

LEADERSHIP AND SPIRITUALITY



On Wednesday, September 11, Centacare Ballarat along with Catholic Social Services Victoria and the Diocese of Ballarat hosted a leadership and spirituality breakfast at the Mercure Ballarat Hotel and Convention Centre. Many local parishioners, community members, clinicians, health care workers, educators, social justice advocates and religious education leaders attended the event. Centacare's Chief

Executive Officer Tony Fitzgerald welcomed all present and Bishop Paul Bird offered a prayer of grace before breakfast. Deanna Davis, Centacare General Manager Family & Community Services introduced Chris Lowney, who was presenting to the gathering.

Chris Lowney is an author and speaker on leadership and Ignatian spirituality and at one time was a Jesuit seminarian. 'Everyone Leads', Chris's recent book on revitalisation of the Church, builds on the Ignatian principle that everyone exercises a leadership role. In his presentation, Chris encouraged listeners to reflect on two key principles of leadership, which he argued is mainly a spiritual role. He reflected on the need for a good leader to 'do the laundry' and to take 'pit stops'. Doing the laundry referred to the call for leaders to live and be with all those whom they lead, and to always serve others first. Chris suggested leaders need to attend to the spiritual nourishment required to lead effectively and to do so by taking 'pit stops' – to take time daily, to reflect on one's work and to review one's leadership capabilities.



Chris promoted five 'take home' messages to his audience, who were able to ask complex questions throughout the session. Chris' messages were:



- **Feel** called to lead because everyone is a leader
- **Serve** a purpose that is greater than yourself
- **Treat** others with dignity
- **View** service as leadership
- **Reflect** daily



L-R: Bishop Paul Bird, Chris Lowney, Tony Fitzgerald and Maureen Waddington

At the end of Chris's presentation, Denis Fitzgerald, outgoing Executive Director of Catholic Social Services Victoria, was farewelled. Denis was thanked and acknowledged for his contribution to the Catholic social services community.

As a community we thank all those involved for organising this valuable event.

*Rachel Smith
Ballarat Diocesan Social Justice Commission Executive Member/
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