

President's Address – TCMA Conference 2011

Welcome to the TCMA's 2011 Conference at this beautiful venue. It is so good to see so many familiar faces and to catch up with you again. And it is exciting to meet new members – I trust you will feel welcome and enjoy and benefit from this conference on this beautiful land.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of this land that we gather upon, the Quandamooka peoples. To thank them for the care they have given this land and to acknowledge their presence as the first peoples of this country.

No doubt you have been amazed by the beauty of this country; the picturesque bay, the quiet trees stirred by the wind – be they gentle breezes or gale-force winds. This conference site is just the right place to explore this theme. It's the right place for us as tertiary chaplains to come to reflect, to discuss and to dream.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Organising Committee for this Conference, Bavin Clarke, Patricia Blundell, Patricia Courtenay and Christine Sebastian . They have done some great work to get us here today, St Theresa's is a beautiful venue, and I look forward to the program that they have planned for us.

This past year has been a productive one for the TCMA with quite a number of accomplishments. As a TCMA executive we have met 5 times since the 2010 Conference, and 3 of those meetings have been face to face.

It is unusual for the executive to meet more than twice face to face, but this year we introduced an extra face to face meeting that included meeting with the conference committee at the conference venue. This extra meeting was included as a way of showing support to the conference committee but also because it is so much easier to get things done when you can talk across a table rather than through a computer screen and microphone.

Our secretary 'tricia has been working on updating our chaplaincy lists, contacting both universities and chaplains to ensure that the TCMA is a well known organization. Robert has been working on a brochure to help to introduce new members to the TCMA. Bavin, in between his work on the Conference committee, has been pouring over the changes that need to be made to the old Objects and Rules to keep up with changes from the Office of Fair Trading.

There are also rumors that Judy Redman could not be kept out of that loop and has been willing to help with this task. It's great to see Judy back amongst it .

Roy continues to manage our finances with great skill, finesse and ease and it has been great to have Patricia Courtenay's practical insight and to add to our collection of Patricias and the confusion it can cause when you say Patricia.

So, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the members of the executive. They have helped to form a great team that deals with the day to day running of our association and have been extremely generous with their time and support.

Together we have been dreaming. Dreaming of what the TCMA can be, how we can use the available resources and technologies to better support the TCMA members.

Some of the highlights of this year have been the continuing development of the website and the increasing ability to drag us and keep us in the 21st century and modern technology. We are continually reviewing and adding things to the website.

The next major addition for the website is the ability to manage our e-list. This was dreamed about at our last Conference in Canberra and has finally come about.

But first I must take a moment to thank 2 very important people who have managed our email list in the past.

I believe that Judy Redman first began this important form of communication before Patricia Blundell took responsibility for its management. Judy and Patricia, thank you so much for the work you have done in creating, transferring and managing our email list. It has been a communication tool that has proved invaluable and we sincerely thank you for your time and dedication to it.

Our new e-list will become operational as from 1st October. I encourage people to jump onto the website and register if you have not already. This feature on our website will allow members to subscribe and unsubscribe to the list themselves. There are behind the scene options of confirming members to the list and this will assist us in being as up-to-date as we can be. This list will continue to be a tool for communicating important developments at our campuses, to report on relevant policy developments, and as a way of making interpersonal connections.

As we have received information about other conferences and connection points outside the TCMA they have been added to the website for you information. I also thank those of you who have notified me of little errors or glitches when they have occurred, this is always an important part of us all sharing ownership of our website.

We've also been dreaming of having our directory available through the website. Dreaming of future possibilities of an on-line journal and members' section,

maybe even a podcast or two! If you feel like doing some dreaming about the website along with us please let anyone on the executive know, we would value hearing your thoughts and learning from your experiences.

In keeping you informed about other conferences and connection points we have been strengthening our ties with other chaplaincy organizations around the world. One of those organizations is our sister association in New Zealand. I will be heading off to represent the TCMA at the ANZTCA Conference in Palmerston North New Zealand in November and I would love to have some company if anyone else is able to join me.

Next year brings us to two special Conferences, the IACHE Conference in Yale and our own Conference in Adelaide. I have been in touch with the International Committee and know that they are working hard towards the Yale conference.

I suggest you all give some serious thought to your attendance at this great event. As agreed at our last AGM, there will be some financial assistance for those wishing to go to the International Conference and the executive is working on the requirements for this assistance.

And that brings us to beautiful Adelaide. If you are looking for something special next year then plan now for the 2012 TCMA conference. I know our South Australian conference committee has been working hard on this. I have asked them to tell us more about it and I believe they will be enticing us to Adelaide during their presentation in our AGM time slots during the week.

I have spoken about the programs and about the plannings – but the most important part of the TCMA's role has to be about the people! It is my dream for us to be participating members who work together on tasks that will improve the TCMA, that will serve our tertiary campuses, and that will enrich our own lives. I dream of seeing state representatives who can inform new members of the benefits of being a part of the TCMA community, who can welcome new chaplains, and who can assist in introducing them to the wider TCMA community by assisting with the members directory.

I dream of each TCMA member feeling confident to step forward and say, "this is what I will contribute" – it might be through small groups of members working on specific tasks such as research, keeping our constitution up to date, or being ready to respond to factors that could influence our work and presence in tertiary institutions. I like the TCMA as it is, as I have experienced, but I dream for its future. A future for the TCMA where we can each contribute by:

- sharing the roles and responsibilities of a national association
- highlighting our presence and connections with chaplains around the world.
- Serving and supporting the men and women who serve and support the students and staff on our campuses.

During this week of conference we will hear inspiring talks delivered. There will be engaging conversations into which we are drawn. And now, at the commencement, I also invite you to join with me and to dream.

Rev Jay Robinson
President TCMA
26th September 2011