

# Gifted for the Journey

Some highlights from the 17<sup>th</sup> Biennial Dominican Education Conference  
– the first to be held in the South Island

Theme for conference: **Gifted for the Journey** – on the Logo design- representing new beginnings, growth and regeneration - with the silver fern motif and the Dominican star.



*Solomon Islands Sisters Antonia (L) & Loretta (R) with Sr Jenny Gerathy (Eastern Australian & Solomon Islands Sisters' Leadership Team) at*


The Conference began on the Te Rau Aroha Marae at Bluff. A very special experience that somehow grounded the conference for what was to come and enabled the community spirit to flourish as we prepared waitas and protocol together.






This mauri stone was blessed at the opening liturgy at the Marae. It was split in three as a way of linking the Solomon Islands, Australia and New Zealand. Pounamu is a stone of strength, resilience, healing and peace.

**WE:**

 **Prayed together & celebrated** – morning prayer and conference Mass.



*Conference Mass at St Mary's Basilica. Dominican Sisters with Fr Kevin Toomey*

 **Listened and learnt from Keynote Speakers**  
– **Sr Laurie Brink and Brendan Spillane**


Laurie's topic – *Journeying with Jesus and Dominic* and  
Brendan's – *Creating connection in disconnected times.*

 **Enjoyed many different workshops:**

including one exploring the traditions and understandings of indigenous peoples and one that was geared to those new to Dominican schools to introduce them to our long and rich story and to provide some insights into why it is relevant in our Dominican schools today. Two workshops were presented by our Mary Horn and Judith Robinson.



*Sr Laurie Brink OP*

 **Reflected together:** Helped by the 'reflective café process' where we broke into smaller groups after the main lectures for discussion and recording our responses.



*Backdrop on stage with water feature*

 **Made new friends and rekindled friendships from past conferences**



*Marie & Paul Ferris with Sr Jan Ogilvy (Paul is head of the NZ Catholic Education Office)*



*Daniel Pepper (Principal, St Dominic's Blockhouse Bay) & Bishop Michael*



*Annette Dunn with Sr Jan Ogilvy*

Our two year preparation was led by the very gifted Annette Dunn to whom we say a special THANK YOU.

If anyone would like to read more, the Keynote presentations and feedback collected during the conference, workshop and liturgy PowerPoints, and the videos sent by schools have been

uploaded to a Google Drive for access over the internet. The web address for the drive is:  
[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1cNsmYIE6AG44x-G\\_0-6-9-6iLX6m5fO3](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1cNsmYIE6AG44x-G_0-6-9-6iLX6m5fO3)

We were certainly gifted for our ongoing journey and hope we meet again in two years' time at the Conference in Adelaide. Grateful thanks to all involved.

*Jan Ogilvy OP*

**“As Dominicans our GPS  
is our Charism that guides us.”**

**Sr Laurie Brink OP**



**“First the bow is bent in study then the arrow is  
released in preaching.”**

**Hugh of St Cher  
13th Century Dominican Friar**