

## **Puja Ahuja**

### ***Sixfold Spiritual Intelligence Scale: Calibration and Standardisation***

The human psychological apparatus is furnished with various sets of skills which are designed to offer a holistic perspective on life. Of those, Spiritual Intelligence is arguably the most important. It provides a technique for assessing one's own strengths and weaknesses.

This knowledge is used to calibrate one's responses to day – to – day situations so as to connect with oneself, with others and with the cosmos in a meaningful way. Although spirituality has been studied for long, what is needed in the present world is an objective study on the various aspects of Spiritual Intelligence. There is a dearth of tools used for assessing Spiritual Intelligence, which can be of immense use in education for teachers and students alike. Spiritual Quotient or SQ is the best predictor of happiness, serenity, self-esteem, and harmonious and loving relationships. Spiritual Intelligence explores how assessing our SQ helps us to live up to our potential for better, more satisfying lives. The present study is a humble attempt to create a Spiritual Intelligence Scale in an objective manner. The characteristics/expressions/aspects of spirituality that my Spiritual Intelligence Scale will attempt to address include:

1. Connecting with the Inner Self (CIS).
2. Connecting with Others (CWO).
3. Connecting with the Cosmos (CWC).
4. Seeking Inner Peace (SIP).
5. Broadening of Vision (BOV).
6. Creating Abundance (CA).

## **Marg Bannan-Watts**

### ***Spirituality For Climate Change (Workshop)***

Currently our world is experiencing a global environmental crisis. Students are constantly exposed to the crisis issues through the media and can feel disempowered to do anything about it. Some argue that the root cause of the environmental crisis is a spiritual

crisis which is evident in human beings disconnectedness from the earth and a sense of alienation from their roots within the natural world.

Spirituality for Climate Change is based on appreciation of the earth as sacred to God. The Earth is spiritual, we are spiritual, and we are in need of spiritually reconnecting with the Earth for our well being and the well-being of the Earth itself. It includes responding to the call to ecological conversion and accepting the challenge of an ecological vocation as a matter of faith. Spirituality for climate change offers a pathway to sustainability that enlightens and empowers youth to address the crisis of the 21st century.

## **Inga Belousa**

### ***Evaluation of a Theoretical Model on Spirituality as a Pedagogical Category: Report of a Pilot Study***

Educators use theoretical models that are generated from generalizations of educational practice. To underlay validity of assumptions of conceptual models they should be evaluated. This paper focuses on results of a pilot study that was accomplished within the framework of a project "Spirituality as a Metacontent of Sustainability-Oriented Teacher Education" supported by a grant from Latvian Ministry of Education and Science in 2006. The paper discusses strengths and weaknesses of the pilot instrument, sampling procedures and the pilot study. It provides suggestions for the study of evaluation of a theoretical model on spirituality as a pedagogical category. This paper is a contribution to restore reflection on educational aims that centers on deepest questions of education and its orientation towards sustainability.

## **Joyce Bellous**

### ***How then shall we teach?***

This presentation examines the place Gadamer might have in understanding how to teach a religious tradition to young children. In his book, *Truth and Method*, he investigated the role of prejudice in traditions that have a claim on Western thought, e.g., Christianity, Rationalism. He claimed modernity held a prejudice against prejudice, which, if he was correct, made it nearly impossible to teach children a tradition in which teachers hold

conviction due to their desire also to teach children to be open to otherness and diversity.

I will argue that children require confidence in the views they are developing in order for them to create a meaningful world and that their well-being is at risk if the tradition they receive is fraught with apology and hesitation.

The topic of this power point presentation is motivated by a desire to understand the roles of prejudice in the global contexts that affect children's spirituality, and particularly, to note how these settings differ from one another. An English context for religious education has its own unique patterns, as does the context in Canada. Can we come to understand the role of prejudice, pre-judgement, within religious and secular traditions in a way that allows us to teach children confidently, and at the same time, trust that they will learn to be open and accepting of others?

I will suggest that Gadamer offers an approach to teaching children their religious tradition that moves beyond fundamentalisms of the past to offer an aesthetic appreciation of tradition as text that can help children become confident as well as open in the educational dispositions they develop from being with teachers that model these virtues themselves.

## **Gina Bernasconi**

### ***"You're invited..."***

This paper identifies the human search for meaning as intrinsically holy and nourished by a spirit that requires a home - contextually, the Catholic tradition.

The Catholic school offers students both knowledge and experiences of the tradition via cognitive and affective learning opportunities in Religious Education. This paper identifies a lack in those opportunities for students to tap explicitly into the spiritual dimension of their learning and offers a complement. Presented therefore, is a small case study of adolescent students and their self-directed learning as a component of a religious education programme. Specifically identified is a particular role for visual art in the post-compulsory Religious Education of boys and the invitation for them to look at, contemplate and respond affectively to artworks as 'carriers of religious meaning'. With this approach holistic learning and wellbeing are promoted, as students are enabled to make their own connections for meaning, experience and knowledge within the cohesive religious tradition of the Catholic school.

# **Patricia Blundell**

## ***Spirituality for inter-faith dialogue***

Spirituality for inter-faith dialogue is increasingly important as dialogue is essential for living in a multi-faith world. Spirituality is an oft-neglected pre-requisite for dialogue. Through education, spirituality for inter-faith dialogue which incorporates increased religious literacy and a greater awareness of, and respect for, difference can be developed. Such spirituality reaches beyond the home tradition with an openness and willingness to embrace others.

This paper will explore the contribution education can make to the development of a Spirituality for inter-faith dialogue.

# **Dr Jane Bone**

## ***Spirituality and relational spaces in early childhood educational settings***

In Aotearoa New Zealand well-being/mana atua is a strand of the early childhood curriculum, Te Whariki, and 'local' models of health and well-being that are inclusive of spirituality are presented in this paper.

This forms the background for qualitative case study research in three different early childhood educational contexts. Using participant observation, interviews with teachers, focus groups with parents, as well as video and photographs, it was possible to generate data that shows different conceptualisations of spirituality.

Three themes that emerged from the research suggest that connection happens as a sense of spiritual witness; as spiritual in-betweenness; and in the spiritual elsewhere. This paper introduces narratives that explore these themes as the spiritual aspect of intersubjectivity, ritual and play. Through the presentation of these core narratives this paper presents relational space as a mediator of well-being and spirituality.

## **PJ Boyle**

### ***Attending to the Silent Voices of Children in Transition: a Healthcare Professional's Response Disconnectedness among Asylum Seeking Children***

Focusing on Asylum Seeking in Ireland, this paper will explore the negative effects of transition for asylum seeking children and the subsequent response by health care professionals in addressing some of their needs and rights while being accommodated in asylum seeker reception centres. Children within the Asylum Seeking population experience a considerable degree of disruption and disconnectedness from familiar surroundings. This paper will outline how health care professionals attempted to address this matter specifically by creating a safe 'space' specifically for asylum seeking children where they could play, learn and connect with others.

Commencing firstly as a volunteer-led childcare group by members of a charitable and religious

organisation, this facility has now grown into a childcare & play-therapy facility with sustainable core funding from State agencies. Children now learn to work share and play together, learn English, learn to play and sometimes if necessary engage in play and behavioural therapy with dedicated staff. Parents and families also benefit from this in terms of parental advice and education. Other initiatives addressing the needs of older children & unaccompanied minors will also be explored briefly in this paper.

As a co-founder of the asylum seekers children's services and a member of the HSE National Traveller and Ethnic Minority Working Group it is my intention to explore and share the learning that has occurred to date.

## **Antoon Breen**

### ***ORA ET LABORA – Pray and Work***

### ***God's Law & the Lord's Prayer: Guides for SPIRITUALITY***

The more we know our God, the more we trust Him. The more we trust Him, the more we exercise fellowship with Him. To exercise fellowship with the triune God, that's what spirituality is all about.

The Holy Spirit causes us to walk with God. How do we do that? By *ora et labora*: pray and work. In this paper I'd like to draw out the importance of the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer for spirituality, and also the connection between the two.

Why is the *law* an excellent guide for spirituality? Paul says in Romans 13 that the fulfilment of the law is love. Love is the key word for spirituality: to love God with all our heart, soul and mind. Says Jesus, "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you the Spirit of truth" (John 14:15-16).

And what about *prayer*? In the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* we read, "it is through the Word of God that the Holy Spirit teaches the children of God to pray to their Father. Jesus not only gives us the words of our filial prayer; at the same time he gives us the Spirit by whom these words become in us "spirit and life." (section 2766).

Jesus taught us in His Sermon on the Mount that God will give His Holy Spirit to those who constantly and from the heart pray for what they need for body and soul. Then "temples of the Holy Spirit" are recognised by the fruits of the Spirit which are expressions of spirituality: "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal. 5:22,23). Yes, prayer contributes to our wellbeing. Says Grace Naessens, prayer makes...

### *The Difference*

I got up early one morning

and rushed right into the day;  
I had so much to accomplish

that I didn't have time to pray.

Problems just tumbled about me,  
and heavier came each task,  
"Why doesn't God help me?" I wondered.  
He answered, "You didn't ask."

I wanted to see joy and beauty,  
but the day toiled on gray and bleak;  
I wondered why God didn't show me;  
He said, "But you didn't seek."

I tried to come into God's presence;  
I used all my keys at the lock;  
God gently and lovingly chided,  
"My child, you didn't knock."

I woke up early this morning,

and paused before entering the day;  
I had so much to accomplish  
that I had to take time to pray.

## **Dr Michael Buchanan**

### ***Enhancing Effective Classroom Learning and Teaching: Attending to the Spiritual Dimension***

Faculty leaders of religious education hold a key position of leadership in Catholic schooling systems throughout Australia. They provide leadership in all areas of the classroom religious education curriculum as well as promote the spiritual well being of students and staff within the context of the Catholic tradition.

A recent study that investigated how faculty leaders manage curriculum change in religious education suggested that teachers' attention to the spiritual dimension in their own lives and the lives of their students was perceived by some faculty leaders as a significant element in a teacher's ability to enhance effective learning and teaching in religious education.

Based on the insights of faculty leaders involved in the study, this paper will discuss the perceptions that emerged which highlighted the importance of attending to the spiritual dimension of learning which, potentially, intensifies knowledge and understanding of content, thereby, increasing engagement at a depth level. Ultimately such an approach addresses the whole person and should lead to greater levels of religious and spiritual wellbeing.

## **Leigh Burrows**

### ***An integral approach to a child's spiritual development: How a therapeutic story facilitated healing and transformation at an individual, group and system level in a regional centre in South Australia.***

Insights and methods for encouraging the healthy development of a child's mind and body are well researched, established and to a degree, being implemented. There is still however very little available- both theoretically and practically – on how to nurture a child's soul and spirit, particularly in mainstream education and health settings. This workshop describes the process and outcomes of writing of a

therapeutic story tailored for a particular child experiencing difficulties at home and school. The child took the story deep within his soul, dreamt about the main character, used elements of the story in his creative play and finally, illustrated it and shared it with others. This leads to significant healing and transformation for the child and his mother who was also played an active role in the process. A theoretical practical approach to addressing the whole human being – body, mind and spirit for children at risk and their families is now being developed for work with other children.

Leigh Burrows has a Master's degree in Special Education and is currently doing a PhD on how education can work with body, mind and spirit to bring about individual, group and system transformation to support children at risk. Leigh has a background in teaching at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, including Steiner education and is currently a consultant with the education department in SA and a lecturer at Flinders University. She has published in the area of learning disabilities, parent teacher relationships, emotional and spiritual intelligence, and emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

## **Prof Jude Butcher, cfc**

### ***Understanding children's spirituality: Insights from assessing Religious Literacy***

Nurturing children's spirituality will benefit from an understanding of how children work with and apply key concepts within their religious tradition such as the presence of God, their relationship with God and key religious values including their personal well-being. The authors have been involved in a Religious Literacy Assessment project with Wollongong Catholic Education Office and the Year 4 students in the Diocese. This paper presents the rationale underlying the assessment process and an understanding of how specific assessment items have been designed to focus upon students' understanding and expression of their relationship with God in prayer and action. Insights from the analysis of student responses are offered which can inform Religious Education programs in the early years of schooling.

## **Olga Buttigieg**

### ***The dazzling darkness: An exploration of the spirituality and healing qualities of the Golliwogg as a character in children's stories.***

'There is in God—some say—  
A deep, but dazzling darkness'. (Henry Vaughan).

Florence Upton created the childhood character of the Golliwogg in 1895. This character was immediately embraced by children living in Victorian England. The stories of the Golliwogg were an invitation for children to go into their imaginations and embark on a journey that embraced spirituality as a way of relating to self and the world. The Golliwogg will be explored as an Upton character that invites the children to enter into unknowing. He symbolically represents the healing power of darkness. Darkness will be explored in terms of the Upton narratives as an encounter, a relationship, a way of relating to the world. When we see darkness as an invitation to enter a place of unknowing, a place of uncertainty we are open to new possibilities of being and thinking within ourselves.

The Golliwogg is a paradoxical symbol in a time of uncertainty. He invites us to live from this center, the place of paradox, where the tension of opposites are held in balance. When we are not connected to our story we become fragmented. Wellbeing begins with an awareness of reconnecting to our story. We need to put the Wogg back into Golli; to reconnect, and to experience a light into darkness. The Golliwogg invites us into a new paradoxical dreaming, to trust in the 'dazzling darkness'.

## **Dr Sandra Carroll**

### ***Nurturing Spirituality through Icons***

Icons are another text by which students can begin to engage with religious understandings that belong to a community of faith and have their foundation in the biblical text. Icons deal with the mystery of the incarnate God. They allow for both a retelling of the Christian story and a way of exploring one's personal story. Icons are key to orthodox spirituality and liturgy and can be used to help students along their journey of religious understanding, spiritual journey, and self-knowledge.

Icons are 'windows to heaven' and introduce the viewer to another reality beyond the human reality while connected to it in the

present. This paper outlines how icons can become a window to greater religious understanding and a gateway to spiritual experience for young people.

## **Elaine Champagne**

### ***Living and Dying: Window on (Christian) Children's Spirituality***

"Where do we come from? Why are we living? What happens when we die?": questions that come from both the young and the old. From this philosophical as well as spiritual universal search emerge the existential foundation stones on which to build in order to better perceive and understand what it means and what it demands of us – individually and collectively – to be human. Interestingly though, except in crisis situations, parents and religious (spiritual) educators seldom listen to children's experience and reflection on life and death. In the context of Christian faith education, the author has developed initiatory sessions for children 10-12 years old where the question is openly discussed with the participants. The purpose of this article is to explore the spiritual and (Christian) theological implications of some of these children's comments about death and its meaning in their lives, as well as their impact on faith education.

## **Anthony Cleary**

### ***Adolescent Spirituality: A Local Study***

In their work *The Spirit of the Child* Hay and Nye assert "the only way an accurate map can be drawn is to listen to what children have to say, and from what we hear, create an empirical account of the contexts of childhood spirituality." So as to draw an accurate map of one particular community and glean a greater understanding of adolescent spirituality I conducted an extensive survey of students in Years 7 and 11 at St Charbel's College, Punchbowl, a K-12 Maronite Catholic school in Sydney during September – October 2003.

The purpose of the survey was to examine issues connected with spirituality, Religious Education and faith practice and examine how student responses varied according to age. The results of this survey will be examined in light of contemporary literature relating to adolescent spirituality and their attitudes towards Religion and Religious Education and in light of the recent Spirit of Generation Y report.

## **Rupert Collister**

### ***The role of holistic, transformative learning in creating new worldviews, mythologies and heroes through the creation of Instances of Wholeness (Workshop)***

My work to date has led to the argument that there is a need to develop a harmonious ontology that is appropriate to both the cultural origins of the community and the principles associated with the creation and facilitation of Instances of Wholeness and sustainability that have been outlined previously. I have also argued that the need to comply with the community's harmonious ontology should also extend to the activities undertaken to meet the needs, wants and desires of the individual, community and wider context.

In this workshop I will ground this work through discussion of the dominant worldview, mythologies and the privileging of the hero archetype (Tarnas, 2006) before discussing the implications of the new and clarified understandings that have emerged from this study.

## **Dr Susan Crowe**

### ***The Role of Spirituality in Education and Health: Finding connectedness to promote health and well-being amongst children and adolescents***

Over many centuries the Arts have been used as a vehicle through which the Catholic Church has communicated religious knowledge. According to Goldberg (2002) "Christianity has traditionally used the creative arts as a means to an end, that is to teach people religion in a way that encouraged them to participate in particular religious activities and celebrations" (p. 2).

Catholic educators believe that there is a religious dimension to every curriculum area that is taught in a Catholic Primary School. That all disciplines have "a capacity to assist students to examine the world of human culture and the world of religious meaning, providing knowledge and skills, and fostering attitudes and values that are life-giving and that assist young people to search for

meaning and truth" (Awakenings, 2005 p. 57). Children should be offered many different ways to explore and develop their spirituality and express their feelings for God and one important way is to utilise the arts, especially the areas of music, movement, mime and dance.

## **Dr. C. Glenn Cupit**

### ***The course of spiritual development (Workshop)***

In a paper recently published in the International Journal of Children's Spirituality I suggested that Dynamic Systems Theory provides an appropriate framework to conceptualise the development of children's spirituality. While the theory does not propose a specific universal course of spiritual development it does argue that general sequential patterns (attractors) may be discerned separated by periods of rapid developmental changes (phase transitions). In the paper I offered such a series without elaboration. I intend to provide elaboration of this proposal suggesting, not fixed 'stages', but six stable 'phases' divided by significant developmental milestones. Each child's pattern of behaviour will vary around the attractor, allowing for the diversity of spiritual life, but share patterns with other children indicating that spiritual development is not idiosyncratic but constrained within definable parameters. Similarly, all will experience the same transitions but following different course, under different conditions and at different ages.

### ***Plotting the dynamics of spiritual development***

Participants will be invited to engage with the basic concepts of a Dynamic Systems Theory approach to spiritual development by identifying and discussing proposed system parameters, phase transitions, and attractors of spirit development and the role of agency in children's spiritual development. Time permitting, the implications of these for the nurture of spiritual development at different phases of the child's spiritual life will be explored.

# **Dr Marian de Souza**

## ***Conscious and unconscious learning and their respective contribution to spiritual and emotional wellbeing***

In this paper I will examine the notion that learning happens at two levels – conscious and unconscious and that, generally speaking, formal educational programs and structures do not pay equal attention to these two levels so that conscious learning becomes the dominant focus.

Further, I will investigate how these two levels of learning can become significant factors in expressions of spirituality in terms of the relational aspects of an individual's life, that is, the connectedness they experience to Self and Other.

Finally, I will draw on these ideas to consider approaches to pedagogy and the design of learning environments which will allow the individual to acknowledge and access his/her conscious and unconscious learning, and to reflect on the influences that these may have on his/her attitudes and behaviours. Such an approach will provide an holistic learning experience where meaning and connectedness become an important factor and, potentially, it should lead to greater wellbeing of the individual.

## ***Preparing pre-service teachers to use an approach which addresses intellectual, emotional and spiritual dimensions of learning: Findings from a small research study***

This paper will report on a small funded study that examined pre-service teachers experiences of and responses to an approach in religious education (primary and secondary) that addressed the intellectual (cognitive), emotional (affective) and spiritual (inner-reflective) dimensions of being, aiming to promote transformational learning.

Pre-service teachers undertaking religious education as a curriculum study area were introduced to the theoretical concepts underpinning the approach. They were encouraged to consider their own engagement with the content, activities and resources that were utilized in the course and to develop their own strategies whereby they could apply this approach to their lesson planning during the course. Further, they were able to reflect on how their engagement with the three dimensions provided them with a holistic understanding, thereby enhancing their own learning.

Students were required to apply this approach during their professional experience practicum in schools and their responses to surveys and subsequent interviews provided the data for this study. In general, the findings from this study were positive, indicating that this holistic approach which addressed the cognitive, affective and inner-reflective learning was successful in achieving its aims.

## **Maggie Dent**

### ***Nurturing Kids' Hearts and Souls in our Classrooms (Workshop)***

This workshop will focus on exploring the unspoken dimension of teaching – the nurturing of children’s hearts and souls. How important are emotional and spiritual intelligence in our classrooms? How do teachers build human connectedness and relationships while still delivering content? Also, Maggie will explore the role of imagination, intuition and how to strengthen the human spirit in all our classrooms. If you need inspiration to fill your cup of enthusiasm, don’t miss this session.

### ***The Importance of Silence, Stillness and Calmness in Children’s Lives (Workshop)***

Children are living in a busy, chaotic world and the stressful pressures of modern living are causing an increase in many childhood mental disorders, sleeplessness, emotional vulnerability, increased aggression and violence. It is also impacting on classroom learning and the building of resilience in children. This has life long consequences.

Bringing the practice of stillness, relaxation and quiet time into homes and classrooms has been shown to be beneficial for many reasons: In this workshop Maggie will explore the cognitive, social, emotional and spiritual benefits of teaching children calmness, quietness and stillness. She will also explore the What? The how? and the what if?

## **Rose Duffy CSB**

### ***Images of God and well-being: is there a connection? (Workshop)***

This workshop explores the images of God of a sample of 15-17 year old students. Some of the students’ pictorial images of God will

be presented, together with the students' descriptions of them. Some of the implications and questions arising from this research will be explored, including the extent to which a connection can be drawn between adolescents' images of God and well-being; their images of God and meaning in life and their images of God and suffering. Recommendations as to how to promote a balanced and nurturing approach to this area of spirituality will also be explored.

The workshop arises from qualitative research into the images of God of middle secondary school adolescents. This doctoral research was conducted in connection with wider quantitative research conducted in seven Catholic secondary schools in Victoria. One of its aims was to report on some of the formative factors that shape adolescents' images of God.

## **Dr Tony Eaude**

### ***Exploring school leadership from the perspective of children's spirituality***

This workshop explores the idea of spiritual leadership in schools, comparable to that of Fullan and Sergiovanni in relation to moral leadership. The implications of different models of school leadership for children's spiritual development, given the lack of a common understanding of this, are considered. The classroom is conceptualised as an ecology, within the wider ecology of the school, in turn within a wider policy and social ecology, with school leaders having to mediate between ecologies which present often conflicting messages and beliefs. The possibility of resolving, at least partially, the paradox of how to model personal beliefs and values without imposing any one particular set of beliefs and values is considered. In particular, the importance of lived models of leadership in which leaders demonstrate, often by small actions and responses, how individuals, whether adults or children, can search for identity, meaning and purpose, both individually and collectively, is emphasised.

## **Jude Egan**

### ***Working with traumatised children - a mental health perspective on children's spirituality***

In this workshop I describe work which I have undertaken with traumatised children. I intend to use clinical examples to show how

to set the appropriate context for this work, focusing on the creation of a 'safe space', considering how to attune to the meanings they communicate via their play and behaviour, and finding ways of thinking and wondering out loud with them, in order to help them reflect on their experiences. I describe how the therapeutic process can draw on children's natural spiritual qualities. Staying alongside children in this journey can be stressful and so I hope to touch on how we can nurture our own spiritual wellbeing and would like to encourage participants to join others in some group exercises, albeit of a gentle nature!

## **Clive Erricker**

### ***Is God good for us?***

This paper focuses on responses to events that have affected the relationship between Islam and the West and the issue of social cohesion. It addresses the theme of the conference by asking whether and how connectedness can be established across fractures created within and across religions and religion and secularity. In particular it will report on an initiative in Hampshire, UK in which young people with different faith (religious and non-religious) and ethnic backgrounds and allegiances, are being brought together to enquire into social cohesion and dialogue across difference. This is being done by using the Living Difference agreed syllabus conceptual enquiry methodology. The outcomes of this project will be based on the students themselves constructing a report and recommendations that will be fed back to their schools and through the other relevant democratic procedures of Hampshire County Council. This will involve a conference at the University of Winchester in March 2007 at which their report will be published. This paper will report on the process and outcomes to date

## **Dr John W Fisher**

### ***Views on spiritual well-being among teacher education students and secondary school students and teachers: congruence or dissonance between theory and practice in Australian education?***

Although church attendance and religion appear to be losing favour with many Australians, some popular press indicates an apparent increase in spirituality in sectors within the Australian community. Some researchers concur with this view, others do not. Two of my recent papers present views from teachers and students that indicate the quality of relationships that students have with themselves, others, the environment, and/or with God, are not as

strong today as they have previously been. In other words, it appears that our schools are reflecting and/or contributing to a decline in spiritual well-being among our students. This paper will present views gathered from teacher education students, which will show how well they agree or disagree with practising teachers and students in our schools. Will the next generation of teachers maintain the status quo or will they bring new expectations to the role schools play in nurturing students' spiritual well-being?

## **Dominique Galea**

### ***Personality Types and Children's Spirituality***

The Enneagram is a rediscovered ancient system which accurately describes the psychological traits and patterns of personality. However, its deeper function is to lead to an understanding beyond the level of personality to the spiritual essence of the individual. Enneagram theory is based on the concept that personality is in fact a construct of each human being, masking the hidden spiritual qualities which each person possesses. In line with current neurobiological research, the theory states that each person generates one of the nine personality patterns to protect a particular aspect of themselves which, due to inherent tendencies, feels endangered. Parents and educators who have an understanding of the basic fears and desires of the nine personality types will be better equipped to deal with the anxieties and conflict situations which arise in the daily life of the child or adolescent, as well as having a schema which assists them to nurture the innate spiritual aspects of the young person in their care.

## **Graham Gallasch**

### ***The Rite Journey - Guiding Adolescents Towards Adulthood***

The Rite Journey' allows each student to share a year long experience with their teacher as they explore what it means to be a respectful and responsible adult in society. Given the common current perspective that initiation and rites of passage should be rediscovered for young people in our western culture, a feature of the program is the specially created ceremonies held throughout the year. These numerous celebration points and rites of passage are based on the "7 steps of a journey". Some topics covered include 'Personal Biography', 'Gender Identity', 'Feelings and beliefs', 'Anger,

Bullying, Depression and Violence' and 'Stillness, Meditation and Relaxation'. These topics are explored using such initiatives as a Solo Experience, Journal Writing, Mentoring and Talking Sticks along with the establishment of strong connection points with the students, teacher, parents, and mentors. The program is effectively including spirituality as an important component in students' transition through adolescence.

## **Prof Colin Gibbs**

### ***Encountering power in learning and teaching: Twelve moments of abundant teacher presence***

Teachers' presence transcends mere spoken words and encapsulates a deeper level of relational connectedness. Caring professions such as nursing identify physical presence, psychological presence, and therapeutic presence as significant influences on well-being (McKivergin & Daubenmire, 1994; McKivergin, 2000). Earlier I attempted to describe teachers' presence in terms of physical positioning, being there, presence in affect, presence of mind, presence in the spirit, and presence in pedagogical responsiveness (Gibbs, 2006). This present paper expands these ideas, and suggests twelve moments of abundant presence to describe the complexity and beauty of teachers' presence.

## **Dr Peta Goldberg**

### ***Spirituality for inter-faith dialogue***

Spirituality for inter-faith dialogue is increasingly important as dialogue is essential for living in a multi-faith world. Spirituality is an oft-neglected pre-requisite for dialogue. Through education, spirituality for inter-faith dialogue which incorporates increased religious literacy and a greater awareness of, and respect for, difference can be developed.

Such spirituality reaches beyond the home tradition with an openness and willingness to embrace others. This paper will explore the contribution education can make to the development of a Spirituality for inter-faith dialogue.

## **Dr Mauri Hamilton**

### ***Educating for Connectedness and Empowerment***

"We only have the world we bring forth with others, and only love helps us bring it forth" (Maturana & Varela, 1992 p. 248).

"I come that you may have life, and have it to the full" (John, 10:10)

Christian education is concerned with the education of the whole child, by the development of holistic approaches to curriculum. Contemporary approaches to wellbeing emphasise the importance of connectedness and empowerment of individuals within society. Learning theory which best facilitates holistic learning in a connected, empowering environment in enactivism. The emerging theory of enactivism, which Begg (2002) describes as a development from constructivism, provides a sound basis for teachers and students to work together in a learning community. The locus of power in a learning community is within, and therefore a true learning community exhibits 'power-with' rather than 'power over': this is the most desirable environment to foster learning that connects and empowers.

## **Jacqueline Hodder**

### ***Striving for Life: Young People talking about Spirituality***

The Young People and Spirituality Project explores contemporary understandings of young people's spirituality with a view to investigating the language young people use to describe and explain their experiences of the spiritual. This qualitative project has explored young people's beliefs and experiences from a range of different faith backgrounds. The language young people use, whilst expressing forms of connectedness, also show some of the difficulties associated with attempting to name some of these experiences. However, the language that young people use to understand the spiritual could prove vital in understanding the role it plays in their lives. Further, the Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling claims that 'Schooling provides a foundation for young Australian's intellectual, physical, social, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development.' (MCEETYA 1999) however what this means in educational terms is unclear. The data from this project provides important clues as to the ways in which spirituality in education could be wedded together.

## **Dr Philip Hughes**

### ***Spiritual Wellbeing among Australian Young People***

Based on the work of John Fisher, Lesley Francis and Mandy Robbins, this paper will propose a model of spiritual wellbeing based on five relationships: with the self, close others, wider society, natural environment, and a view of the world as a whole. The model proposes four levels of relationship: negative, positive, ethical and spiritual.

This model has been applied to Australian young people between the ages of 13 and 24 in a large study which involved approximately 350 in-depth interviews and a national telephone study of 1200 young people, conducted between 2002 and 2006. The paper will summarise the results of the survey in terms of spiritual wellbeing. Among the major issues in the spiritual wellbeing of Australian young people that will be discussed is the issue of clarity in young people's views of the world as a whole.

## **Robert Hurley**

### ***Liberation through Story: Children's Literature and the Spirit of the Child***

The psychotherapist A. Vanesse (1982) suggests that children, by listening to stories, may be able to resolve anxieties which they feel without being able to name. Other therapists encourage traumatized children to 'tell their story' as a means of achieving a mental and spiritual catharsis. Such anxiety often destroys the inner peace of children, affecting their self-image and upsetting their closest relationships. Given that the findings of D. Hay and R. Nye (1998) suggest that children express their spirituality in terms of a web of significant relationships, the malaise experienced as a 'normal' part of childhood should be understood as spiritually significant. Certain books intended for children, when used in ways that respect their freedom, have the potential of nurturing their spiritual life, by fostering self-acceptance, inner peace and hope; pointing them in the direction of the transcendent. Strategies presented in this conference draw inspiration from the reader-response criticism of Stanley Fish, from S. Kierkegaard's ideas about indirect communication of the narrative form and from J. Berryman's Godly Play.

## **Dr Mariana Hwang**

### ***Understanding Korean-American Children's Self-Concept in Relation to Their God-Concepts***

This qualitative study investigated children's understanding of their self-concepts in relations to their God-concepts in order to explore how the children's God-concepts influence the formation of their self-concept. Several previous studies have claimed an individual's positive self-concept is one of the critical factors for the individual to develop a positive God-concept. Contrary to those previous studies, this study proposed that an individual's positive God-concept might lead to the development of a positive self-concept. A sample of 24 Korean-American children (12 boys and 12 girls), ages ranging from 9-11, who have attended church regularly during the last five years with their parents were interviewed. A positive relationship exists between the children's self-concepts and their God-concepts. It also showed that the children's positive God-concept is one of the influential factors for the development of the children's positive self-concept. One of the most important findings of this study is that the children's God-concepts can be changed through church education.

## **Dr Brendan Hyde**

### ***Relatively speaking? A case against the arbitrariness with which children give voice to their spirituality***

A number of recent studies exploring aspects of the spirituality young people have reported a phenomenon sometimes referred to as "supermarket spirituality". Such studies suggest that spirituality has been commodified; that young people tend to pick and chose from among the many spiritual offerings available in an arbitrary fashion, discarding them when their usefulness has expired in the way in which one disposes of supermarket goods when they pass their 'used-by' date. The arbitrary nature in which this occurs, suggested by these studies, leads to the notion of relativism, which questions whether the worth and value of anything can be judged outside of its own particular context.

While acknowledging the validity of such a trend, this paper, drawn from aspects of the author's own hermeneutic phenomenological research into the spirituality of primary school children in Australia,

suggests that the way in which children give voice to their spirituality is not necessarily always arbitrary or relative. In this sense, the author's research may be considered provocative in that it may indicate some discrepancies with other investigations which have explored aspects of the spirituality of young people. It argues that although there is subjectivity in relation to the way in which children weave their spiritual worldview, their construction is not means an arbitrary process.

## **Rev Janet Jackson**

### ***Children Should be Seen and Heard: The importance of bereavement care for children's spiritual and psychological well-being.***

This workshop builds on work presented at 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Children's Spirituality where attitudes to children/young people following bereavement were critiqued.

Since that time we have developed our services to children/young people in response to frequent requests both internally and externally to the hospice to provide advice, support and practical help. Strong connections are being built between hospice, families and the wider community through contact with schools and local General Practitioner surgeries in order to promote good practice in meeting the needs of children who have been bereaved.

This workshop describes the work and presents the preparation and facilitation of a full day workshop provided for children needing bereavement support. The children ranged in age from 3 years to 16 years. It also includes the feedback from the children as well as comments from parents on the benefits of the day.

## **Dr. Helen Johnson**

### *Quaker schools in a time of social complexity*

While taking on ever more responsibilities in the social and educational field, the British liberal and effectively secular state is perplexed by the seemingly unsuccessful outcomes of its policies which have incorporated direct intervention into the lives and well-being of citizens and their families. The intention of this paper is to examine an alternative philosophy and culture through focussing on the seven schools based on Quaker principles in the United Kingdom. Using data gathered from policy documentation, school prospectuses and interviews with head teachers and administrators, the paper will explore:

- the relevance of a particular type of educational alternative in societies that aspire to be democratic, inclusive and open to diversity.

- the elevated or transcendent aims of education and exploring innovative ways of nurturing rounded academic, social and personal development in school students and encouraging them to embrace democratic citizenship.
- the defining features of Quaker education.
- any significant research evidence on these features.
- assessments of the strengths and weaknesses of such an approach.
- the lessons for mainstream forms of education and for alternative educators.

## **Dr Ross Keating**

### ***The Recovery of Poetic Knowledge as a Way of Seeing***

The American poet William Carlos Williams wrote “It is difficult / to get the news from poems / yet men die miserably every day / for lack / of what is found there” (“Asphodel, That Greeny Flower”). What does Williams mean? And what is the news that he refers to? Ezra Pound’s definition of poetry, “news that stays news”, hints at the idea that poetry reveals a perennial “message”. But in what kind of poetry is this news to be found? How and when is it found? There is certainly a general resumption today that poetry has some intrinsic value, some kind of “news” to offer, as seen in such recent texts as Peggy Rosenthal’s *Praying through Poetry: Hope for Violent Times* (2002), and in the Parker Palmer inspired *Teaching with Fire: Poetry that Sustains the Courage to Teach* (2003) edited by Sam Intrator and Megan Scribner. There is also a growing public appetite for texts that attempt to explain poetry for a thinking readership like Edward Hirsch’s 1999 surprise bestseller *How to Read a Poem and Fall in Love with Poetry*. This paper discusses this growing interest in poetry and the idea of poetic knowledge as essentially a mysterious way of knowing reality. It also provides examples of spiritual poetry to illustrate how different poetic traditions approach and see reality. Lisa Kimball

## **Mary Kelson**

### ***Co Creating Community (Workshop)***

This workshop will be an interactive session on the findings, research and methodologies used at the Nazareth Catholic Community, Findon R-7 site.

At the Findon site R-7 we are exploring how our students understand, experience and articulate their wellbeing, individually and communally. Students have opportunity during this project to express their thoughts and understandings in their own ways. They will also participate in sessions giving them access to a 'spiritual literacy', for example: an interactive workshop on Kessler's, Seven Gateways to the Soul.

The following are some examples of methods, processes and resources drawn upon and used in the development of this ongoing and organic project.

Some of these will be used throughout the workshop:

- Langford Quality Learning Tools
- Rachel Kessler: Seven Gateways to the Soul
- Art and Symbol
- Glasser: Choice Theory
- Creation Spirituality
- Progof Journalling
- Ongoing gathering and feedback of students' articulations
- Student involvement in learning unit development and presentation to staff and community Celebration

## **Lisa Kimball**

### ***Developing Spirituality in Adolescents – An Oxymoron?***

Findings from a preliminary international study conducted by the Search Institute (Minneapolis, Minnesota, U.S.A.) suggest young people have an intrinsic capacity for spiritual development and find ways to resolve developmental tasks across socio-cultural contexts. What then is the role of parent, educator, youth worker or clergy committed to healthy youth development? This workshop will present data from 81 focus groups conducted with youth, youth workers, and parents in 13 countries on 6 continents that provide compelling support for the inclusion of "spiritual development" in a holistic, health-promoting understanding of positive, culturally contextual youth development. Participants will be invited to respond to the preliminary findings and to lend their wisdom to this exciting, creative conversation that has the potential to transform our understanding of youthhood, youth work practice, and adolescent development theory.

## **Andrew Lines**

### ***The Rite Journey - Guiding Adolescents Towards Adulthood***

The Rite Journey' allows each student to share a year long experience with their teacher as they explore what it means to be a respectful and responsible adult in society. Given the common current perspective that initiation and rites of passage should be rediscovered for young people in our western culture, a feature of the program is the specially created ceremonies held throughout the year. These numerous celebration points and rites of passage are based on the "7 steps of a journey". Some topics covered include 'Personal Biography', 'Gender Identity, 'Feelings and Beliefs', 'Anger, Bullying, Depression and Violence' and 'Stillness, Meditation and Relaxation'. These topics are explored using such initiatives as a Solo Experience, Journal Writing, Mentoring and Talking Sticks along with the establishment of strong connection points with the students, teacher, parents, and mentors. The program is effectively including spirituality as an important component in students' transition through adolescence.

## **Aileen Lyle**

### ***The nature and development of spirituality: an examination of the perceptions of adults who work with children***

Approximately 50 adults who work with children within mainly Christian environments responded to a questionnaire-based survey about spirituality. Their perceptions about the nature of spirituality, spiritual development and religious belief and practice in general, in their own lives, and in the lives of the children with whom they worked, were examined.

Survey results indicated that spirituality is regarded as an holistic concept although the way in which spiritual development takes place is uncertain. Respondents indicated that religious beliefs and practices have a contribution to make to the spiritual life of children. In terms of understanding spirituality as four relational connections, the natural world is not regarded with the same degree of importance as the other relational connections, that is, to self, others (community) and a transcendent being.

## **Paul McQuillan**

### ***CHILDREN of the deaf: The challenge of spirituality in today's society***

Numerous researchers from different perspectives (Hardy, Hay, Newberg and D'Aquili) have suggested that human beings have a religious nature "hard-wired" into the brain.

Others (Robinson, Hay & Nye) suggest that childhood is the best time to study the natural tendency to spirituality. At that time the experience is less clouded. However, they have found at times only a very rudimentary capacity to express such experiences.

This paper will bring together the author's research in 2000 and 2004 among senior high school students in Australian schools. It will suggest that the means to express spiritual experience is slowly being lost among this group. Awareness of such experiences was found to be very high, although the most recent data indicates that it too may be in decline.

The situation is akin to that of CODA (children of deaf adults). These children, although in 90% of cases naturally endowed to hear and speak do not do so naturally. They need assistance. In a similar way it seems we need to help our young people to be in touch with their spirituality and human experience. Some practical ways to address the lack of recognition of a natural human experience (spirituality) will be suggested.

## **Professor Tadashi Migiyama**

### ***To promote education among pupils***

Today, many of the pupils (human beings) apparently suffer from the meaninglessness. Such a feeling of meaninglessness would be defined as the inability to find any purpose in life. This suffering occasioned by the meaninglessness of life has been referred to as an existential vacuum by V. Frankl.

The attitudes and behaviors of human beings that have fallen in such nihilism (existential vacuum), according to Frankl, are characterized by following elements.

- a. lose life accompanied by no feeling of good and bad.
- b. disinterest in everything
- c. the pursuit of stimuli
- d. actions to relieve the tedium of their life itself

- e. suicides resulting from the unbearableness against their unmeaning life.

Such nihilism comes to the negation of personality or the negation of the meaning of human existence.

Presented below is a method of making pupils who suffer from existential vacuum encounter new meanings in life. Frankl says that taking compassion (Mitleid) on those who live in suffering significantly meaningful. We could refer to those "mitleiden" as mentors.

The mentors must be a person who takes compassion (Mitleid) on the pupils who "leiden".

The love to be given by the mentor to a pupil who "leidet" is to take compassion (Mitleiden) on him. It may be almost impossible for the mentor to love pupils he dislikes. But it is possible to take compassion on him.

The mentor should give a helping hand to a pupil who suffers from existential vacuum so that he can find the meaning of life. That the mentor himself must search seriously for meaning in life would be the important way to make pupils encounter meanings of life.

## **Maria Minto Cahill**

### ***Spiritual Health & Wellbeing – Protective Inner Life Skills for Building Resilience & Connectedness in Young People***

This paper will explore the relationship between spirituality and the health and social wellbeing of young people and examine the issues associated with education in these areas for schools and systems. Resilience is a noted positive protective factor in a young person's life and an important aspect of resilience is a belief in something beyond the self. The challenge for schools is to provide a broad cultural framework of hope, meaning and purpose in young people's lives strengthening their resilience, and making them less vulnerable to alienation and disengagement.

The following types of background questions form the backdrop to the exploration:

- What is the place of spirituality and inner life skills in contributing to the development of positive protective factors in a young person's life eg sense of identity, belonging and self-acceptance.

- How is spirituality related to the development of psychological resilience, (Resnick 1996) especially in situations of grief or loss?
- In what ways can spiritual health and inner life skills be defined, developed and nurtured in young people?
- How can these skills be best addressed in a western, secular and pluralist society?
- How can schools and school systems build social capital and promote optimism for the future?
- What barriers need to be recognised and negotiated?

## **Sue Moffat**

### ***Nourishing Young Children's Spirituality through Religious Education***

The paper will explore the contribution made to the development of children's spirituality in Religious Education curricula based on 'Godly Play' and 'The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd' approaches to Religious Education for young children.

The paper will outline the key elements of the above mentioned approaches and analyse their potential contribution to nourishing and developing children's spirituality. It will also outline their contribution to the Religious Education of young children. It will relate key aspects of these approaches to principles of holistic learning in the broader field of education.

Finally it will explore some elements of present Religious Education curricula which may need to be re-imagined so that they can more fully nurture children's spiritual development.

## **Wyn Moriarty**

### ***Evaluating Children's Use of Symbol in Some Recent Research***

In my recent research into the spiritual experiences of children in Victorian State Primary Schools I note a number of examples of what appears to be recurring symbolic expression of spirituality. These expressions were in drawings and in conversation. Symbols can be a rich source of data both for hermeneutics and for pedagogy.

In this paper I explore some of these symbols, such as mountain, island and snake, for their multiple meanings, to gain understanding of the children's individual and collective expressions of spirituality and the contribution this makes to their wellbeing. This demonstrates their importance in a 21st Century Australian culture, where most of these children lack a religious language to express their spirituality.

Since Religious Education requires understanding of the metaphoric and abstract language of Religion, exploration by children of their own symbols may provide a bridge to understanding and exploring the core ideas of the Faith. Exploring symbols can provide a way to exercise the imagination, grounded in bodily experience, to achieve open and enriching spiritual outcomes (Halstead 2005).

## **Chris Morris**

### ***Meditation with Children and Adolescents: Affirming Peaceful Worthwhileness (Workshop)***

Religious Education, when it is doing its job of 'educating the spirit', must be conveying, in all aspects of the educational environment, a sense of the peaceful worthwhileness of each person. (Rowan Williams)

There is a growing interest in meditation today. Meditation has been shown to reduce stress, and people in all walks of life are finding that practicing meditation helps them achieve a more balanced and fulfilling life. What is the place of meditation in the spiritual wellbeing of children and adolescents in the educational environment?

This workshop will investigate the nature of meditation, with particular emphasis on its origins within the Christian tradition. It will explore how the practice of meditation is a simple and direct way to nurture connectedness with God's presence, and with one's own inner goodness. It also provides an inner resource to develop personal resilience. Meditation therefore, has a significant role in affirming the peaceful worthwhileness (and thus the spiritual wellbeing) of students of all ages. The fruits of meditation will be discussed, and a method of meditation will be presented and practiced as part of the workshop.

## **Peter Mudge**

## ***Towards a spirituality of the arts in education for the promotion of holistic learning and wellbeing***

A spirituality of the arts (including painting, sculpture, poetry, dance, and digital technologies) is a vital but much neglected vehicle in education for the promotion of holistic learning and wellbeing. This paper explores this area in relation to two key topics. The first topic focuses on how the arts can help develop holistic learning in relation to other significant approaches – connected knowing, the cultivation of wisdom, and the commitment to slow, meditative and lateral thinking.

The second topic deals with ways in which inclusion of the arts can lead to cultivation of insight and well being in terms of – paying attention, ‘deep seeing’, silence, and contemplation, as well as the stance of ‘waiting upon’, and the development of a Sabbath spirituality.

Finally, the paper also incorporates a range of practical arts-based and other strategies that can assist the promotion and maintenance of holistic learning and well being. The paper argues that the above approaches can help facilitate the shaping of positive attitudes, values and behaviours during the formative years of children and adolescents, and can assist in the development of successful young people and sustainable communities.

## **Kori Nemme**

### ***A naturalistic investigation of children’s spirituality in public schools***

This paper reports on a 12-month investigation of children’s spirituality in diverse educational settings from preschool to high school. A total of 90 students were observed and informally interviewed as they undertook their daily classroom activities. Using a theoretical framework derived from the work of Gardner (1999) and Hay and Nye (2006), these observations were analysed to determine how children express and develop their spirituality. Their teachers were also interviewed about their views on spirituality and its place in the school curriculum. These data were then used to select six children for more intensive case studies. The study confirmed that children are engaging in explorations of their spirituality on a daily basis. These explorations are seen as central to the curriculum for preschool and primary students. However, there was not the same level of importance attached to this area in the high school setting. Implications of this research will be discussed.

## **Dr James O'Higgins-Norman**

### ***Sexuality, Recognition and Well-being: How High-Schools in Ireland Are Measuring Up***

Both internationally and at a local level legislation and research suggests that schooling must concern itself with an ethic of care, in other words, the development of all aspects of the child or adolescent (Best, 1999; Noddings, 2005). School mission statements espouse concern for the well-being of the whole person but research in more than one country reveals that in the case of relationships and sexuality little has been achieved and more specifically attempts to recognise the issue of sexual orientation have hardly moved beyond rhetoric (Norman, 2006; Gerouki, 2007). The consequences of this for the individual are serious when we consider that most of our assumptions regarding the goals of schooling include a concern for spiritual well-being and yet how can a school facilitate a young person to develop spiritually if a significant dimension of the person is not recognised within teaching and learning? In this situation young people are left to their own devices and the combined wisdom of the peer group resulting in the construction of stereotypes, fear, and prejudice and most importantly an inability in young people to integrate their sexuality with the entirety of their personality.

## **Chris Picone**

### ***Spiritual and community connectedness through growth partnerships***

Spiritual development does not occur in isolation. It is part of the wider introduction of young people generally into society. Any person who is not living as part of a community is living apart from that community. The consequences of marginalization are dysfunction not just to the individual but also to the community.

My SCORE Our MATCH is a simple means of establishing and maintaining direct linkages between young people and their community through growth partnerships. The program involves the one to one linkage of a student to an adult member of the same community (preferably a former student from the same school /college /university). Each growth partner is required to nominate goals across various dimensions of their life (study, career, health, fitness, faith, community involvement, etc) for the next year. These goals for both partners are included on a growth contract and each

partner is then required to encourage and support the other in the achievement of their respective goals. As a result, the lifewide benefits are both to the individual and the community.

An example of a growth contract is included at attachment 1 and may also be found at the program website, [www.myscoreourmatch.com](http://www.myscoreourmatch.com). Although faith is a critical part of personal and community growth, it needs to be packaged in a manner that is accepted to the younger generation. My SCORE Our MATCH offers a neutral but appealing packaging that has already attracted the interest of youth.

The program was launched at an educational conference at the American University of Kuwait in May 2007 (conference paper is included at attachment 2) and a pilot growth community has now been established in Kuwait.

The proposed conference panel discussion for the ACU conference will include a report on outcomes to date from the pilot program in Kuwait and the desired expansion of the program to other communities.

## **Dr Mike Radford**

### ***Spiritual Education, Health and 'Well Being'***

The conflation of the concept of spiritual education with therapeutic understandings is problematic. The issues centre on:

- a. the conflation of psychological 'health' which, though governed by cultural norms, is essentially individual, and educational processes that are essentially social in nature.
- b. the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic justifications, with educational ends falling into the former and health into the latter.
- c. education as 'promoting' diversity and choice. Education promotes good health since this is a means to extending choice. It does not promote any particular experiences that are then chosen. Education promotes understandings in such a way as to extend human choice in relation to spiritual ends but does not promote any end state that might be characterised as 'spirituality'.
- d. norms in relation to health that converge towards a homogenous set of standards. Exploration of spiritual experience is divergent in character tending towards heterogeneity.

## **Prof Graham Rossiter**

### ***Education in identity***

While identity has long been a prominent focus of education and religious education in Europe and Britain, little explicit attention has been given to it in Australia, even though its importance as an educational goal is implied. This paper reports on a project concerned with 'education in identity' which attempted to address this imbalance. A generic notion of education in identity is developed, underpinned by a conceptualisation of identity and of what constitutes identity health.

## **Sturla Sagberg**

### ***Children's spirituality in Norwegian kindergartens***

Spirituality is a term which gives few connotations in Norwegian kindergartens. This is quite remarkable, especially since laws for both schools and kindergartens in Norway refer to Christian and humanistic values as a basis for all education. In the present project I purport to develop some hermeneutical starting points to develop a language of spirituality in Norwegian kindergartens, with relevance for primary school as well. Based on research within English education on spirituality I am working out a framework for understanding expressions of spirituality in Norwegian context. Alongside this work I have talks with kindergarten teachers on a regular basis. In a second stage I will in cooperation with these teachers gather data from children in order to develop the framework more. The result will be published in articles as well as in teaching material. At the conference I will present a background study.

## **Dr Shukri Sanber**

### ***Understanding children's spirituality: Insights from assessing Religious Literacy***

Nurturing children's spirituality will benefit from an understanding of how children work with and apply key concepts within their religious tradition such as the presence of God, their relationship with God

and key religious values including their personal well-being. The authors have been involved in a Religious Literacy Assessment project with Wollongong Catholic Education Office and the Year 4 students in the Diocese. This paper presents the rationale underlying the assessment process and an understanding of how specific assessment items have been designed to focus upon students' understanding and expression of their relationship with God in prayer and action. Insights from the analysis of student responses are offered which can inform Religious Education programs in the early years of schooling.

## **Dr Inna Semetsky**

### ***In a different voice: Noddings, Dewey, and the ethical lessons of Tarot***

My paper is three-fold. It is grounded in the philosophical work of two educational theorists such as our contemporary Nel Noddings, and explicitly her book *Educating for Intelligent Belief or Unbelief*. Another is Dewey's classic source *Experience and Nature*, in which he commented that to call somebody spiritual never meant to invoke some mysterious and non-natural entity outside of the real world. The paper also brings into the conversation an ancient system of Tarot, arguing that its pictorial symbolism embodies intellectual, moral, and spiritual "lessons" derived from collective human experiences across times, places and cultures. As a system of communication and interpretation, Tarot is oriented toward the discovery of meanings for the multiplicity of experiences that would have otherwise lacked meaning and significance. Tarot therefore performs two functions, existential and educational, the latter focusing on the ethical and spiritual dimension of experience. The pictorial images create an adventure story of the journey thorough the school of life, each new life experience contributing to self-understanding and, ultimately, spiritual rebirth. Tarot not only speaks in a different voice therefore bringing forth the subtleties of Gilligan and Noddings's relational ethics but also enables a process of critical self reflection analogous to the ancient Soctaric "Know thyself" priciples that makes life examined and thus meaningful. As a techne, it can therefore become a valuable tool to complement an existing set of educational aids in the area of moral and spiritual education.

## **Caroline Smith, ACU National**

### ***Ecospirituality - the missing dimension in spirituality discourse***

Much of the current spirituality discourse in education and elsewhere tends to be narrowly anthropocentric, focussing almost exclusively on the human and described in terms of social justice and human-human connectivity, with the occasional reference to 'stewardship'. There is however a wider interpretation of spirituality that considers human connectivity to the more-than-human world of nature, described as ecospirituality. Consideration of this broader aspect of spirituality is increasingly important in a world of climate change and ecosystem destruction if the human species is to create a sustainable future and live in harmony with the more-than-human world. It is also, for many young people in particular, a way of providing meaning and connection to a wider whole and a more hopeful vision of the future in an increasingly materialistic and disconnected world.

The paper draws on the writings of Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XI, Fr. Thomas Berry, Brian Swimme, Joanna Macy and others as well as the work of Catholic EarthCare to consider ecospirituality and how it might integrate with a more human centred spirituality to reframe our relationship with Creation.

## **Wilma Vialle**

### ***Religiosity as a protective factor for young males? Evidence from the Wollongong Youth***

It is widely acknowledged that spirituality is vital to the emotional and academic well-being of young people. Nevertheless, it is a facet of their lives that is sometimes neglected in educational research. This paper reports on data gathered as part of an ARC-funded longitudinal study of 900 students from Catholic high schools in the Wollongong Diocese. Currently in its fifth year, the study is exploring a broad array of factors that impact on young people's lives but this paper will focus on the students' responses to the Religious Values Scale and its relationship with a range of other measures. Our research shows positive correlations among religiosity and self-esteem, conscientiousness, hope, satisfaction with social support, and school grades. Of particular interest was our finding that there was a significant gender difference, which suggested that religiosity may be functioning as a protective factor for males.

## **Jacqueline Watson**

### ***Spirituality and science – is there any connection?***

There is a tendency in the literature on children's spirituality – and elsewhere – to draw a divide between science and spirituality. The discussion of the development of children's spirituality in schools is more usually associated with literature, art and music than with science.

The historically relatively recent positivistic turn to science has no doubt contributed to the perception of science as destructive of spirit. But the Enlightenment could be seen as a spiritual awakening; aspects of science, for instance cosmology and environmental science, lend themselves to the kinds of big ideas and complex interconnectedness that might be associated with the spiritual.

Religion and science have long been in contention, although many commentators now try to bring these two realms together. This paper would examine the relationship between spirituality and these areas of science. It would ask whether science and science education can and should make a contribution to children's spiritual well-being.

## **Associate Professor Ruth Webber**

### ***Spirituality and Social Concern among Australian Adolescents: Findings from a National Study***

The paper reports on results of a three-year nationally representative study of spirituality among young Australians. The Spirit of Generation Y study explored the varieties of religious and spiritual experiences of young Australians as well as the alternative, non-religious ways in which young people are defining themselves and interpreting their lives. This paper reports findings on 'social concern' among young Australians between the ages of 13 and 18: especially the relationship between their spirituality type and their outlook, values and practices in the social realm.

There are significant differences in social concern between the responses of those who are religiously or spiritually active and those who either have low levels of spiritual or religious belief and

involvement, or are secular in outlook. These findings suggest that religious or spiritual involvement makes a difference to young people's social engagement.

## **Scott Webster**

### ***Transcending the Spiritual and Physical Divide through Education***

Spirituality can sometimes be considered as something which pertains to the non-material realm and so is often understood as an add-on to physical or mental health. This divide is also reflected in schooling practices where learners are regarded to require development in the different areas of the intellectual, emotional, social, physical and spiritual.

However, dividing the person into such faculties as these has been described as a 'mutilation' by Faure in his report to UNESCO.

This paper will argue that UNESCO's conception of holistic education is such that it is able to transcend these divides in such a way that the health of humanity itself is able to be enhanced. This is able to be achieved through recognizing the spiritual aspect which is intrinsic to the enterprise of holistic education itself and forms the ultimate value in any conception of health.

## **Ruth Wills**

### ***From theory to practice: the issues, challenges and questions raised through the development of 'Dream' – 're-imagining church' for children.***

The 'emerging church' movement in the U.K. seeks to locate and develop Christian spirituality within a post-modern and post-Christendom culture, its philosophical starting point being the capacity of all people to experience 'God.' The ensuing methodology is based on one of creativity, discovery and enquiry within the framework of contemporary culture as well as in reference to the mystics, Celts and early church fathers. Inspired by the writings of deconstructionists such as Derrida and Foucault, the group uses art, music, sculpture, film, literature and journalism are used as the stimulus for creative prayer, worship and reflection.

Since March 2007, 'Dream,' an 'emerging church' network, has sought to 're-imagine' church for children in Liverpool, U.K. Establishing and developing the group based on the principles stated above has been challenging, and raised some major philosophical questions for children. In this paper I will present the cultural, philosophical and theological ideas underpinning this work, describe the group and activities that take place, then seek to address some of the questions that have arisen in the process of transforming a theory to practice for the wellbeing of children.

## **Keith Wilson**

### ***Service–Learning and the Spiritual Imperative***

Students nurture the link between head and heart through community service and those who have a high level of commitment to serving others are heeding a spiritual imperative. The close relationship between faith development and other student development theories, especially cognitive development theory, provides opportunities to create experiences, activities, and environments that enhance spiritual development.

Compared to their state run counterparts, systemic institutions have advanced significantly in adopting, delivering and resourcing service–learning. Private schools appear more enamoured towards service–learning programs and are keen to see them expand. State schools tend to favour experiential experiences that include a token reflective element. Participants will watch a couple of videos of service–learning in action to set the scene for deeper exploration. The workshop assumes that participants are involved in all phases of service–learning particularly critical reflection. The challenge is to devise strategies that willingly engage all students and their stakeholders in service–learning and allow them to reflect on their experiences. Ideally a graded set of activities will be devised where peer mentoring and school based service leads eventually to community service with the reflective process moving from the academic through critical to spiritual. If the opportunity presents itself a formal submission, easily adopted by all middle and senior schools, will be drafted for further development and eventual distribution to education authorities.

## **Pastor Nancy Windels**

### ***Faith Formation during the First Three Years of Life***

Tending to the spiritual development of the young child is essential in raising healthy children nurtured in body, mind and spirit. Current brain research has lifted up the importance of learning and life experiences during the first three years of life. The primary influence for children Birth-3 years is the parent. This has implications for current faith nurture and education for the young child which typically begins at age 3. In response, our congregation created the Faith Imprints ministry to address this three year gap. Developed and piloted since 2003, this child-centered ministry, and the accompanying curriculum models and teaches developmentally appropriate practices for faith formation prenatally through the first three years.

Participants will be invited to review our findings, explore the implications of initiating family-based spiritual nurture and practice during the first three years of life, as well as identify areas for further study.

## **Hidemori Yasuyama**

### ***How do Japanese teachers define spirituality?: A study of the beliefs and attitudes of Japanese teachers toward spirituality in education.***

A great deal of empirical research on spirituality and spiritual education has been done in the UK, the US or Australia, whereas almost no empirical studies in Japan have been conducted. The study will examine how the Japanese teachers defined the notion of spirituality, their views on what spiritual education might look like, and assessed their own spiritual sensitivity. The questionnaire survey will include Spirituality Sensitivity Scale developed by Tirri et al. (2006), as well as some open-ended questions on spirituality and spiritual education.

This paper will present the preliminary findings of the questionnaire survey conducted with 50 teachers in public schools in Japan. It will also explore the problematic issue of Japanese equivalent of the term spirituality, 'reisei' and why it is so in relation to the historical background of Japanese education policy.