On Tuesday 1 September 2015, Bishop Michael McCarthy and Leesa Jeffcoat AM, Diocesan Director of Catholic Education hosted an afternoon tea in the gardens adjacent to Catholic Education Office to honour and give thanks for the many religious priests, sisters and brothers who have served the Rockhampton Diocese since its inception to the present - The Year of Consecrated Life.

Invitations had been extended to all religious presently resident in the diocese and a good number of these were there to mingle with those who had gathered to honour them.

*God rarely makes booming announcements about what you should do with your life. Quite the opposite, it takes a lot of quiet to hear the God inside you...*

This was the the quote on the cover of the prayer segment of the afternoon which was ably and reverently led by Di-Anne Rowan - a prayer of gathering, listening, responding, praying and blessing.

Craig Fairbairn was the Master of Ceremonies for the afternoon and called firstly on Bishop Michael McCarthy to address those present. Bishop Michael paid tribute to all the religious who had served in the diocese and thanked those present for their ongoing commitment.

Leesa Jeffcoat was next to speak and spoke of her long association with the religious in the diocese and how they had done much to form her faith and support her on her journey to the present. She spoke on behalf of all in Catholic Education and acknowledged how Catholic education has been built on the shoulders of the brothers and sisters who had preceded those currently working as educators. She also acknowledged the many who have worked and still work in ministries other than education.

Sister Margaret Dixon rsm responded on behalf of the religious past and present and thanked the priests and members of the laity who had supported them and their work over the years and who continue to support them.

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Above: L-R: Bishop Michael McCarthy, Sr Ita Kavanough rsm, Sr Margaret Smith rsj, Leesa Jeffcoat as the celebratory cake is cut

Personnel from Diocesan Catholic Education Office and students from The Cathedral College did an admirable job keeping the refreshments up to everyone present.

Each of the religious present received a small gift to mark the Year of Consecrated Life.

Students from The Cathedral College also provided the music for the afternoon. As well as being the first day of spring (a beautiful clear day), it was also Leesa’s birthday which was duly acknowledged in song and accompanied by this group of wonderful young musicians.

**Catholic Education**

**Diocese of Rockhampton**

For more information on our Kindergartens, Schools and Colleges please contact the Catholic Education Office on 4931 3600 or www.rok.catholic.edu.au; Twitter @DCEORock

Existing not to be different, **but to make a difference**