpack neatly, move quietly,

join others almost timidly.

Anxieties and doubts change over the years,

but gradually, mixing with friends,

the welcome warms me, thaws me.

I can relax and share my thoughts.

I am always encouraged and accepted.

This experienced love is irresistible.

I know I will return.

- Many Lay MSC attended the MSC Parish Conference held at Henley Beach, November 3-6, 2003. Frank Fletcher gave a fine address on Heart Spirituality and the Lay Vocation, Claude Mostowick spoke on Prejudice and Personal Growth. Bob Irwin had questions for parishes from the perspective of an MSC Provincial.

- At Monivae College on the 2003 Feast of the Sacred Heart six new members made their first commitment as Lay MSC with encouragement from Pat Austin.
- The Chevalier College group used sections of Jim Cuskelly's book, *Walking the Way of Jesus*, for their monthly reflections.



Canberra group at Rosedale 1990s. From left back row, Michael Smith, Denis Uhr, Pat Keneally, Rita Daniels, Jean Reid and Jim Reid. Front row, Marie Clarke, Judy Smith, Ray Gunn, Mary Cummins, Joan Gunn and Jizella Akkari.

Significant Events

2004 – 2008

The Numurkah Group

Patrick and Maria Kempton, Lay MSC in Hamilton, moved to Numurkah in central Victoria in 2002. Together with a neighbouring couple, David and Kris Walker, they initiated an adult faith education group in Numurkah in 2004. After some time they felt the need to be associated with a religious congregation. Whereupon Patrick asked me to help him form a Lay MSC group in Numurkah. I readily agreed to do so and since then I have generally visited them every three months.

The original members of the Numurkah Adult Faith Education group are Maria and Patrick Kempton, Kris and David Walker, Shona and Damian Thomas, Gabrielle Cameron, Kerry and Colin Stone, Dorothy Farrant and Tricia Newman. Seven of these are officially members of the Lay MSC Association but several other people are now part of the Adult Faith group. They include Chris Sutton, Lorna Morris, Steve Mills, Terri and Tom Tinkler (Tom died recently). As many as 15 adults have been at meetings which I have attended.

Each year the group meets weekly in Lent to follow the Lenten Program provided by the Brisbane archdiocese. Their normal monthly meetings consist in sharing recent events in their personal lives, reflecting on the coming Sunday's gospel and discussion of some aspect of adult faith. For example they have used various chapters of Frank Andersen's book, *Jesus Our Story*, and Pope Francis' Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*. At the end of the year they share a meal together after the Eucharist, which I provide. Several of the group have travelled to Canberra to have a meeting with me



Numurkah group 2018. From left back row; Colin Stone, Tricia Newman, Jim Littleton, and Damian Thomas. Middle row; Steve Mills, Lorna Morris, Terri Tinkler and Maria Kempton. Front row; David Walker, Patrick Kempton and Kris Walker.

at Daramalan College. They are an inspiring group to be with and to share their hopes and concerns about the church.

150th Anniversary Celebrations

2004 was a significant year in the history of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. It was the 150th anniversary of the founding of our congregation by Fr Jules Chevalier. Celebrations began with an evening Mass of Thanksgiving at Kensington monastery on December 8, 2003. This was attended only by professed members. Writing later about the occasion Chris Murphy noted:

At the celebratory dinner ... Peter Malone took us for an encyclopaedic and cheerful trip through the major events and aspects of the history of the Australian Province and its missions ... Old times, old incidents and many great MSC brothers and priests who have gone before us were recalled with delight and good humour through a night of festivity and collegiality. [Lay MSC Newsletter, February 2004]

The next event attended by both lay and professed MSC was a Jubilee Mass celebrated in Our Lady of the Sacred Heart church at Randwick on March 24, 2004, to mark the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Jules Chevalier at Richelieu in central

France on March 15, 1824. The Provincial, Bob Irwin gave an inspiring homily from which I quote a very small section which summarises the spirituality shared by both lay and professed MSC:

The MSC form a brotherhood – and by extension, a brotherhood and sisterhood in mission – focussed on Jesus who shows us how much God loves us.

- *We are not pessimists, nor naïve optimists, but we are people of hope and courage.*
- *We are people who love our Church, which must work conscientiously to make sure it understands the times and not just condemns them; to make sure it is relevant to the needs of today's people.*
- *We believe in a Church of compassion, not of fear.*
- *We believe in a Church that was founded for the salvation of all and not for the condemnation of people.*
- *We see the hand of God in the times in which we live.*
- *We believe that love is the only way, not a soft sentimental love but a love that challenges and yet comforts, a love that is courageous and yet is humble, a love that is hopeful and yet not blind to the problems of our world. It is a love that is strong and determined but does not crush the bruised reed. It is a love that is faithful and generous. Like Christ, it is compassionate, tender and merciful. [Lay MSC Newsletter May 2004]*

All MSC schools and parishes celebrated the 150th anniversary in their own way. As an example Kippax parish set aside five Sundays scattered throughout the year to have a 3.00pm meeting of parishioners at which the following spoke on themes connected with the anniversary: Frank Fletcher, Margaret O'Toole (Adelaide Lay MSC), Shane Carr, Peter Hearn and Brian Gallagher.

Celebrations came to an end in December with a "Back to Douglas Park Weekend" (December 4-5). This was intended for former brothers and students of the Apostolic School who found that they were called to a different vocation in life. It was also attended

by many lay and professed MSC. It was a wonderful occasion for renewing acquaintances and recalling memories of the past. About 200 people attended.

The final celebration was a Jubilee Mass and Dinner at Douglas Park on December 8, the actual anniversary date. It was attended mainly by professed MSC and was an occasion to thank Bob Irwin for his leadership of the Province in the past six years.

The 2004 Provincial Chapter

In September 2004 another Provincial Chapter was held at Downlands College in Toowoomba. Tim Brennan was elected as the new Provincial. There was considerable discussion about a shared charism and a shared mission between lay and professed MSC. The following Lay MSC gave short addresses on this topic: Liz Phelan (Toowoomba), Lynn Taylor (Douglas Park), Julie Taylor (Chevalier Institute), Margaret O'Toole (Adelaide). In responding to these addresses Alison McKenzie stated that professed MSC should see Lay MSC not just as helpers, but as colleagues, united as one in mission and spirituality. The Chapter produced an important statement on the topic:

MSC, LAY AND PROFESSED:

A SHARED CHARISM, A SHARED MISSION

Moving forward in the Spirit, the Chapter acknowledges that the charism of heart spirituality is a gift of the Spirit to the whole Church. We acknowledge that this charism has its roots in the Old and New Testaments, and has unfolded and developed through the centuries, appearing in various forms at various times.

We acknowledge and celebrate that this charism has been carried and nurtured by many individuals and religious congregations, and, for the past 150 years, by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and within the sister congregations, the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Throughout

history, religious congregations have been one of the primary means by which charisms have been preserved. Throughout history, the Spirit has also gifted lay people with the same charism, and this gift of the Spirit has never been restricted to the professed or ordained.

We acknowledge and celebrate that our Founder, Jules Chevalier, had as his original vision three groups formed in the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus, with one group being lay people who are called to be Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in the world.

At this point in the history of the Church and the history of the Congregation, in accord with the spirit and teaching of the Church,

- We affirm the mutuality of the lay and professed expressions of this charism,*
- We declare our desire to deepen our understanding and appreciation of the shared nature of the charism,*
- We commit ourselves to setting up structures and forums to ensure our ongoing discussion and exploration of this vision of the Founder.*

Several suggestions were also recorded as ways in which the statement could be implemented

Centenary of the Death of our Founder

The year 2007 was another significant year in the history of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. It marked the centenary of the death of our Founder, Fr Jules Chevalier, on October 21, 1907. It was celebrated in different ways in our various communities. The following events were reported in the Lay MSC Newsletters:

- On Sunday October 21 Cardinal George Pell celebrated a Mass in Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church, Randwick. Over 200 lay and professed MSC later attended a celebratory dinner at Kensington monastery.
- In Adelaide the celebrations were combined with a function

to honour the 50th anniversary of the foundation of Henley Beach parish. An open air Mass was held on the nearby Star of the Sea Convent School Oval, followed by a parish picnic. Many lay MSC participated in the celebrations.

- The Melbourne professed community with lay MSC and friends gathered at what had once been Croydon monastery. There was an early afternoon Mass in the beautiful new chapel, followed by afternoon tea and a reflective visit to the MSC cemetery where up to 19 professed MSC lie buried. Over 100 people took part in the function.

Other Events

The Brisbane group began meeting in the MSC presbytery at Camp Hill in 2004 and have done so ever since, now by courtesy of a diocesan parish priest. The group meets with me every three months. The following have attended regularly: Marie Menhinnitt and Jim Buckley (both now deceased), Joan and Eddie Casey, Maurice Cullen, Kay and Paul Bertini, Barbara and Cor de Regt, David and Veronica Colch, Martin Rose, John and Sandy O'Donoghue.



Brisbane group 2018. From left; John O'Donoghue, Eddie Casey, Joan Casey, Kay Bertini, Paul Bertini and Maurice Cullen.

On November 7, 2004, eleven Australian Vietnamese made their first commitment as Lay MSC. They form another Sydney group and were brought together by Thoi Tran in 2001. They are pictured with Thoi before he went to Vietnam in 2003. There were prepared for the commitment



Adult lay MSC group in Vietnam ceremony by Tan Van Nguyen.

In October 2004 I took a group of 16 Lay MSC to Issoudun, which is a wonderful experience for anyone with an MSC connection. This was followed by a visit to Paray le Monial and a tour of northern Italy finishing at Rome.

Early in 2005 Bernadette Phillips replaced Nilda Gonzales as secretary to the new Provincial, Tim Brennan. In this capacity Bernadette became the new editor of the Lay MSC Newsletter and she continued in this capacity until her resignation in mid-2017. I am indebted to both Nilda and Bernadette for their commitment to the newsletter and to maintaining the records of the Association.

During 2005 the Provincial Administration gave serious thought as to ways in which the Provincial Chapter's reflections on the Lay MSC could be implemented, and specifically ways in which lay people could be more closely involved in MSC mission as a joint exercise. Bob Irwin was appointed to carry out the investigation and I assisted him.

Over a period of several months in 2005-2006, Bob and I visited most MSC communities and most Lay MSC groups in Australia. The



Bob Irwin

recurring message was that their members were growing older and hence becoming less active. However they were concerned about the drift of young people away from religious practice. Hence they frequently suggested that the MSC, lay and professed, should work together to develop ministries to this section of society and that young lay MSC groups (people aged 20-35) should be formed.

One attempt to form such a younger Lay MSC group occurred at Daramalan College. In a staff of over 160 there are always younger people with a deep interest in religion and spirituality. Wendy Wade, a member of staff and coordinator of an adult group, invited individuals whom she thought would be interested. Over the years they have met occasionally and have attended retreats at Douglas Park, without making any formal commitment. Another important group is Heartworks, which emerged from Chevalier College past-students, about which I will write later.

In 2006 the Melbourne group had their annual retreat day at Shoreham where Brian Gallagher guided them through some reflections. They also discussed what they could do to promote the Lay MSC among young people. As a group they felt privileged to have received a visit from the Superior General, Mark McDonald and the Provincial, Tim Brennan.

Many readers will have memories of watching World Youth Day celebrations on television, July 15-20, 2008: the arrival of Pope Benedict XVI on Sydney Harbour, the Stations of the Cross, the Mass at Randwick racecourse and much else. The warmth and gentleness of the Pope was very evident; the enthusiasm and faith of young people was very impressive.

Many Lay MSC were involved in helping to raise money to allow young people from MSC parishes in the Pacific to attend the World Youth Day activities. These young people came from parishes in Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines. Some Lay MSC also provided accommodation for such travellers. The MSC endeavours were coordinated by Peter Hearn, the Randwick parish priest; about \$200,000 was raised.

Third International Lay MSC Meeting 2008

The third international meeting of the Lay MSC took place in Santo Domingo, the capital city of the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean in November 2008. About 140 people attended the meeting from 26 countries, and they included Associates of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and the MSC Sisters. The Australian Lay MSC representatives were Bob Irwin, Fred and Sue Stubenrauch, Margaret O'Loughlin and Julie Taylor.

The following are some of the salient features of the meeting:

- A wonderful sense of being part of a worldwide movement based on the charism of Jules Chevalier.
- An emerging desire for ongoing development of an independent relationship between the professed and the lay.
- Involvement in group ministry in several countries.
- The need for coherent formation programs.
- The involvement of youth in many countries.
- Rita Cleuren from Belgium was elected as the International Coordinator.

Lay MSC in Vietnam

The first Lay MSC group in Vietnam emerged in 2008. Thoi Tran gathered a group of seven married women who are affectionately known as Thoi's Angels (pictured left). After appropriate formation they made their first commitment on November 5, 2010. They gather every first Friday of the



month and do charitable work as a group in Advent and Lent.

A second group of about 10 young students (aged 18-35) gathered in 2009. Their numbers increased and 18 made their first commitment as Lay MSC in 2011. Since then the membership has increased significantly. They meet regularly for reflection and the Eucharist, take part in a retreat in Lent and Advent and as a group do charitable work twice a year. In 2016 some of this group formed a separate group of five married couples who meet in a family house every second month, accompanied by a professed MSC.

A fourth group was formed in 2016 composed of the parents of young professed MSCs. They live in B       Province about 200km from Ho Chi Minh City.

Congratulations to Thoi Tran, Bob Irwin and other MSC priests who have promoted the Lay MSC movement in Vietnam.



Young lay MSC group with Bob Irwin in Vietnam

MSC Lay and Professed Council and Heartworks

The Council

Early in 2009 the Provincial Council decided to set up an MSC Lay and Professed Council with a view to working towards a wider sharing of our charism and mission. The initial members of the Council were Therese Compton, Peter Hendriks, Bob Irwin (interim chairperson), Jim Littleton, Alison McKenzie, Margaret O'Loughlin, Fred and Sue Stubenrauch and Julie Taylor. Over the years that followed membership of the Council changed: Bob Irwin retired and Fred Stubenrauch became the chairperson; Paul Compton replaced Therese; Steve Dives replaced Bob Irwin; Philip Fitzgerald and Aidan Johnson joined the Council; others attended individual meetings by invitation. The Council meets four times each year at Douglas Park.

The first venture of the Council was to meet at Chevalier College with six young adults, all former students of the college. The age range was from 21 to 26 years. Each young adult spoke of their love for the alma mater and their desire to develop their spirituality along the lines of MSC heart spirituality that had been fostered at the college. They decided to make a weekend retreat at Douglas Park in August and to organise a weekend retreat for young people of their age at Douglas Park in November. Aidan Johnson became the leader of this group which took the name, Heartworks, of which more will be written in the next section. Alison McKenzie was and continues to be their mentor.



Aidan Johnson

Heartworks

Heartworks is the name of a young adult Lay MSC group which emerged in 2009 from a group of Chevalier College past students. However by 2012 they had become a much wider community involving young people from Sydney, Canberra, Wollongong and the Southern Highlands of NSW.

The group gathers at Douglas Park on the first Friday of each month to share a meal together, pray, reflect and catch up on each other's lives. During the reflection the group often work through a guided discussion on a religious topic or a gospel text. In 2013 they took a virtue from the MSC Constitutions for reflection at their monthly meetings, eg, compassion, justice, love, hospitality, humour. The members feel free to express their opinions openly and without judgement. Every second first Friday the group has a sleep-over in some basic accommodation which they have helped to construct at St Mary's Towers. They also make an annual retreat at Douglas Park.



Heartworks group at Douglas Park

Heartworks also holds post-school retreats for Year 12 students graduating from Chevalier College. Apart from the value of the retreat the young graduates are provided with the knowledge that there is a way for them to remain connected with the MSC spirit that has guided their lives to that date.

Another aspect of Heartworks is the bi-annual retreat offered to the wider young adult community. The retreats are run by young adults and for young adults in a relaxed environment. The retreatants not only have the opportunity to renew their spirituality but to become more involved with Heartworks if they so desire.

An example of such retreats is the one that took place at Douglas Park in July 2013. The advertisement read as follows: "Join us on the 6th - 7th July to explore what it means to be human and how one may live ethically. Take time to recognise the principles that you live by." Individual young adults gave addresses on virtue ethics, consumer ethics, bioethics, ethical dilemmas, integrating the content of the retreat and to ask again the question, "Who Am I?" 20 young people attended this retreat.

There is a strong desire among the members of Heartworks to be involved in mission work such as short term lay missionary work at such MSC missions as Kiribati or Wadeye, or community based work such as the Vinnies Soup Kitchen.

Great credit is due to their leader Aidan Johnson of Wollongong and to their mentor, Alison McKenzie of the Chevalier Institute. The other regular members of Heartworks are: Andrew and Louise Constantino, Gemma and Simon Farrugia, Martha Johnson, Mary Johnson, Vincent and Georgia Iacono, Michelle Hinton, Nick Turner, Kate and Sam Wighton.

Other Developments in Recent Years

In 2008 the MSC took responsibility for the parish of Blackburn in Melbourne. Soon after, the MSC purchased a large house next to the parish church to use as a residence for MSC students for the priesthood. The Melbourne Lay MSC group then decided to have their monthly meetings at Blackburn. They attend the 10.30am Sunday Mass on the third Sunday of the month and then have a light lunch and a meeting in the student house (called Cuskelly House). The Lay MSC appreciate the attendance of the MSC students and other community members at their meetings. Meantime the membership of the group had increased significantly with the following attending regular meetings: Carol Dyer, Neville and Mary Hackett, John and Patricia Jennings, Michael and Christine Kearney.

In pursuit of fostering a ministry to post-school youth, the Lay and Professed Council first suggested that an MSC Youth Minister should be employed to work with all the MSC schools and parishes. This was somewhat ambitious, and it was decided instead that



Melbourne group 2018. From left; Neville Hackett, Mary Hackett, Carol Dyer, Christine Kearney, Michael Kearney, Margaret O'Loughlin and Phil Malone.

each school should appoint one of its staff as a Post-School Youth Minister. A role description was provided and each school agreed to implement that request.

On May 7-8, 2013 the Lay and Professed Council was delighted to host the inaugural meeting of the Young Adult Ministry Coordinators from each of the MSC schools. These were Anne McAtomney (Downlands), Fiona Mulhall (Chevalier), Terry Molan (Monivae) and Wendy Wade (Daramalan). The participants were invited to explore a variety of statistical and anecdotal data pertinent to attitudes and beliefs of young Australians. They evaluated some successful ministries currently being undertaken by a variety of religious congregations and then proceeded to dream their own vision of young adult ministry through their school. The meeting concluded with a commissioning and blessing by Peter Hendriks.

Following the third international meeting of MSC Associates in 2008, representatives of the General Councils of the three Chevalier congregations have met annually in Rome. This Tri-Generalate group decided to refer to Associates as The Laity of the Chevalier Family. The Tri-Generalate is responsible for staffing *Cor Novum* in Issoudun to run formation courses in our common spirituality and to research the charism of our Founder. Several Australian Lay MSC have benefitted from these courses, particularly the executive members and other staff of our four colleges.

Yukio Yamaguchi reported from Japan that in 2010 there was a total of 36 Lay MSC, of whom 20 were connected with the Johokubashi church in Nagoya, ten with the parish in Ogaki and six with the parish in Fukui. Yukio said that their meetings normally started with prayers from the MSC prayer book, followed by a reflection on a Gospel text and concluding with the Memorare to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Following the Provincial Chapter in 2010 at which John Mulrooney was elected Provincial, a General Chapter was held in Spain in September 2011. This Chapter made a very positive statement about the Lay MSC movement:

We affirm that lay Christians have their own vocation; we want to be open to, and encourage their particular charisms, and not think of them only in relation to our own works. Lay MSC should be encouraged to participate not only in our spirituality but also in our mission.

We recognise that the MSC lay movement has developed in different ways in various parts of the Congregation and we encourage the International Coordinating Group of the Chevalier Family to promote the formation of Lay MSC and the integration of the various branches of the Association and to help them to assume responsibility for their own apostolic ministries. As professed MSC we acknowledge the independence of the Lay MSC movement and we want to continue to support and encourage their autonomous development in whatever ways we can and to contribute to their formation. However, at the same time we recognise that the development of their role and identity within the Chevalier Family is something for them, as lay people to discern and decide.

On the last weekend of September 2011, over 30 Lay MSC gathered at Douglas Park for the annual retreat, which was facilitated by Julie Taylor and Phil Fitzgerald from the Chevalier Institute. The theme for the retreat was “Stories of the Heart”. Participants were



Lay MSC Retreat group at Douglas Park 2011

invited to connect with their own “love story” and with the “Story of Jesus – the great love story”. The retreat, as always, received a very positive response.

In March 2013 John Rate led a group of Lay MSC and other parishioners from Henley Beach on a Pilgrimage “Following in the Footsteps of St Paul”, through Greece and Turkey. It was a wonderful experience for those involved.

On August 9-11, 2013 the Chevalier Resource Centre provided a Seminar on the Spirituality of the Heart at Kensington. Speakers included Tony Arthur, John Rate, Claude Mostowik, Brian Boyle, Peter Malone, Julie Taylor, James Maher and Denis Uhr. Many Lay MSC benefitted from the seminar.

In recent years a section of the MSC website [misacor.org.au] has been developed to provide extensive information about the Lay MSC movement.

An on-line program has been developed on Heart Spirituality by Hans Kwakman MSC on behalf of *Cor Novum* in Issoudun. This has provided about 40 reflections on the topic since it began in 2015.

The Chevalier Institute which operates out of the Chevalier Resource Centre at Kensington has always been very much connected with the Lay MSC movement. Over many years it has conducted courses in the Spirituality of the Heart at Douglas Park for staff of MSC schools. In each school it has also offered courses on such topics as Pedagogy of the Heart, Teaching with Heart, Heart Centred Leadership. As a result many members of staff have become Lay MSC in spirit, even if they have not made an official commitment. The Chevalier Institute Team has included over the years Julie Taylor, James Maher, Philip Fitzgerald, Alison McKenzie, Bob Irwin and Brett Adamson.

At the Provincial Chapter in 2016 at which Chris McPhee was elected Provincial, Alison McKenzie, Fred Stubenrauch, Phil Fitzgerald and Paul Compton represented the Lay MSC.

In recent years Anne McAtomney, the Director of Mission at Downlands College, has developed a new staff group, which she has called Heart Voices. There are about 10-12 members who generally meet twice each term to reflect on Heart Spirituality. Anne is ably assisted by her husband, John, both of whom have been key members of staff for many years. Anne has also revived a small group of student associates who normally meet once a term.



Sacred Heart Monastery, Kensington

One Heart – Many Bodies

The Lay and Professed Council has always been aware that there are many parishioners in MSC parishes who are Lay MSC at heart even though they may not have made an official commitment. In order to reach out to that group of people the Lay and Professed Council, in conjunction with the MSC Parishes Committee, organised a national gathering of lay people connected with the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. It was held at Douglas Park on June 10-12, 2016 and took as its theme One Heart – Many Bodies.

Over 80 people participated in this gathering, representative of almost every MSC ministry in Australia. They worked in small groups initially reflecting on the question: “Who are we?” They then moved on to reflect on: “Who are we called to be?” Three themes emerged from this sharing that can be summarised as

- a mission focus
- a naming of the qualities that are central to who we are
- a deep and unshakable knowledge that we live refreshed and sustained by God’s love.

On the second day, group work focussed on preparing a statement for presentation to the forthcoming Provincial Chapter. It reads as follows:

We live in changing times when the influence and relevance of the church in the lives of ordinary people is diminishing and when it is foreseeable that there will be no professed MSC available to serve in Australian parishes, and no obvious way to maintain other MSC ministries. We could become disconsolate and fearful, dreaming of a time that is now past. Many groups are doing this.

But, we MSC have a vision of our Founder to guide us through times of change and uncertainty that is as relevant to our times as it was to his. We know that the remedy for the ills of the world comes when we learn to believe in God's love for us and to allow that love to transform us, and our mission, like Jesus, is to share that good news with the world.

You professed MSC have shown us how to live that vision with courage and hope and to be a church of compassion and mercy. You have formed us and we are profoundly grateful. In the 2004 Chapter you:

- affirmed the mutuality of the lay and professed charism and*
- declared your desire to deepen your understanding and appreciation of the shared nature of the charism*
- committed yourself to set up structures and forums to ensure your ongoing discussion and exploration of this vision of the Founder.*

There have been many words spoken since that Chapter. We lay MSC have also taken this commitment seriously. We have matured over those years and now we stand beside you.

Through a process of prayerful discernment at our recent Lay Gathering we wish to say to you:

Do not be afraid, we are here with you, and God is with us all.

Those present at the Lay Gathering would like to ask you:

Do you believe that we are all MSC with different expressions of the charism?

Can you see that our walking beside you reveals our commitment?

How can we seek to work together as co-workers to be a transforming presence and to face the future together?

Will you support the structural changes that our working together will require?

The evaluations of the gathering were very affirming. Participants expressed a desire to meet again. The group was facilitated in its discussions by Sr Therese Carroll RSJ, and the meeting was subsidised by the Provincial Administration.

The Provincial Chapter in September 2016 made the following response:

Acknowledging the developments in the past, the Chapter receives and affirms the report on the Conference of Lay MSC, "One Heart-Many Bodies". The Chapter commits the Province to collaborating with the Lay and Professed Council in the development of the Lay MSC and the specific ways in which the Lay MSC share the charism, Heart Spirituality and the mission.



Basilica of our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Issoudun

Third International Meeting 2017

The third international meeting of the Laity of the Chevalier Family was held in São Paulo, Brazil on July 16-26, 2017. It was attended by 70 lay people and 25 professed sisters and priests, who came from 20 different countries. There was simultaneous translation into English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and Korean. The theme of the meeting was: "Spirituality without Borders: Vision and Mission of the Laity of the Chevalier Family". Australia was represented by Fred Stubenrauch and Alison McKenzie, both of whom presented papers on "Chevalier's Vision: A Mission without Borders".

Among the presentations was one by Hans Kwakman: "A New Concept for the Organisation of the Lay Family". After explaining at some length Fr Chevalier's vision for the lay branch of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, he suggested that each country have its own

National Board composed of representatives of the three congregations. We already have the equivalent for ourselves in the Lay and Professed Council, but we still need to form a national body with representatives of the OLSH and MSC Sisters. Fr Kwakman also suggested that an International Board be established to replace the current European Board.

Elections were held for the International Board and Alison McKenzie was elected as the first General Secretary. Doris Machado dos Santos



Alison McKenzie

of Brazil was elected as Deputy, while Rita Cleuren was added as a member. They have authority to appoint others so that all continents are represented. Congratulations to Alison.

Another document that involved considerable discussion was "General Guiding Principles and Statutes of the Laity of the Chevalier Family". The document was officially approved on July 22, 2017. It is a lengthy document, too long to be included here but can be found on the Lay MSC website.

In reporting on the meeting in the August 2017 issue of the Lay MSC Newsletter, Fred concluded his report as follows:

I returned to Australia enthused about the future of the Laity of the Chevalier Family. There are many things to consider and much to do over the next years ... It was a wonderfully enriching experience that strengthened my feeling that we are part of a thriving worldwide movement of great promise ... The next General Assembly of Laity will be in six years in a country to be decided.

In recent times Fred and Sr Ancilla OLSH have organised a steering committee to develop the National Council. Meantime Alison and Fred have been visiting MSC parishes to promote the formation of leaders in fostering Heart Spirituality amongst parishioners. There was a Parish Leaders Gathering at Douglas Park in September 2017 for this purpose. There was also a meeting of 22 people at St Mary's Towers on March 4, 2018 to discuss how to implement the Guidelines document. This group is continuing to meet on a regular basis.



Fred Stubenrauch

The other significant event of 2017 was the General Chapter held in Rome in September, when the delegates assembled at the Vatican for an audience with Pope Francis. His words to them included the following affirming reference to the Lay MSC Association:

May your common life be marked by true fraternity, which welcomes diversity and values the gifts of all. Do not hesitate to continue and expand your communion with the lay people who participate in your apostolate. Let them share in your ideals and projects, and in the rich spirituality arising from your institute's charism. With them, and with the Sisters in your female congregations, you will form an ever greater and stronger charismatic family, one that will better demonstrate the vitality and relevance of your Founders charism.



An Adelaide group 2014, from left; Noel Mansfeild, Mary Barton, Betty Wallace, Jim Littleton, Robyn Trebilcock, Mary Kitschke, Dean Kitschke, Franl Perry and John Wallace.

The Groups in 2018

Many Lay MSC have reached an age when they have less energy than in previous years and hence find it harder to attend regular meetings. However they are still committed to living a Spirituality of the Heart and see it as a means of remedying the indifference of many people to the love of God. They have a deep faith in God's love for themselves and for all people and they try to help others appreciate this by the way they relate to them, that is with compassion, respect, loving care and hospitality.

Thus some of the Sydney groups meet only occasionally, although Geraldine Pierce's group still meets on the first Sunday of the month. They attend the 12:00 noon Mass at Randwick and meet with Peter Hearn in the presbytery after Mass.

Likewise the Melbourne group with fewer numbers attends the 10:30am Mass at Blackburn and meets with some members of the professed community in Cuskelly House after the Mass.

Three of the Canberra groups meet regularly each month though with reduced numbers. The Bowral group made a decision in recent times to discontinue meeting. Likewise the Darwin group no longer meets because of deaths and departures.

At one stage there were three groups connected with Monivae College. Over time they amalgamated into one group which now meets only occasionally, not from lack of interest, but because of age, departure from the district and the absence of an MSC chaplain.

The two Adelaide groups continue to meet regularly each month. They reflect great commitment and I enjoy meeting with them on a

yearly basis. The Brisbane and Toowoomba groups meet with me four times a year.

Members of the Vietnamese group in Sydney keep in touch with one another and meet occasionally, particularly when Thoi and Tan are on holidays in Sydney.

The Heartworks group with its youth, energy, enthusiasm and commitment is an inspiration to all the older groups. It meets regularly each month at St Mary's Towers with different themes each year and different styles of meeting.



A painting of Fr Jules Chevalier by Otto Huszar, a Lay MSC

IN MEMORIAM

At the serious risk of omitting someone, I wish to record the many Lay MSC who regularly attended group meetings and who have passed to their eternal reward. They include:

George Allen	Pat McFarland
Enid and Maurice Austin	Ernie McGuinness
Melinda Bisits	Ellen and Pat McNamara
Enid Brookes	John McPeake
Jim Buckley	Mary Menhinnitt
Peter Burbidge	Bernard Mobley
Iris Burnett	Jerome and Mary O'Callaghan
John Coghill	John O'Loughlin
Norma Compton	Michael Phelan
Ted Devine	Harry and Joan Phillips
Mary Ehn	Jim Reid
Bernadette Ferguson	Fay Rizzo
Edith Follows	Marie and Brian Rigney
Alan Gill	Louise Ryder
Elizabeth Hall	Julianne Ryan
Therese Haydon	Pat Sewell
Adrienne Hemsley	Brian and Joy Shine
Deirdre Hicks	Bernadette Smith
Cath Howman	Patricia Smith
Otto Huszar	Thelma & Ron Stannard
John and Edna Jamieson	Denise Stubbs
Michael Kent	Tom Tinkler
Kay Kerr	Chris Topp
Ron Klease	Van Trompf
Ron Lane	Margaret Wallace
Glenda Liddle	Darcy Walsh
Patricia Maguire	Sheila and John Whigham
Helen McCormack	Keith Williams
Kath and Bill McEnnally	

APPENDIX

The Answer

A poem by Sheila Whigham, composed at Douglas Park, April 1987

*Elbows on the table,
chin in cupped hands,
with earnest concentration
my friend asks,
“What does it mean to be an MSC. Associate?”*

*The room is noisy and crowded,
How to respond to this opportunity,
describe the joy and wonder?
“It means belonging to the MSC Family.”
I clumsily begin.*

*Later, quietly, I try to form my answer –
It means being accepted
and learning to accept.*

*It means being encouraged
and learning to encourage.*

*It means being challenged
and learning to think.*

*It means being given responsibility
and learning to be responsible.*

*It means being given freedom
and learning to be free.*

*It means witnessing others’ courage
and learning to be faithful.*

*It means having sufferings shared
and learning to be peaceful.*

*It means experiencing joy
and learning to believe.*

*It means being reflected as good
and learning to hope.*

*To sum it all up, dear friend,
It means living in the Heart of Christ
and learning to be loving and loved.*