

February, 2020

Dear Diocesan Presidents and Executive members,

Greetings and best wishes for a joyful and fulfilling year serving Jesus through Mothers Union. I hope you have had a refreshing break from your usual routine since we met in Melbourne in November. Actually, as soon as I wrote that sentence I thought, "Not likely for a good number, who have been affected by the bushfires!" If that is you, I hope that you have found strength and the ability to cope with the anxiety, pain and anguish the fires have caused, and that you have been helped *by* others and able to offer help *to* others.

I write wearing my brand-new "Mia Mia" hat. Although it's a hat I'm excited to wear, it is sitting rather awkwardly on my head just at the moment, and I fear that its newness could well cause it to fly off my head at any time. Hopefully, as I grow more accustomed to it, it will sit more comfortably. In the meantime, may I ask for your patience and good humour as we all adjust.



I am deeply grateful for the work done by Susan and the other Mia Mia Editors of the past, who have all kept AMUA members informed and enthused about the work of Mothers Union. I am especially grateful to Susan for her willingness to produce the Autumn 2020 issue of Mia Mia, which has given me some much-needed breathing space to familiarise myself with the software and to plan \_\_\_\_\_ for the issues due later in the year.

As always, I would like Mia Mia to be a means of letting others know about the things which go on in your diocese in the name of AMUA and so special moments in the life of your diocese and its members will continue to be welcome. **However, I am really keen to let our readers know about events and programs beyond birthday parties, Lady Day services and long service presentations.** Every time I go to AC and hear about the various activities your members get up to serving others, particularly in the community beyond the four walls of our churches I think, "Wow! That's really interesting". Even those of you who struggle with numbers and aging membership have good things to share (just reread the reports in the AC book if you don't believe me).

So, I would *really* like to give you a special opportunity to share some, or even just one, of those things with our readers. Do you give out blessing boxes? Do you knit beanies for seafarers? Do you write to isolated clergy families? Do you help with a playgroup? Do you run a dementia café? Do you help with school breakfast clubs? Do you run parenting programs or seminars? We need to tell others about these great things which are done in the name of AMUA as we offer "Christian care for families".

How do I plan to do this? I'm glad you ask. I plan to do it by **focusing on several dioceses in each issue**, devoting several pages to sharing these interesting and stereotype-breaking activities. It will be, in a way, a "mini report" and an opportunity to showcase your diocese to the **world**. I know that some of you will be thinking, "This sounds like bragging, and we don't like to brag." Others will be thinking, "This sounds too hard, we don't do much." My answer to these objections is, "Don't waste the opportunity we have to lift the profile of Mothers Union and show that we aren't past our use-by date. We may have been "best before", but that doesn't mean that we're ready to be put in the bin just yet. And by sharing these things we are offering new ideas to others- not just other DPs once every 18 months at Australia Council meetings, but every quarter and to every member."

I firmly believe that Mia Mia stands alongside our website and Promotion leaflet as a wonderful advertising tool. Will you help me to put together a magazine that both our members and others find interesting and helpful?

Yours in Christ,

*Christine*