SCIENCE AND RELIGION
Are they compatible?

THE NEW FACE OF HOMELESSNESS
The alarming number of homeless children in Australia

DEMYSTIFYING HIGHER EDUCATION
Extraordinary teachers making dreams a reality

A SOCCER GAME THAT’S STREETS AHEAD
The Big Issue soccer team that’s more like a family

Telling tales of ANNE BOLEYN
PhD student Laura Saxton on why the Tudor queen is a master of disguise
Vice-Chancellor’s Letter

To say politicians have never been popular is like saying scorpions have trouble getting jobs as babysitters. Politicians always have been regarded in Australia with a frank suspicion.

You would think it would be hard for things to deteriorate. But over recent years, there have been troubling signs that Australians are treating their politicians with the sort of pathological disregard usually reserved for Geelong supporters.

Not that long ago, our Prime Minister was called a liar to her face by a shopper with more front than manners. Julia Gillard smiled, pale and remained polite.

Her predecessor, John Howard, had a shoe launched at him by an unimaginative critic inspired by an incident involving George W. Bush. A few years earlier, Paul Keating, suffered the indignity of being peremptorily cross-examined by an audience of students with more spots than IQ points.

Tony Abbott moves so fast these days he probably does not register insults or flying boots, but his cartoon depiction as a peripatetic Speedo addict and the standard description of this Catholic politician as a “Mad Monk” probably does not enthuse him.

We live in a robust democracy, where free speech rules. It is no mean thing that the average Joe can publicly abuse his leaders with no more serious consequence than a short reality television contract.

This answer is ready, but not convincing. In fact, there are plenty of things wrong with voters treating politicians as public doormats, regardless of their politics, incompetence or physical limitations.

To begin with, it is profoundly cowardly. The true dynamics of political muggings is not that the victim will have their aggressor hauled away by the secret police. On the contrary, given the realities of an ever present media, a confronted politician can react to the nastiest venom only with a restrained shrug. Their stalkers know this.

The last Prime Minister to tell the truth to a savage elector was Bob Hawke, when he called an ill-mannered elderly gentleman a “silly old bugger”. The media hounded him mercilessly as an inveterate cad.

Quite beyond this, does anyone seriously imagine that 99 per cent of politicians are trying to do anything other than their sincere best in a very publicly difficult job, where every mistake is scrutinised and every minor triumph discounted? Does the population genuinely believe that Julia Gillard or Tony Abbott gets up in the morning thinking “How am I going to screw the weak and pitiful today”?

As for the endless whining about perks, how long is it going to take Australians to realise that if Julia Gillard actually was in it for the money she would be earning squillions as a partner in a law firm, and Abbott would be an extremely well-paid journalist, business person or swimwear model.

It is interesting to ponder why Australians have decided that politicians are as open to public vilification as a car that just won’t start.

It is particularly interesting to wonder why the pollies cop it so hard when we are prepared to forgive other pampered celebrities almost anything, from foul-mouthed tennis players, to oafish swimmers, through bogan soap opera stars and philandering thespians.

One answer is that we pay politicians. But via ticket sales, government subsidies and sponsored stubby holders we pay all the rest of red-carpet baggers, too.

One nasty suspicion is that we like to kick people when they are down, and in federal politics especially, politicians are very, very down just now.

Our government in Canberra is particularly vulnerable. It does not have a majority, it does not have good polls and it does not have the leader we originally elected. Let’s give Gillard a right ranga rollicking while she’s on her knees.

And that Abbott bloke has funny ears, even though I look like a jug. Wayne Swan is as boring as my own buck’s night and Malcolm Turnbull’s a smart alec, even if my own last idea was in 1979.

Perhaps we get the politicians we deserve.

Professor Greg Craven
Vice-Chancellor
Australian Catholic University
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Last year we were joined by a group of seven Exercise Science students, including Samuel Agars. All made a significant contribution and really soaked up the opportunity – adjusting to the cultural differences in language and lifestyle. Planning, thinking on their feet and adapting to limited resources were some of the skills they developed.

Definite values and codes of behaviour underpin the program. It’s all about playing for fun, playing by the rules and looking after each other.

Seeing the kids shake hands before and after a game was a highlight for me. This powerful gesture of unity and respect is now an integral part of the game for them. They didn’t shake hands before we came – so it says to me we are making some steps towards achieving our higher-order objectives.

Only time will tell if this attitude becomes ingrained in the wider East Timorese community – but you’ve got to start somewhere."

Samuel Agars
Exercise Science student, Strathfield Campus

“I had never been to a place like East Timor before. I wasn’t quite sure what to expect but it really won my heart. The people were so welcoming and excited to have us there.

Promoting life skills through soccer, we trained and played with the locals at a venue called ‘Estadium’ – an old grandstand with a grass oval – and felt like rock stars every time we turned up. Some of the sessions had more than 500 kids and when we arrived they’d all crowd around the bus, rush up and want to shake our hands.

The kids came from all around. Some of them walked for miles but beat us there every time. By the time we got there the kids were already in their lines and warming up. They were just really keen to get started.

The youth in Baucau don’t have much to do after school, so having a designated place to go, a set time, and a soccer team and coaches was really exciting for them.

It’s the funny things I remember most… Like when one of the kids turned up to training with one boot and the other foot bare – he didn’t seem to notice and just kept playing. Another day it rained and the kids were sloshing around up to their knees in water. They were literally swimming on the field and just kept playing – nothing could dampen their enthusiasm.

At the very least, the kids were engaged in something positive and healthy. They got to learn how to have fun without fighting. It was great to see the girls get stuck into it as well – once they got going they didn’t hold back.

Dr Ross Smith and Dr Paul Callery were great in reminding us about the long-term goals of the program – about where it was heading and how it began. They shed a light on the bigger picture and reinforced concepts about building capacity and infrastructure in East Timor.

My time in Baucau has inspired my future goals. I hadn’t done much work with kids before Future in Youth – and now I plan to do further study in physiotherapy with a focus on paediatrics. Eventually I want to work with children with disabilities.”

Dr Ross Smith
Senior lecturer, School of Exercise Science

“East Timor first came to my attention when I heard about a primary education degree offered by ACU in Baucau. The history of political unrest in that region had manifested in a youth culture of martial arts gangs, fighting and rock-throwing. There was a high rate of disengaged youth, serious health issues and a distinct lack of structure around sports clubs and facilities.

I had a belief that soccer – the sport of choice in Baucau – could be the perfect way to engage the kids and bring about positive change in this community, and I was keen to create a field experience for ACU’s Exercise Science students.

Together with my colleague Dr Paul Callery and the Institute for Advancing Community Engagement (IACE), we developed Future in Youth – a sports program to teach Baucau youth about health, wellbeing and life skills.

The aim was to set up some structures, train local coaches, engage parents and the local Football Association and create a program that could be sustained by the community in the long term.

ACU Exercise Science students in their third year can apply to volunteer and are selected on the basis of individual skills, attributes and experience. In just two years of operation, the Future in Youth program has reached out to more than 1,500 young people in Baucau.

With nearly 100 per cent youth unemployment in Baucau, East Timor, the children of this region often get caught up in gang violence. Sara Coen spoke to lecturer Dr Ross Smith and student Samuel Agars about a program that keeping kids busy in a new way, and teaching some life skills in the process
It has become commonplace in the media to set religion and science in opposition. This is particularly true of those such as Richard Dawkins who see the two areas as incompatible – with science based on reason and evidence, and religion little more than superstition and ignorance.

This narrative of conflict has been strongly promoted since the Enlightenment with regular predictions that in the fullness of time, science will replace religion as the sole source of truth.

One of the things that this narrative conveniently ignores is the major contribution people of strong religious convictions have made to the development of modern science. These people have found no incompatibility between their religious convictions and their commitment to scientific excellence and methodology.

In this brief reflection I would like to highlight three such figures who have made major contributions to our scientific world view, while remaining strongly devoted to their religious faith. They are Gregor Mendel, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and George Joseph Lemaître.

Gregor Mendel (1822-84)

From 1840 to 1843, Mendel studied practical and theoretical philosophy as well as physics at the University of Olomouc. At the conclusion of his studies, at the age of 21, he entered the Augustinian order to train for the priesthood. In 1851 he went to the University of Vienna to study physics to later return to his abbey to teach. In 1867 he became abbot of his abbey.

From 1851-67 Mendel engaged in a variety of scientific research, in the study of bees, meteorology, astronomy and biology. Most of his published works were in meteorology, having founded the Austrian Meteorological Society in 1856. However, the work for which he is most remembered is on the question of inherited characteristics of peas.

With painstaking analysis and experimentation, Mendel discovered the basic laws of genetic inheritance, of recessive and dominant characteristics. His paper on this topic was published in 1866, but had little impact, being cited about three times over the next 35 years. His work was unknown to Darwin and was only rediscovered in the 1930s when the modern biological synthesis brought together Mendelian genetics and Darwinian natural selection to lay the foundations for modern biology as an explanatory science.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955)

While de Chardin is perhaps better known among religious thinkers than Mendel, we should also remember that as a scientist he made major contributions to the theory of human evolution as a palaeontologist and geologist.

de Chardin entered training as a Jesuit at the age of 12. After years of study he taught physics and chemistry from 1905-1908 in Cairo before returning to his theological studies from 1908-1912. He was ordained a priest in 1911, at the age of 30.

Taking up work in palaeontology, de Chardin became one of the leading scientific figures of the time in that field, contributing significantly to providing evidence for human evolution through his joint work in the discovery of the early hominid, Peking Man. So significant were his scientific discoveries that he was elected to the French Academy of Science in 1950, five years before his death.

George Joseph Lemaître (1894-1966)

Lemaître studied engineering at the Catholic University of Leuven, going on to research in mathematics and physics. Ordained a Jesuit in 1923, he went to Cambridge in the UK to work with the leading physicist, Sir Arthur Eddington, and then to the Harvard College Observatory in Massachusetts.

Awarded a PhD in 1927 for his thesis entitled The gravitational field in a fluid, he utilised Einstein’s newly created theory of general relativity. The same year he published a paper which further utilised general relativity to derive what would later be called Hubble’s Law on the red shift of the expanding universe, two years before Hubble actually discovered the empirical evidence for the phenomenon. This paper was published in a little-read journal and did not attract much attention.

Hubble’s empirical evidence went against the then dominant view of a static (and eternal) universe. However, Lemaître’s paper had already provided a mathematical analysis for an expanding universe, and in 1931 he published a new paper in Nature in which he drew the further conclusion that the universe had a temporal beginning, emerging from a “cosmic egg”, or what is now referred to as the “Big Bang”.

We can celebrate the contribution of those believer scientists, such as those considered above, who have shaped modern science. Further, their lives demonstrate the inaccuracy of contemporary atheists who have written believers out of their account of the development of modern science.

As a Catholic university, ACU is fully committed to the unity of truth, and the compatibility of science and Catholic belief, offering degrees in both science and theology.

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ACU Vice-Chancellor Professor Greg Craven spent several weeks in the United States in December visiting the University’s key partners in Washington DC, New York and Connecticut.

Professor Craven met with US Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts in his chambers, and attended the non-argument session of court as his guest.

He also signed an agreement with Georgetown University that will allow nursing students from ACU’s North Sydney Campus to undertake a student exchange semester in Washington DC.

The Vice-Chancellor was accompanied by Professor Thomas Martin, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), and Chris Riley, Executive Director of International.

Professor Tracey McDonald, Professor of Ageing at ACU, has been made a Member of the Order of Australia in the General Division (AM) for services to nursing, particularly in the area of aged care, through advisory roles with the United Nations Expert Groups on Social Policy and the development of public health and social welfare policy.

Professor McDonald currently holds the ACU Research Chair in Ageing sponsored by RSL LifeCare. In late 2011 she was appointed to the National Lead Clinicians Group by the Minister for Health - which was set up to provide high-level strategic oversight and leadership on clinical issues.

Professor McDonald’s work with the United Nations includes being a member of World Expert Groups on Ageing in Malta in 2007 and on Social Integration in Finland in 2008.

In 2009 she was invited to Germany to help develop a draft convention on the rights of older persons, and in 2010 she went to Tunisia to participate in the United Nations/OSAGI Expert Group on Empowerment of Women in Arabic Cultures.

This year, ACU is launching a new strategic plan that will guide the University’s directions and operations over the next three years.

“We have achieved a lot in our 150-year history within Australia, and publication of the Strategic Plan 2012-2014 marks yet another milestone on our journey,” said ACU Vice-Chancellor Professor Greg Craven.

“I am confident that this plan will realise the ambitions it sets out and position us strongly for the future. I look forward to working with the ACU community to implement our Strategic Plan over the next three years as we further advance ourselves as Australia’s outstanding Catholic university.”

The Strategic Plan 2012-2014 details the University’s Strategic Goals, Key Result Areas and University Performance Indicators and is accompanied by a set of specific University Performance Targets. To find out more about the Strategic Plan 2012-2014, visit www.acu.edu.au/StrategicPlan2012-2014
CARDINAL PELL BLESSES TENISON WOODS HOUSE

His Eminence George Cardinal Pell DD AC and the Honourable Joe Hockey MP recently blessed and opened ACU’s newest acquisition in North Sydney.

Mr Hockey said he had been a great beneficiary of Catholic education, as had his family.

“This University is a proud part of the North Sydney landscape, it adds so much to my electorate… students here represent an opportunity to provide growth in the community… and energy in the community.”

The building at 8–20 Napier Street has been renamed Tenison Woods House in honour of Father Julian Edmund Tenison Woods. Together with Blessed Mary MacKillop, he founded the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart in 1866.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Greg Craven welcomed members of the Tenison Woods family, and said ACU was now the largest English-speaking Catholic university in the world.

“This building gives us a unique opportunity to recognise one of the greatest figures in the history of the Australian Catholic Church and indeed in Australia itself.

“The range of Tenison Woods’ academic work is such that he would, were he alive today, walk into a chair at any university in Australia.”

The University purchased the tower building last year to support its growth plan and expansion of the North Sydney Campus and course offerings.

PROFESSOR BRIAN FITZGERALD TO HEAD NEW LAW FACULTY

Professor Brian Fitzgerald, well-known intellectual property and information technology lawyer, has been appointed Executive Dean of ACU’s new Faculty of Law.

Professor Fitzgerald joins ACU from Queensland University of Technology (QUT), where he was a specialist research professor in intellectual property and innovation, and a pioneer in internet and cyber law.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Griffith University, a Bachelor of Law from QUT, and postgraduate degrees in law from Oxford University and Harvard University.

Professor Fitzgerald said it was an exciting time to be joining a dynamic university.

“The core goals of ACU – commitment to human dignity and respect, social justice, ethical practice and public service – are what will make this a tremendous laboratory for legal education.”

Law degrees will commence at the Melbourne Campus in 2013, and in Sydney in 2014.

VC APPOINTED DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF COAG REFORM COUNCIL

ACU Vice-Chancellor Professor Greg Craven has been appointed Deputy Chairman of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Reform Council.

The group aims to assist COAG to drive its reform agenda by strengthening public accountability of governments through independent and evidence-based assessment and performance reporting.

Professor Craven was appointed as a highly regarded authority on federalism, government, public policy, and constitutional law and history. He replaces the former Deputy Chairman, Professor Geoff Gallop.
Improving English outcomes in schools

With the advancement of technology in the 21st century, new forms of language are being used by young people as they communicate with each other, members of their community and their teachers.

In an Australian Research Council (ARC)-funded project, Professor Kristina Love (left) and her team are developing a grammatical toolkit that will assist students and their teachers with the spoken and written forms of communication that are essential to success in school.

"With the introduction of the Australian Curriculum for English and the assessment of Argument alongside Narrative in the NAPLAN, more teachers are struggling with how to improve the writing outcomes of their students in subject English," said Professor Love.

"Knowledge about the grammar of narrative, argument and text response, including their multimodal grammars, is needed if teachers and their students are to achieve the demands placed on them in this new curriculum."

Report reveals parental contributions to education

Parents provide the majority of the resources of independent schools in Australia, a new report by ACU’s Public Policy Institute (PPI) has found.

The research also revealed that families who choose a non-government school come from all income levels and social classes, and the investment of private resources has positive effects on the quality of Australian schooling, on equity in schooling, and on the public purse.

“The research shows that encouraging private investment in schooling is good for society as well as individual students,” said Professor Scott Prasser, Executive Director of PPI.

Contributions from parents account for 58 per cent of the recurrent income of independent schools, and 28 per cent of the income of Catholic systemic schools.

“This private investment greatly increases the total resources available for education and frees up public funds for other purposes,” Professor Prasser said. “It’s time to turn on its head the view that it is wrong to spend personal income on education. The funding mechanism used by the Commonwealth for non-government schools has encouraged this private investment from families with the capacity to pay. As a result, the social mix and diversity of the sector have greatly expanded.”

The Parental Contributions to Education report is available at www.acu.edu.au/ppi
Researchers at ACU are working to improve health outcomes and shed light on education in Australia, and they are being recognised for their contributions. Here is a taste...

Exercise scientist wins sports safety award

Exercise Science Lecturer Dr David Greene (above) has been awarded the FE Johnson Memorial Fellowship at the 2011 NSW Sports Safety Awards.

Valued at $20,000, the prize recognises outstanding research contribution to injury prevention in sport – and was awarded for the first time in four years.

Dr Greene, Deputy Head of School at the Strathfield Campus, was recognised for his work on musculoskeletal health in active young populations.

He reviewed more than 500 bone scans to identify markers of injury risk in young athletes by examining tibial and radial bone characteristics and nutrition levels. Dr Greene is one of the first researchers in Australia to look at bone strength using three-dimensional bone-imaging technology.

He plans to visit a bone lab at the University of Calgary in Canada to look at three-dimensional bone scans from Xtreme CT, a high-resolution scanner. He will also visit Ireland to collaborate on an ongoing study examining the musculoskeletal health of jockeys.

Reducing caesareans

In 2008, 31.1 per cent of pregnant Australian women had caesarean sections. Professor Sue Kildea (left) and her team of researchers, with the assistance of a $456,760 grant, are investigating whether sterile water injections can decrease the rate of caesarean sections and improve outcomes for women and/or their babies.

Professor Kildea, Director of the Midwifery Research Unit at ACU and Mater Medical Research Institute (MMRI), is the chief investigator on the double-blind collaborative study which will run for three years across five hospitals and include 1,846 women.

Nigel Lee, Project Manager and PhD candidate, said sterile water injections could be an innovative and simple technique to increase the normal birth rate.

“There are indications the sterile water injections used to ease back pain during labour may also decrease the rate of caesarean sections,” he said.

Professor Kildea said the grant was a significant achievement and will help support vital midwifery research.

“This is an exciting area of research which we already have a track record in. This large study has been called for internationally and will attract much interest,” she said.

‘The Impact on Caesarean Section Rates Following Injections of Sterile Water’ study was awarded $456,760 in funding by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

ACU and OBI to establish joint biotech centre

ACU and the O’Brien Institute (OBI) have signed an agreement to establish the Centre for Regenerative Wound Healing.

The O’Brien Institute was established more than 40 years ago to promote research and training in microsurgery. It has since made headlines with operations such as Australia’s first hand transplant, the reattachment of a woman’s face and the growth of a new ear.

The new centre, based at St Vincent’s Hospital in Fitzroy, Melbourne, will focus on research, new technologies and health care initiatives in the areas of wound healing and tissue engineering.

Head of the O’Brien Institute, Professor Wayne Morrison, said the presence of ACU allied health professionals and students at St Vincent’s Hospital align perfectly with OBI’s role of translating its research into clinical applications.

Professor Thomas Martin, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) at ACU, said the agreement would also provide higher education career pathways and unique research training opportunities for nursing and other allied health students and professionals.
Telling tales of
ANNE BOLEYN

Strikingly beautiful raven-haired goddess or six-fingered witch with a sallow complexion? Sara Coen meets PhD student Laura Saxton and discovers Anne Boleyn is defined by the book you happen to pick up.
Anne Boleyn is a master of disguise in English literature and this is exactly what makes her so compelling and intriguing. There are thousands of biographies, historical accounts and novels written about her—each of which casts her in a dramatically different light.

Second wife to King Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn is arguably the most famous queen consort in English history. The woman for whom England’s ties with the Catholic Church were severed, and with her life cut short by the executioner’s sword, Boleyn’s story is politically fascinating, making her the perfect protagonist for any good story.

“Growing up reading a lot of historical fiction and biographies, and majoring in history at ACU, I became interested in how authors construct their narratives about Boleyn—this famous historical figure we actually know very little about,” said PhD student, Laura Saxton (pictured right).

“Despite all the myths, legends and documentation, many of the facts about Boleyn’s life are inconclusive, extremely vague, and often clouded by rhetoric, rumour and propaganda—so, naturally, imagination has filled in the gaps.

“We don’t even know where in England she was born; only that she spent some time in France before she became Queen of England.

“Her death also lends itself to much conjecture. We are not exactly sure how old she was when she died, only that she was convicted of treason and adultery, and subsequently beheaded.

“There is also much debate about the reasons behind her execution. Some scholars think she was guilty and others believe she was plotted against.”

Laura’s thesis—Anne of the thousand tales: representations of Anne Boleyn in the English written word—examines how 10 21st century authors construct very different narratives about the same woman.

Among the fictional and non-fictional texts compared in the study are Philippa Gregory’s The Other Boleyn Girl, Eric Ives’ The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn, Emily Purdy’s The Tudor Wife, David Starkey’s Six Wives: The Queens of Henry VIII, and Susannah Dunn’s The Queen of Subtleties.

“Historical narrative is heavily influenced by the time in which the author lives, so it was important to limit the texts to a specific time period, with similar influencing factors,” Laura said.

“I am interested in how the authors discuss certain events in Boleyn’s life, their theoretical perspectives, the ways they construct their ideas about her, and where their evidence comes from.”

Significant questions such as ‘how is history written?’ and ‘how are women portrayed in English literature?’ are explored, along with ideas about gender, sexuality, power, and Medievalism.

“So far the study would suggest that there is a significant contrast between the ways in which authors depict Boleyn depending on factors such as their audience, genre, perspective and influences. For some, she is a glamorous, courageous and intelligent heroine; whereas others define her by her downfall, sexuality and death.”

Laura explains that even Boleyn’s physical appearance is hotly debated, with some authors describing her as having black eyes, a long neck, unsightly moles and warts.

“There is even talk of her being a witch with physical deformities, including a sixth finger. Others depict her as exotically beautiful with flowing black hair and pure white skin.

“In reality, the only conclusive image we have appears on a coin made to commemorate her coronation which is damaged and defaced—so it’s all just speculation.

“Postmodern scholars refer to history itself as fiction—and this idea underpins my research. We can never truly access the past, we can only build our arguments by piecing together the fragments that remain. With this approach comes a whole range of implications about how historians use language, gather their information and string together their narratives about the past. Hence, everything is fiction.

“Anne Boleyn may not be the most important figure in terms of Australian society today, but the many tales written about her can teach us quite a bit about history as a construct. We begin to see just how fluid our understanding of the past can be, and we question things more.

“Perhaps everything we think we know about history really is just fiction.”
as a ‘winged man’, one of the four living creatures from the Book of Revelation 4:7. Both the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church believe that Matthew died a martyr.

In 1260, Albert was appointed bishop of Regensburg, and when he resigned was called to be an adviser to the Pope. In his latter years, Albert resided in Cologne, took part in the Council of Lyons in 1274, and travelled to Paris to defend the teaching of Thomas Aquinas.

It was in Cologne that his reputation as a scientist grew. Albert carried out experiments in chemistry and physics, and built up a collection of plants, insects and chemical compounds. He was friend and adviser to popes, bishops, kings, and statesmen and made a unique contribution to the learning of his age.

Albert died a very old man in Cologne on 15 November, 1280, and was canonised and declared a Doctor of the Church in 1931 by Pope Pius XI.

as a ‘winged man’, one of the four living creatures from the Book of Revelation 4:7. Both the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church believe that Matthew died a martyr.

Jean-Baptiste de La Salle was born in 1651 in Reims – he was a French priest and educational reformer who dedicated more than 40 years of his life to the education of the children of the poor.

Born into a wealthy family, he completed theological studies and was ordained a priest – at a time when few could afford to send their children to school, and most had little hope for the future.

Moved by the plight of the poor who seemed so “far from salvation” he determined to put his own talents and substantial education at the service of children. To be more effective, he abandoned his family home, moved in with the teachers, renounced his position as Canon and his wealth, and formed the community that became known as the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

Jean-Baptiste pioneered modern educational practices that eventually became standard throughout France, and was a strong proponent of reading and universal education. The De La Salle Brothers have had a long history in Australia and in teacher education throughout the world. He is recognised as being one of the founders of modern pedagogy, and pioneered the training of lay people for the teaching profession.

He also wrote inspirational meditations on the ministry of teaching (along with catechisms and other resources for teachers and students), and became the catalyst and resource for many other religious congregations dedicated to
education that were founded in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Jean-Baptiste was ordained to the priesthood in 1678, beatified in 1888, and canonised by Pope Leo XIII in 1900.

SAINT BERNADETTE OF LOURDES FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Bernadette Soubirous was 14 years old and living in Lourdes, France, when she saw the first of 18 visions of the Blessed Virgin Mary in a cave on the banks of the Gave River. In the visions the Virgin declared, “I am the Immaculate Conception” and requested prayer for conversion of the world.

A frail child from an impoverished family, Bernadette was placed in considerable jeopardy when she reported the vision, and crowds gathered when she had further visits from the Virgin throughout 1858. The authorities tried to frighten Bernadette into recanting her accounts, but she remained faithful to the vision.

On 25 February, a spring emerged from the cave and the waters were discovered to be of a miraculous nature, capable of healing the sick and lame. Since that time many thousands have been healed through the waters of the grotto. All claims of miraculous healing are rigorously investigated before being approved.

During her seventh appearance, the Lady instructed Bernadette to ask the priests to build a chapel by the grotto for people to gather there, and this is at the heart of Lourdes today.

In 1866, Bernadette joined the Sisters of Notre Dame in Nevers, where she completed her religious instruction. After years of sickness and pain Bernadette died in 1879 at the age of 35, still giving the same account of her visions.

BLESSED JOHN HENRY NEWMAN FACULTY OF THEOLOGY & PHILOSOPHY

John Henry Newman is the 19th century’s most important English-speaking Roman Catholic academic and theologian, and was also a priest, popular preacher and writer.

Born in London, England, he studied at Oxford’s Trinity College and was a priest in the Church of England. Newman was also a leader in the Oxford Movement—which fought against the increasing secularisation of the Church of England, and sought to restore its heritage to Catholic doctrines.

Gradually, it dawned on Newman that this was impossible, and in 1845 he was received into full communion as a Catholic. Two years later he was ordained a Catholic priest in Rome and joined the Congregation of the Oratory, founded three centuries earlier by St Philip Neri.

Returning to England, Newman founded Oratory houses in Birmingham and London, and was instrumental in the founding of the Catholic University of Ireland – now University College, Dublin, the largest university in Ireland.

Newman wrote 40 books and 21,000 letters that survive. One of his best-known works is The Idea of a University which outlines a classic vision for tertiary education that still has resonance today. When he was named a cardinal in 1879, he took as his motto “Cor ad cor loquitur” (Heart speaks to heart).

Pope Benedict XVI beatified Newman on 19 September, 2010, at Crofton Park, near Birmingham. The Pope noted Newman’s emphasis on the vital place of revealed religion in civilised society but also praised his pastoral zeal for the sick, the poor, the bereaved and those in prison.
A snapshot report has revealed that an alarming number of homeless children are being let down by patchy services. Dimity May spoke to Professor Morag McArthur about this increasingly overlooked population.

Last year in Australia, 84,000 children tried to get help from a homeless service – equivalent to one in 60 children – but more than half of them were turned away, a snapshot report on child homelessness has revealed.

Seen and heard: putting children on the homelessness agenda was released by children’s groups, including the Institute for Child Protection Studies (ICPS) at ACU.

Drawing on research, including information from frontline staff across 107 specialist homelessness services, the report found that these children were being let down by a lack of clear national targets and patchy support services.

Professor Morag McArthur, Director of ICPS, said that two years after the release of the Federal Government’s White Paper on tackling homelessness, The Road Home, not enough action had been taken.

“There is little consistency in the services and support provided to children who become homeless when their families do – what they end up getting is pure chance,” she said.

“The White Paper made a range of commitments specifically to homeless children, yet little has been done. There have been no clear national targets set, not enough of an increase in resources, and no consistent national framework. It is very hard to keep a focus on children as most services are very adult focused.”

The report found that family groups are the most likely to be turned away from government-funded accommodation services, including 82 per cent of couples with children and 67 per cent of individuals with children. Of the children who accompanied their parent or guardian to a homelessness service last year, almost 72 per cent were under the age of 10.

The causes of family homelessness are varied. They include structural causes, such as the housing affordability crisis, the importance of a strong and targeted response from the system.

Decline of low-skilled jobs, and personal or familial causes, such as relationship breakdown, domestic violence and mental health issues. Often families presented to specialist homelessness services with multiple and complex issues.

The report calls for prevention, early intervention and better support through a range of measures including an increased supply of affordable housing, simpler services that are easier to identify and prioritised housing support for families, especially those with young children.

The report also suggested a national framework be implemented to guarantee consistency and quality of care for homeless children and an expansion of existing effective programs such as the Household Organisational Management Expenses (HOME) program, which assists families with personal or financial challenges.

Professor McArthur said the impact of homelessness on children is especially disturbing, and emphasised the need for intervention.

“The challenge for homelessness services is to specifically assess and act on children’s needs.”

Homelessness has a flow-on effect in children’s lives. It has a profoundly negative impact on their health and wellbeing, their engagement with school, their capacity to learn and their connection to friends, family and the community,” she said.

“The challenge for homelessness services is to specifically assess and act on children’s needs. The state and federal governments have done some great work around homelessness, but too often the focus has been on single people rather than families and children.”

Seen and heard: putting children on the homelessness agenda is a joint initiative between ICPS, Mission Australia, Hanover Welfare Services, The Australian Centre for Child Protection and The Social Policy Research Centre.
Alarmed by the fact that 38 per cent of all deaths in Australia and 49 per cent of all deaths in Europe were directly linked to cardiovascular disease, he developed an interest in prevention and early detection. His PhD investigates the impact of two separate factors – metabolic syndrome and ageing – on the structure and function of the heart. Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of risks including obesity, hypertension, diabetes and high cholesterol.

The research is unique, using speckle tracking echocardiography – a highly sensitive imaging approach which allows for the detection of subtle changes in the heart. Findings indicate this technique can be used for early detection of cardiac abnormalities and it may be a more effective diagnostic tool than traditional methods.

Edward said many of the risk factors involved in cardiovascular disease are modifiable and early detection can lay the foundation for timely intervention.

After completing a Bachelor of Exercise Science with honours at ACU’s North Sydney Campus, Edward became particularly interested in cardiovascular research.
The main township on Elcho Island, Galiwin’ku, is also the largest Indigenous community in northeast Arnhem Land. With a population of about 2,290, more than 94 per cent of the community is Indigenous with half under the age of 20.

Located within the Galiwink’ku community, Shepherdson College provides bilingual education programs for pre-school to senior secondary grades. The college also provides education services to several remote Homeland Learning Centres, as well as to the local community mobile school.

In an initiative to highlight potential career and education pathways, Shepherdson middle-school teachers Emma Hegerty and Rebecca Hunter decided to take their charges to the mainland.

In preparation for the trip, Emma and Rebecca worked with students in researching career fields and related jobs, as well as identifying Indigenous role models in various occupations and professions.

The students also studied the social behaviour, everyday communication style and lifestyle experience of people living in a major Australian city.

“A positive aspect of the trip for our students is we knew it would provide real-life experience, which is part of our teaching method – learning by doing,” said Rebecca.

To be eligible for the trip, students were required to have a minimum attendance rate of 80 per cent, in an effort to combat the major challenge of absenteeism faced at the school.

And it worked.

“As a result of planning the trip with the students, we witnessed several of them improve their attendance 100 per cent, which was absolutely fantastic,” said Emma.

Students were also required to take part in fundraising efforts – which ranged from writing letters to companies and service providers for donations, to selling glow sticks at school dances.

With the help of the teachers and their supportive local community, the students raised an impressive $30,000 to fund their trip.

For the majority of students, the trip to Sydney was the first time they had travelled far from home, and their first experience in an aeroplane.

At ACU’s North Sydney Campus, the students listened raptly as Indigenous staff – Dr Liesa Clague and Leanne King – gave inspirational presentations about their personal and academic experiences.

The students also had the opportunity to visit the new Physiotherapy Centre and experience a first-year lesson in physiotherapy with Professor Meg Stewart, who worked with the students to piece together a human skeleton.

“It was a delight to have the students from Elcho Island visit ACU and learn about university life,” said Professor Anne Cummins, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students, Learning and Teaching). “We hope some of them will be back as students in the future”.

Demystifying Higher Education

Students on Elcho Island don’t often have the opportunity to travel. Shirley Godlewski spoke to some extraordinary teachers who made the dream of a real-life university experience a reality.
Like many Australians, Rachael Haynes has always loved cricket. Recently appointed all-rounder of the NSW Breakers, the 25-year-old has come a long way from bowling into the family dog’s kennel.

“Growing up in suburban Melbourne, I idolised Shane Warne, Belinda Clark and Cathryn Fitzpatrick,” she said. “It became my dream to play cricket for Victoria and one day, if I was good enough, to play for my country.”

“I’ve always loved playing and cricket was a big part of family life – one of my earliest memories is playing with a bat my cousin carved from a fence paling. I used to wait in anticipation at family gatherings for the game of backyard cricket to start!”

Fast-forward 15 years and Rachael is fulfilling her dream in a major way. After quickly rising through the junior ranks, she made her senior debut for Victoria in the Women’s National Cricket League in 2005.

After a successful playing career with Victoria, captaining back-to-back Twenty20 titles, she played her first match for Australia during the 2009 Ashes series.

“I was really excited to be finally realising my dream. I got to bat and felt such a sense of achievement. I love playing big games – it’s why you work hard and put so much into training and improving as a player. I get a little bit nervous, but mainly enjoy the challenge and pressure that comes with it.”

At the end of the 2010 season, Rachael moved to NSW and began playing with the Breakers.

“For personal reasons, I made a decision at the end of the season to move to NSW and continue my domestic career with the Breakers,” she said. “They have a good history and their program has produced a lot of great players.

“The move has been fairly smooth, although coming into a new program and team always presents its challenges. There are different dynamics and culture, but my focus is squarely on playing well and earning my new teammates’ respect.”

“I’m happy I made the move, now I’ve settled in and get along well with my teammates. I feel privileged to be on the team and hopefully I can enjoy some success with them.”

Rachael is also completing a Bachelor of Marketing at ACU’s North Sydney Campus.

“My biggest goal for cricket is to play in a winning World Cup team. I’m working really hard and ultimately I want to play at the highest level for as long as possible,” she said.

“However, I won’t be playing cricket forever, and after working in Bowls Australia’s commercial operations department and developing a passion for the work, I decided to go back to university and obtain my degree.

“ACU has been great because it’s an elite athlete-friendly university – so I’m enjoying my studies knowing I have support when it comes to juggling my commitments.

“Also, the Breakers are extremely lucky to have a major sponsor, Lend Lease. Through their involvement with the team, I was lucky enough to have an opportunity to complete a 10-week internship with their marketing department. I really enjoyed the internship – it was great experience, fits in with my studies and helped grow my skills in an area I am passionate about.”
There’s a buzz in the air at North Melbourne Community Centre – where women of all ages laugh and chat about their week. But when the whistle blows, they are all business.

ACU Exercise Science student Sally Prickett has been involved with Street Soccer – an initiative of The Big Issue Australia – for the past two years.

The 22-year-old started out as a volunteer – linking her involvement to the community engagement component of her degree, and is now employed as assistant coach for the North Melbourne team.

The Street Soccer program uses team sport to promote social inclusion and personal change, and is run at 25 sites right around Australia.

Players range from 18 to 70 and come from all walks of life. Many have been marginalised in some way and experienced obstacles such as long-term unemployment, mental illness or homelessness.

Sally said that while none of the women are obligated to turn up for the weekly training session, there is a group who attend regularly because they love it.

“One of our players has only missed one session in three years – and that was for her mother’s funeral,” she said.

“The fact that they show up every week despite what’s going on in their lives is a real testament to their loyalty and commitment to the program.”

“There’s something special about soccer. It’s a game that really brings people together – and the skills and attitudes developed somehow translate to life.

“I have seen so many girls improve their self-esteem and confidence just from being part of the team – it’s a joy to watch.”

A longitudinal study has shown practical outcomes for participants include reduced symptoms of mental illness, reductions in smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, and improved housing situations.

“The girls work as a team, learning about respect, effective communication, fairness, and how to support each other,” Sally said. “They are striving for a common goal and try to be the best players they can be.”

“Swearing, tackling and aggressive behaviour are not tolerated and this code of behaviour is held in high regard among the girls. If they break the code, they are not permitted to play – it’s that simple.

“Besides a bit of swearing here and there, we hardly ever have any problems. Players might be asked to sit out and cool off if they ever get upset but that’s pretty rare.”

Joined by support staff from The Big Issue, Sally works closely with players linking them to services that address their individual issues and needs.

“We don’t provide counselling, but we often provide referrals and give support through organising workshops and other activities,” she said.

“I recently introduced the Health and Fitness Challenge – a six-week competition designed to promote daily exercise and healthy eating. This was a great way for the team to kick-start healthy habits and break old patterns.”

The North Melbourne team also attends an annual state camp with players from other Victorian teams.

“It’s a great way for all the teams to get to know each other,” Sally said. “I went last year and it was one of the most amazing weekends of my life. The energy was incredible.

“It’s awesome to see state finalists have a chance to compete in the Homeless World Cup – an annual tournament where Street Soccer players from teams around the country are selected to join the Australian team, Street Socceroos.

This year the Street Socceroos may have the opportunity to play again in the 10th annual Homeless World Cup in Mexico City.

“Regardless of whether the North Melbourne girls play in Mexico this year or not, it’s important to have a bigger picture and know that we are part of something universal,” said Sally.

“Street Soccer is truly transformational. The team have said I am part of their family – and this says it all. I am blessed to be involved.”

The women’s Street Soccer team is seeking volunteers. For more information, please contact Jill Murphy on 0412 992 882.
Until the 1970s, single mothers in Australia were forced to sign their newborn babies away for adoption, new research by ACU academic Professor Shurlee Swain has verified.

The practice, known as ‘closed adoptions’, was based on the premise that unwed women would be unfit mothers, and would more easily give their baby away if they had not yet seen or held their child.

“It was the practice for all hospitals from the 1950s to not allow them [the mother] to see their child,” said Professor Swain.

“The belief was that it would hurt the mothers less if they didn’t actually see their child.”

The research, undertaken by Professor Swain and ACU postgraduate student Christin Quirk, was commissioned by The Royal Women’s Hospital, Victoria. The findings, which were presented to a Senate inquiry into Australian adoptive practices from 1945 to 1975, prompted the hospital to apologise for its past practices.

“My research involved examining hospital archives and [conducting] interviews with women who had given birth at The Royal Women’s Hospital,” said Christin.

“I also spoke to former hospital staff to get a more complete picture of what was happening at this time.

“About 20 women were interviewed from the hospital and the research also drew upon the more than 400 submissions that were made to the inquiry. Examining this information, we started to see similarities and commonalities between the mothers’ experiences, regardless of the year or hospital they gave birth at.”

Despite a Federal Government adoption act stating that consent could only be given by a mother in a stable state of mind – women interviewed reported feeling pressured into adopting out their child.

“It was not accepted that children could be brought up outside the union of marriage,” said Professor Swain.

“The parents of these women – and more importantly, the people in positions of power, doctors, social workers and nurses – felt they knew what was best for the new mothers, and their answer was adoption.

“In hindsight, these women feel that they were coerced into signing consent, being told that the only alternative to adoption was for their child to grow up in an orphanage. That trauma has never left them.”

Christin explained that hearing the first-hand stories from women who had experienced forced adoption practices was a moving experience.

“Prior to my research at ACU, I had been involved with The Council for the Single Mother and her Child – a support organisation for single mothers.

“I wasn’t aware of this at the time, but quite a few of the founding members of the organisation – in the late 1960s and early 1970s – had experienced the practice of ‘closed adoptions’ and were fighting to change it.

“As a single mother, I was aware of the stigma and the issues surrounding being a single mum – our research helped complete the picture.”

Greens Senator Rachel Siewert headed the Senate inquiry that examined the Commonwealth’s contribution to former forced adoption policies and practices. She said there is no doubt that illegal practices occurred.

The inquiry’s recommendations, which were announced on 29 February 2012, included that the Government issue a formal apology, as well as implement, and fund, a national framework to address the consequences of former forced adoptions.

For more information, or to access the Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices report, visit www.aph.gov.au
**Q1**

**Q:** I’m in my second year of a Bachelor of Psychological Science and my goal is to be a child psychologist, however I know it’s difficult to get into Fourth Year and then into Masters. What can I do to improve my chances, apart from keeping my academic marks high? *Sarah, Brisbane Campus*

Sarah, as a psychologist who taught for many years in the undergraduate, honours and masters courses in psychology, I understand the pressures and competition to get into Fourth Year. You have answered your own question, however – and that is to keep your marks as consistently high as you can. This means reading widely on all the set topics; being systematic and making notes as you go; seeking help, clarification and feedback from lecturers early on; setting yourself tests of understanding and recollection; and seeking out papers and books that go beyond the set readings.

If you are really motivated, set yourself practice essays and find a helpful and enthusiastic staff member who is willing to read them for you. Finally, great marks need a relaxed, balanced and fit mind, so take care of yourself and don’t feel guilty about taking breaks.

**Q2**

**Q:** I’m in my Second Year of an Exercise and Sports Science degree. I don’t want to be a personal trainer, and am unsure about where my course can lead. I love sport and my dream would be to work with an AFL football club, however I know these opportunities are quite limited. Where do I start? *Daniel, Melbourne Campus*

Daniel, I want you to do something distinctly odd. Go to an AFL game, or to the MCG for an international cricket match, and once there, don’t pay any attention to the game itself. Instead, walk around the ground and make a list of every occupation you see – from pie-sellers to marketing people, hospitality managers to physiotherapists. Once you’ve got the list, you will appreciate that there are as many roles in the sports industry as there are in any large organisation. Consider which of these you’d be interested in doing, and how your degree might contribute to the role. Perhaps consider changing degree, but the important thing is to get some objective advice.
Q1: I can’t seem to control myself when I see chocolate, especially over Easter. If I start eating a block, I can’t stop – how can I develop better self-control?

Easter is a time when most people find it difficult to resist chocolate – it’s everywhere! According to Professor Gordon Parker from the Black Dog Institute, most people find chocolate enjoyable and pleasurable. However, some people crave chocolate when they are anxious, stressed or depressed and believe that chocolate helps their mood or reduces their anxiety. They consume to cope! It has been reported that chocolate is the most commonly craved food, with women more prone to chocolate cravings than men. The good news is that many cravings are short-lived.

We all have different levels of self-control, sometimes finding it easy to resist temptation and other times more difficult. What is important is to figure out why you want the chocolate – if it is that you really want it, then eat it. If you are feeling depressed, anxious or stressed, or having the chocolate out of habit, then it may be an idea to consider other foods or activities to help you reduce the craving. Drink a glass of water or go for a walk instead. If you usually have a healthy diet and exercise, don’t stress or feel guilty. Eat some chocolate to satisfy the craving, if you don’t you will probably eat more later on. Limit yourself to a small amount rather than a block. As I mentioned earlier, most cravings are short-lived, so if you wait 15 minutes or so you just might find that your craving has disappeared.

Q2: A friend who recently separated from her partner has become obsessed with her weight. At first I thought it was healthy but now I’m not so sure. How can I raise the issue without offending her and what should I say?

After a relationship break-up it is not unusual for an individual to become self-critical and experience low self-esteem. To deal with such feelings, individuals tend to focus on something other than issues related to the relationship break-up, to provide a distraction from the distress they are finding difficult to deal with. It seems that your friend is dealing with the distress by focusing on her weight.

I suggest that you make a time to meet with your friend and to ask her how she is coping with the break-up. After listening to how she is coping, you could mention that you have noticed her weight loss, and express that you are concerned that her obsession with her weight will impact on her overall wellbeing. Even though it might be tough, you could suggest she try to focus on the positive aspect of herself – and what has she learnt about herself since the break-up. You could also encourage your friend to seek support from a counsellor. Such support is likely to boost her self-esteem and self-worth, and to enable her to become more positive about herself in time. Your willingness to help your friend is a good start.

Dr Barbara Jones is a registered psychologist and lecturer at ACU. She is Director of the Melbourne Psychology Clinic, and Coordinator of the Bachelor of Social Science (Counselling) and the Master of Counselling programs. Dr Jones works one day per week in private practice with children, adolescents and adults with anxiety disorders, and is here to answer readers’ life questions.
Many young Indigenous students around Australia continue to underachieve in Western mathematics. National test results indicate that they are two years behind their peers—a statistic which a group of ACU researchers is hoping to change.

Professor Elizabeth Warren and her team at the University have set out to develop a best-practice approach to teaching mathematics in schools with a largely Indigenous population.

“National trends show the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous has widened over time as students progress through school,” she said. “Students’ mathematical ability is strongly related to culturally appropriate experiences, and foundations in the early years determine future success.”

The study, *Representations, Oral Language, and Engagement in Mathematics* (RoleM), is researching the best methods to teach mathematics in these schools. By developing a range of activities and testing their effectiveness, Professor Warren is hoping to impact the way mathematics is taught.

“We’re looking at the ways we can engage children to allow them access to mathematics—the types of materials we use, the ways we teach and the pedagogy of how we teach it.”

Implemented in 48 rural and remote schools, the program focuses on the big ideas of the Australian National Mathematics Curriculum—providing practical hands-on experiences for a diverse range of learning styles.

The study is also training Indigenous education workers to become fully registered teachers. There are currently around eight Indigenous education workers from within RoleM schools participating in undergraduate teaching courses and two students enrolled in the Master of Education at ACU.

“One of the problems in disadvantaged schools is that often there is a revolving door of teachers,” said Professor Warren. “We are trying to build the capacity of the Indigenous community as well as working with teachers in the classroom to give the project longevity.”

Funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, the longitudinal study is halfway through the four-year project—and is already demonstrating positive results.

Around 80 per cent of the students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, who participated in the RoleM program showed significant improvement in their mathematics as a direct result of the shift in learning style.

Professor Warren said the program is a big step in the right direction for Indigenous mathematics education.

“RoleM is challenging what people think it means to be Indigenous and to be an Indigenous learner. It is changing the stereotype, bridging the gap and offering new beginnings to students. It is breaking the cycle of poverty, providing pathways and allowing students to engage in a much more positive future.”

The RoleM materials are available for purchase to support the mathematics learning assistance given to disadvantaged children. More information is available at [www.rolem.com.au](http://www.rolem.com.au)
“At ACU you are not just a number, you feel like you are a student and you feel like you are an important asset to the University... The attitude at ACU makes it so easy to make friends for life and by seeing students regularly instead of in only one lecture a week, it ensures you keep in touch with one another.”

Eloise Cook
Bachelor of Physiotherapy

“My sister studied the same course at ACU and highly recommended it to me. By choosing ACU I knew I would leave university with the qualifications to teach at Catholic schools. Also, the size of the University was a bonus with it feeling much more personal and welcoming.”

Ryan Collins
Bachelor of Education (Primary)

“I was really drawn to the sense of community and smaller class sizes. Because of this and the friendly lecturers, I have been able to excel during my studies and develop life-long friends.”

Jenna Veneziani
Bachelor of Commerce

Q: Why did you choose ACU?

UPCOMING EVENTS

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<td>Vice-Chancellor to lead session on Determining an Institution’s Academic Profile and Issues in Teaching and Learning, at the International Federation of Catholic Universities (FIUC) Rector’s Programme-Phase V: Critical Elements in Strategic Institutional Management</td>
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<td>Arts and Sciences, Theology and Philosophy, and Education Graduation Ceremonies, Melbourne Campus</td>
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<td>26 April</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor to lead session on Organisational Design, at the International Federation of Catholic Universities (FIUC) Rector’s Programme-Phase V: Critical Elements in Strategic Institutional Management</td>
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First place, Pixel Prize, NSW

“Insanity within society reflects the frustrations and confusions that we, as a society, bottle up inside ourselves throughout life; the blurred image of the subject resembles the spirit who haunts the community.” – Domremy College student Laura Colantonio