

# The Leaders Among Us Pastors and Pastoral Associates Conference

The 2009 National Conference of Pastors and Pastoral Associates was held at Shoal Bay in September. "It was an incredible journey of collaboration working with eleven other people representing five NSW dioceses to pull together a Conference attended by 150 delegates from as far away as Perth, Townsville and Melbourne and all points in between. It was indeed a privilege to be part of this initiative – the first time the National Conference of Pastors and Pastoral Associates was not only held outside a capital city but organised collaboratively by five dioceses," said Kate Bartlett, Chaplain at the University of Newcastle.

At a time when the church is facing a number of significant pressures it was uplifting to see a group of people come together willing to participate in and co-ordinate the life and mission of their local church. "It was fascinating to experience a familiar list of names of delegates in small print turn into a living, enthusiastic, energising group of people," said Kate. Topics addressed at the conference included the changing face of church leadership; connecting with single parent families, youth, non-practising Catholics, the aged and people with a disability; ecological conversion; educating for life and the opportunities and challenges of engaging in contemporary communication technologies.

"The lasting insights from the conference are many. For me witnessing how a group of people, beginning in the most part as strangers, energised and renewed each other, helped each other to reclaim the source of their call to ministry and left as friends was a very important one," said Kate. Vivien Williams, Pastoral Projects Officer of the Diocese of Rockhampton, echoed these feelings. "Our conference opportunity proposed a distinction between leadership and ministry, clarifying what many probably know - that leadership is no longer a sole domain, but ideally multifaceted, collaborative and competent; enabled to effect particular goals or missionary endeavours. It was a most stimulating conference - one requiring a deal of ongoing pondering and translating into action."

*Jessie Brown*



The organising team.



Conference participants Ann Maree Whenman, Bishop Michael, Greg Byrne, Janette Davidson.

## SEEDS

(Shoal Bay September 2009)

For three days  
Words, words, words  
Germinating  
Some died  
Other soared!!  
Presenters, sharers  
Listened, turned-off  
But  
settled and dispersed  
To and with  
One another.  
The shoot of life  
Sprouted –  
The wealth of massed grains  
Mingled and merged  
To  
Become  
Bread for life –  
Life within and for  
Pilgrim People  
Open soiled Hands –  
Welcome  
The face of God!  
RGS MacKillop