



MU Australia
Part of the World Wide Mothers' Union

**DEPARTMENT OF MU CARITAS AND
PROMOTION & DEVELOPMENT**

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Dear MU Friends

No doubt you will be surprised to receive another letter so soon. As I leave for Broome on Tuesday for 3 weeks I thought I would get this away before I left. At present I am using only one hand to type. The dangers of travelling around and encouraging MU members to promote our great organisation is that useless people like me can fall over a chair leg and end up with a minor fracture and severe sprain of the wrist. I did this at a Deanery day last Tuesday. So beware when you ask me to visit you!!

Nominations....Time for nominating people for positions not only in our Dioceses but on the Australian Executive is running out. Are you thinking seriously about the role you have been asked to take on? Are you unhappy about the role someone has been undertaking for the past 3 years? Do you want some changes made? If you are unhappy about past performances it is no good sitting back and doing nothing and then continue to be unhappy and complain when no changes are made. Once someone has been nominated and voted into a position it is necessary that the person is fully supported and helped. Therefore make your decision now if you want changes made. MU Australia cannot continue to grow if there is friction and undercurrents within the ranks. The people we choose should have vision and the time and energy to make that vision grow into reality. If someone has asked if they can nominate you for a position, please give it prayerful consideration and be prepared to commit your time and energies. If you are too busy or feel uncertain it is better to say "no". There is no glory in taking on a position, but there is satisfaction in knowing you are doing your best to help Mothers' Union grow in order to help others.

I have received a couple of queries regarding term of office for Australia Council members and Diocesan Department Heads. I refer to Page 3 of the By-laws in the new "Rules & By-Laws". OFFICE BEARERS.....(iii) **All Office Bearers shall hold office for a term of three years and shall thereafter be eligible for one further term. Any extended period of office beyond a term of six consecutive years shall be sanctioned by the Council in case of its members and in all other cases by the Diocesan President and Diocesan Executive Committee.**

(iv) **The term of office for Australia Council members and Diocesan Department Heads, will commence on 1st January, 2011 and every 3 years thereafter.**

Have you read or intend to read the new MU Australia “A Handbook” and “Rules and By-Laws”. I know there is more enjoyable reading material, but really it is essential that all Office Bearers are aware of the content of and any changes in the books. Knowledge of these can save a great deal of confusion.

I trust you are keeping your ears and eyes open within your community in order to find new projects in which to become involved.....

“Active Hands-Active Minds Project” In the Brisbane Diocese our Caritas and P&D Co-ordinator discovered that her local nursing home needed special books (made with large pictures in plastic sleeves), fiddle rugs and large pom poms for the Dementia residents. At that time I had been guest speaker at my own Branch on Bribie Island, suggesting that they needed to take on projects and “wave the flag” Our enthusiastic Treasurer Pricilla led the charge for this project and to-day (three months later) Fr. Bill has organised a special service for the Dedication and Presentation of Gifts to three nursing homes. We have tables of books, rugs, pompoms and boxes (for the men). We have been featured in the local paper and the whole editorial given over to what MU has done. To-day we will have our local councillor and our State MP as well as other VIPs at our handover when residents from the homes will be our guests.

A way of outreach....Yesterday our Bishop Jonathan was most impressed with our outreach. We have reached out into the community involving not only our members but members of the Parish. We have involved and received help from the Trefoil Group, the” Woodies group”, CWA, Square Dancing, the tennis club, local Newsagents and many individuals. This means all these organisations and people know more about MU Australia and the residents of Homes not only on Bribie but in the wider community will benefit.

Red Ribbons.... Our Diocese makes all the red ribbons (approx. 8,500) for sale around Queensland by Positive Directions (within Spiritus) on World Aids Day I started this 3 years ago when I was Diocesan P&D co-ordinator (by asking Spiritus how we could help)and it has grown and involves all the Branches each year.

No 4 & 5 of our Mission points and networking....We have decided to hold a special Diocesan fundraising Musical afternoon tea and hat parade in September to raise funds for the Educational Toys and Playground equipment for the new Women’s Shelter for homeless women and their children. The new “home” is being built by Spiritus and we saw this as a way to carry out part of our Mission... We hope to have our Lady Mayoress to speak on homelessness and will be having a well known Milliner to show her hats. Through my networking with various organisations, Griffith University have offered us a venue free of charge.

I have not written the above to just talk about my Parish and Diocese, but to point out the opportunities we must embrace in order to carry out our Aim, Purpose and Objects. To “sit back and do nothing” is not an option. We have to be out and about and be visible and show that we are involved. There is nothing wrong with involving or seeking help from other organisations. Neither is there anything wrong with giving our support to other organisations (as long as we keep in mind our Rules and Bylaws especially with regard to monetary support).

A new way of expressing the Aim, Purpose and Objects of Mothers’ Union-2008. How many of you are aware that in 2008 the Trustee Board of Mothers’ Union agreed to some new wording to “update” the Aim, Purpose and Objects? The Royal Charter has not been changed but this new wording is being widely used....

Mothers’ Union Vision...Our vision is of a world where God’s love is shown through loving, respectful and flourishing relationships.

Aim & Purpose....To demonstrate the Christian faith in action by the transformation of communities worldwide....through the nurture of family in its many forms.

Mission... To promote and support married life

To encourage parents in their role to develop the faith of their children

The remaining three parts stay as they are as shown in our 5 Objects.

The above is stated on Page 16/17 of the new Handbook. Personally and as Caritas and P&D Co-ordinator I like this new wording. It appears to be less restrictive than the Aim Purpose and Objects as we have known them and more relevant in to-day's world. I don't feel that it has lessened the importance of our purpose and objectives but rather put them within the reach of many in to-day's society. Maybe you can think about this and have some discussion.

Caritas Groups. I have received a reasonable response to the letter and list of Questions which I sent to Caritas Groups. However I am still waiting on others to contact me. I trust that Diocesan Caritas Leaders made sure their Groups received these questions and that you have taken the time to follow up to see if they have responded. Please make enquiries and let me know how many of your Groups have yet to respond. As I stated earlier, changes cannot be made if we sit and do nothing. When you took on the role as Diocesan Caritas Leaders you took on the responsibility of making sure your Caritas Groups were well informed and "kept in the loop" of what is happening in MU Australia not only in your Diocese but around Australia and around the World. It is not enough to say the Groups aren't interested....be enthusiastic and share what you know.

Of course this also applies to Diocesan Presidents and all Department Heads. Your Australian Executive expects you to pass on information within your Dioceses. We cannot work in isolation and be effective.

Promotion Brochures...These are coming. I took the opportunity to consult with various groups and Dioceses before taking them to print and have decided to revise a few details. This has not been an easy task, but it is underway so don't give up on me just yet.

In closing I would ask you not to be negative regarding your Dioceses and groups. A negative person will never be able to encourage others. Even though at times you may wonder if what you do is worthwhile, don't show this face to those you are trying to encourage. Show a positive image and if one way doesn't work try a different angle. If branches are closing, look at what you are doing and ask for and accept advise of those around you.....As in nature, quite often plants have to die off in order for fresh, new shoots to emerge and so bring forth an abundance of fruit and flowers.

With love and prayers for an abundance of fruit and flowers as you work positively for MU Australia and the worldwide Mothers' Union.

Marjorie

Australian MU Caritas and Promotion & Development Co-ordinator