



McAuley Community
Services for Women
a ministry of the Sisters of Mercy

Making lives better...

Annual Report 2010/2011

Crisis Accommodation

Supported Accommodation

Long-term Accommodation

Respite Accommodation

Case Management

Social Support and Recreation

Health and Nutrition

Employment Education & Training

Peer Support

Early Intervention

Primary Prevention

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Annual Report.

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Message from the Chair and CEO

Twelve Rewarding Months

In working with women and their children affected by homelessness, mental illness and family violence, McAuley Community Services for Women provides accommodation and support services catering for a range of needs, from immediate crisis accommodation to ongoing support and holistic care, through to early intervention programs.

It is a challenging task for our organisation to attempt to affect change in each of these areas. Yet it is with courage, vision and determination reminiscent of our founder, Catherine McAuley, that the Sisters of Mercy Melbourne Congregation, the Board, the Special Events Committee and the staff and volunteers consistently rise to meet that challenge.

We are continually refining and expanding our programs in order to secure better outcomes for the women and children with whom we work. Our future aspirations include: doubling housing options for women over the next five years, and developing a primary education program within workplaces aimed at preventing homelessness and further instances of violence to women.

Immediate Need: Over 600 women and children were supported throughout the year at the family violence crisis service (Mercy Care). The average stay for women and their children has lengthened to four days, however the occupancy rate has remained the same, with over 2,000 bed nights being provided.

This situation reflects the complexities surrounding women on visas. Firstly, they are ineligible for most forms of assistance beyond that provided by crisis services. Secondly, there is a lack of safe housing alternatives available to women who need to relocate.

Ongoing Support: Last year the women's homelessness program (Regina Coeli) accommodated and supported nearly 70 women. This highly successful program utilises a service delivery model that focuses on returning women to good health and encouraging them to develop skills and confidence.

An important element of our work is the support offered to women who have moved from the program into long-term housing. This ongoing support assists women to maintain good health and secure housing, and increase their social connections.

Throughout the year, 30 women from Regina Coeli were connected to McAuley Works, our Women's Employment Program. Overwhelming positive feedback was received from the participants and staff reported women were experiencing an increase in confidence after securing a job.

Early Intervention: The continuing innovation and development of the Children's Program has been a highlight of the year. Mercy Care consistently accommodates more children than women, the majority of those being infants and toddlers (which is reflective of the national data on family violence and the number of women and children seeking assistance and homeless support).

Thank you
to the women
and their
children for their
inspirational
strength and
bravery.



“You’ve made it possible for me to think without prejudice or pressure”

Rebecca, 34.

Our Board

- Sr Anne Ryan rsm
- David Stephenson
- Denis Moriarty,
Chair
- Jeanine Froomes
- Kim Windsor
- Netty Horton
- Sr Nicole Rotaru
rsm
- Paul Robinson
- Polly Caldwell

The program recognises children as clients in their own right. It provides a range of opportunities for children to play, for mothers and their children to rebuild a healthy relationship and for women to learn about the impacts of family violence on their children. The overall aim is to heal the damage done to the mother/child relationship through the experience of violence.

New Programs: 2010/2011 saw the introduction of two new programs, developed in response to client needs:

- McAuleyWorks - a women’s employment program, based on voluntary participation, which has supported 60 women in its first year of operation, with 30 of those women finding employment which suited their skills and capabilities.
- McAuleyPathways - a fledgling program supporting four families to-date, funded through The William Buckland Foundation. This program aims to create sustainable pathways out of homelessness using a holistic outreach support model that is tailored to the women’s individual needs. Integral to this program has been the support of the Sisters of Mercy, who have provided a three-unit property to accommodate women and children.

Community Support: Securing ongoing funding for our programs beyond their establishment phase is a challenge many organisations face.

We are extremely grateful for the wonderful support we receive from the community including individuals, corporates, small businesses, schools, community groups and especially philanthropic trusts and foundations. It would be impossible to assist so many women and children without your generous contributions – thank you.

We would also like to take this opportunity to extend our thanks to the staff and volunteers who work so hard for the benefit of women and their children. To the Sisters of Mercy and the Board, who envisage and strive to create a better future, a very big thank you. Sincere thanks also to our partnering agencies - who are dedicated to continuously improving our service delivery – and all levels of government for their ongoing support.

The upcoming year is going to present some of our biggest challenges to date as we face the rebuilding of our major property to accommodate women who are at risk of homelessness – we will need money, wisdom, support and hard work. We seek your continued help and generosity.

Thank you for helping the women and children of Victoria who need your support. And thank you to the amazing Sisters of Mercy Melbourne Congregation for having the wisdom to establish McAuley Community Services for Women, and for entrusting us with carrying out their quest for a fair and just world. It is a foundation we cherish and aspire to.

Denis Moriarty
Chair

Jocelyn Bignold
Chief Executive Officer



Our History

Mission

McAuley Community Services for Women is a ministry of the Sisters of Mercy Melbourne Congregation, impelled by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and enriched by the spirituality of Catherine McAuley, the founder of the Sisters of Mercy. Our mission is to provide accommodation, services, advocacy and support for homeless women and women with accompanying children who experience family violence.

Vision

Through our service McAuley Community Services for Women is committed to advocate for a better, safe and just society.

Values

McAuley Community Services for Women is committed to Hospitality, Compassion, Justice and Community. In our daily encounters we offer women the opportunity for empowerment in their lives.

180 Years in the Making

Today, McAuley Community Services for Women is an ideal representation of the commitment that Catherine McAuley had over 180 years ago when she opened the 'House of Mercy' to house homeless women and their children. The house was located in Dublin, Ireland, on the boundary between where those who were rich and poor lived. Catherine also founded the Sisters of Mercy at that time to help address poverty and especially its impact on women and children in 19th century Ireland.

Over the years, the ministry of the Sisters of Mercy has been expanded and adapted to respond to social needs appropriate to the 21st century. And as such, the Sisters of Mercy Melbourne Congregation formed McAuley Community Services for Women in 2008 to expand their commitment to women and children.

McAuley Community Services for Women builds on the work of two existing Mercy programs - Mercy Care and Regina Coeli. The Sisters' mission in forming McAuley Community Services for Women was to provide greater capacity for service development, while strengthening leverage to attract support, increase public profile and enhance advocacy.

Many of the issues that Catherine faced in the 1800s are still confronting women today. Catherine reported on her bitter experiences trying to find shelter for abused servant girls. McAuley Community Services for Women is building a future from the founding spirit of Catherine McAuley.

Many of the issues that Catherine McAuley faced in the 1800s are still confronting women today.

Our Organisation



The Challenges

Family Violence

Family violence is harmful behaviour that occurs when someone threatens or controls a family member through fear. It can include physical harm, sexual assault, emotional and economic abuse and may also involve:

- *unreasonably controlling a person by withholding money for reasonable living expenses where a person is dependent on them for financial support*
- *threatening to harm another family member or pet in order to intimidate*
- *racist taunts that inflict emotional harm*
- *preventing contact with other family members or friends in order to torment the person*
- *behaviour that causes a child to experience any of the elements of family violence above.*

Family violence is the leading contributor of death, disability and illness in women aged 15-44 years. In Australia, one in four children are subjected to or witness family violence.

Homelessness

Homelessness is primarily due to a lack of affordable, safe, available housing with major contributing factors including family violence or breakdown. Female-headed households have an increased risk of homelessness as a result of greater exposure to violence, poverty and inequality. In addition, women with children experiencing homelessness require specific support services to cater for their particular needs.

Mental Illness

A mental illness is a health problem that significantly affects how a person feels, thinks, behaves and interacts with other people. Confronting the negative attitudes of people towards mental illness is one of the biggest obstacles for people recovering from mental illness. This often means that people with mental illness face isolation and discrimination. Mental illness is a contributing factor to homelessness.

The link between family violence, mental illness and homelessness is significant. One in three women who stay at our crisis accommodation are experiencing mental health issues.

Our Programs

McAuley Community Services for Women is a dynamic organisation that is constantly expanding and refining its programs to more effectively meet the needs of the women and children we work with.

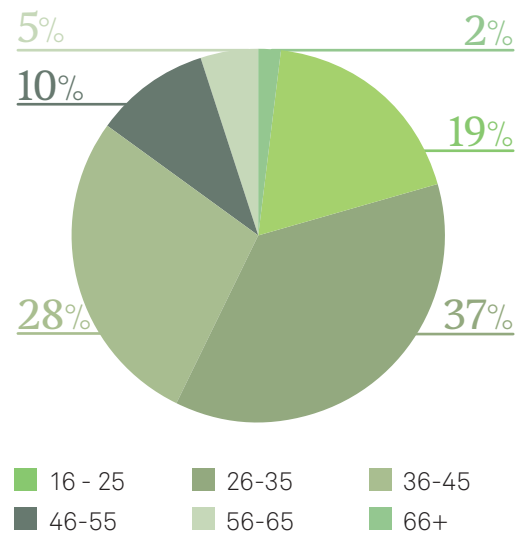
It is important to demonstrate effectiveness in each of the program areas to secure future funding. A critical component of each new program is the development of an evidence-base that underpins the evaluation process. Feedback mechanisms from clients are an important source of information that are included in our performance measures and contribute to our program evaluations.

We currently offer five programs:

- *Family Violence Crisis Accommodation*
- *Children's Program*
- *Women's Homelessness Program*
- *McAuley Works Women's Employment Program*
- *McAuley Pathways.*

Women we assisted, by age

In 2010/2011 we assisted 350 women, most of whom were aged 26 – 35 years. While most clients were aged 26 – 35, the data shows we helped clients of all ages.



16 - 25 26-35 36-45
46-55 56-65 66+

Family Violence Crisis Accommodation

Mercy Care is a family violence crisis accommodation and support service, one of only two in Victoria that operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for women and their children.

In a safe, non-judgmental environment women are provided with shelter, food, clothing and toiletries as well as information and assistance to access services.

Making decisions about where to go after staying at our crisis accommodation is a daunting and overwhelming task for all the women. Our case workers have undertaken specialised training to help women assess the level of risk associated with options available to them.

In 2010/2011 the average stay at Mercy Care was four nights (an increase from three nights in 2009/2010). The increased length of stay is due to limited transitional housing options available for women and their children.

Furthermore, 25% of clients were heading into unsustainable situations after leaving Mercy Care, which also reflects the lack of safe housing options available to women. To counteract this development, McAuley Community Services for Women advocates for public policy changes to increase the number of affordable housing options available.

McAuley Community Services for Women is one of five agencies working within the Western Integrated Family Violence Partnership. Partnering provides seamless responses to women experiencing family violence in the western metropolitan region. On weekends, the partnering agencies take turns to respond to police reports of family violence incidents that are faxed to the program office. Women involved in these incidents are then contacted and offered support.

Children's Program

Our Children's Program is the only one of its kind in Victoria.

Working with women and their children accommodated at Mercy Care, the innovative program recognises children as clients and aims to identify the impact that family violence has on them.

Its early intervention strategy actively addresses the mother-child relationship that is damaged through the experience of family violence.

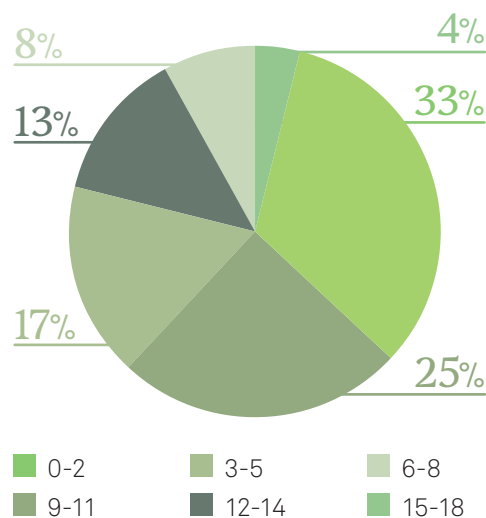
This year 61% of women accommodated at Mercy Care had accompanying children which was consistent with the previous year's figures. Half of the children were under the age of five years and one third were primary school aged.

Our children's workers help give voice to the anxiety children feel, and provide enormous psychological relief to overwhelmed children and mothers. The program also assists mothers in understanding and acknowledging such impacts on their children and provides support to build on family strengths, address risk factors and promote safety.

Women coming into crisis accommodation are highly stressed and often terrified. So are their children. A Children and Families Outreach Worker was appointed this year to help continue this dialogue and provide ongoing support to children who have left Mercy Care.

Children's Program

In 2010/2011 one-third of the children at the Mercy Care crisis accommodation were under two years of age.



Highlights – Mercy Care & Children's Program

In 2010/2011 Mercy Care accommodated 619 women and children fleeing family violence.

The total number of bed nights for the year was 2104.

Over half the clients at Mercy Care are children.

Highlights – Women’s Homelessness Program

70 women were assisted through the Regina Coeli program last year.

20 women moved into independent housing.

30 women participated in a do-it-yourself household maintenance workshop run by Bunnings.

Highlights – Women’s Employment Program

60 women were connected with the program.

30 women were placed in employment and 30 are continuing their journey towards employment.

Women’s Homelessness Program

Regina Coeli creates a community with both current and past residents, fostering a sense of belonging that remains long after they have left residential care.

Regina Coeli is an accommodation and support service providing medium term, supportive, transitional accommodation to women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and are often affected by mental illness or family violence issues. The unique residential setting offers women a safe community in which to live, that promotes respect and values the dignity and worth of each person.

This program empowers women to regain good health and well-being through intensive and individualised case management support. It responds to women’s individual needs across the full spectrum of their life, building on their resilience and strengths.

Our case workers continually encourage and support women to enhance their community connections and foster meaningful relationships with people. After years of hardship and struggling to survive, many women become socially withdrawn and isolated. Developing social and family relationships are central components to their recovery and continued good health.

Homelessness is marked by the lack of access to things that most people take for granted. The recreation program at Regina Coeli organises outings and social activities that are very popular with all the women. Participating in these activities improves self esteem, confidence, promotes a positive outlook on life and provides an avenue for making friends.

Regina Coeli continues to support women towards achieving independent living. The program relies upon access to housing and we are grateful for the use of the property allocated through the Sisters of Mercy. For this purpose we have also been developing our outreach case management model, McAuley Pathways to meet the growing demand in this area.

McAuleyWorks Women’s Employment Program

McAuleyWorks Women’s Employment Program is designed to assist women into the workforce who have experienced family violence, homelessness or mental health issues.

Access to employment options is an important step in regaining a sense of dignity and confidence, and can play a major role in a woman’s ability to achieve economic independence.

Women recovering from these circumstances can often be unsure how to regain control of their lives and provide a safe, positive environment for themselves and their families. The program specifically addresses the unique needs and barriers that woman who are affected by family violence, mental health issues or homelessness, have in finding employment.

Many of the women participating in this program have been residents at Regina Coeli. Referrals are also received from our partners, particularly those within the family violence sector.

McAuley Pathways

McAuley Pathways is funded by The William Buckland Foundation and was established in late 2010.

The program was developed to respond to the growing needs of women and their children, and to provide long-term, specialised outreach support.

The first phase of McAuley Pathways has focussed on providing a children’s worker to offer tailored, practical and holistic outreach support to women and their children after they have left Mercy Care. Going forward, McAuley Pathways will link the existing programs and undertake an evaluation to ensure we are meeting the needs of our clients effectively.

Investing in Staff

*“Bruises heal but my
kids will take a longer
time with counselling.
I pray in time they will”*

Kate, 29.

Investing in Staff

McAuley Community Services for Women continues to build staff competencies through encouraging collaboration with other service providers for training and professional development. With funding from the Victorian Women’s Trust, one Mercy Care staff member was placed within Elizabeth Hoffman House, an Aboriginal Women’s Refuge, to exchange skills and encourage ongoing partnership development. The Department of Health also funded a Regina Coeli staff member’s temporary placement at DasWest, a drug and alcohol service.

McAuley Community Services for Women is undergoing rapid growth and while programs are being expanded so to is the infrastructure that underpins the organisation. This year has seen a restructure of our finance section and the addition of dedicated communications and fundraising positions to maximise our capacity to take on the challenges ahead.

Thanks to our Staff

Without the hard work of the enthusiastic McAuley Community Services for Women team of social workers, program coordinators, cleaners, administration staff and volunteers our innovative organisation would not be where it is today. Their dedication, humour, compassion, values and ability to create change is inspiring.



Community Partnerships

This year McAuley Community Services for Women has strengthened and embarked on some important partnerships to improve service delivery to women and their children. Our partnerships are rich and varied and include other Mercy Ministries, volunteers, community organisations, business and government. We are particularly grateful to the following for their supportive partnerships.

Sisters of Mercy Melbourne Congregation

The Sisters of Mercy Melbourne Congregation has shown unfailing support for McAuley Community Services for Women. As an organisation building on the foundation of the Sisters of Mercy, we rely heavily on this continued partnership.

Special Events Committee

The commitment of this passionate group of volunteers is unrelenting and through their extraordinary efforts they raise significant funds for the Mercy Care Program. They donate their time, skills and energy to attracting supporters and increasing awareness of the issues surrounding family violence.

The Royal Children's Hospital

The development of a strong working partnership between The Royal Children's Hospital Integrated Mental Health Program (RCH MHP) and McAuley Community Services for Women has been extremely successful. Through this partnership, we continue to strengthen our understanding of the way that children experience family violence.

RCH MHP provides ongoing skill development to our specialist children's workers to ensure they are experts in their field.

Western Integrated Family Violence Partnership

In 2010, McAuley Community Services for Women was invited into the Western Integrated Family Violence Partnership. This partnership is funded through the Department of Human Services tasked with providing an integrated response to women in the western region. The partnership comprises five organisations that together developed the safe@home program and extended the faxback system to weekends.

Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service

Building on a 2006 report commissioned by the Sisters of Mercy and a 2009 report commissioned by Good Shepherd, McAuley Community Services for Women recently partnered with Good Shepherd Youth & Family Service to produce an enhanced model for supporting women and their children fleeing family violence.

Filling The Gap: Integrated Post Crisis Response for Women Who Have Experienced Family Violence makes recommendations to address a number of long-standing gaps in existing service provisions which make it harder for many women leaving situations of violence to rebuild their lives.

Financials

Profit and Loss Statement for the year ended 30 June 2011

	2011 \$	2010 \$
(Loss) Profit before income tax	43,728	106,697
Retained earnings at the beginning of the financial year	1,304,595	1,197,898
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year	1,348,323	1,304,595

Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2011

	Note	2011 \$	2010 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	2	1,935,902	1,475,392
Trade and other receivables	3	7,277	330
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		1,943,179	1,475,722
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Investments	4	1,836	1,836
Property, plant and equipment	6	148,519	157,617
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		150,355	159,453
TOTAL ASSETS		2,093,534	1,635,175
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	7	687,354	273,413
Provisions	8	57,857	57,167
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		745,211	330,580
TOTAL LIABILITIES		745,211	330,580
NET ASSETS		1,348,323	1,304,595
EQUITY			
Retained earnings	9	1,348,323	1,304,595
TOTAL EQUITY		1,348,323	1,304,595

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2011

	2011 \$	2010 \$
2 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		
Current		
Cash on Hand	1,857	1,767
Cash at Bank	14,355	53,415
Cash on Deposit	1,919,690	1,420,210
	1,935,902	1,475,392
3 TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES		
Current		
Trade Debtors	4,488	330
Prepaid Expenses	2,789	-
	7,277	330
4 INVESTMENTS		
Shares in listed companies	1,836	1,836
	1,836	1,836
6 PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
Land and Buildings		
Improvements	43,498	45,864
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	30,423	(28,117)
	13,075	17,747
Total Land and Buildings	13,075	17,747
Plant and Equipment	87,391	71,459
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	25,942	(18,864)
	61,449	52,595
Motor Vehicles	130,556	130,556
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(80,511)	(63,830)
	50,045	66,726
Computer	43,136	34,905
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(19,186)	(14,356)
	23,950	20,549
Total Plant and Equipment	135,444	139,870
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	148,519	157,617
7 TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES		
Current		
Trade & Other Payables	141,235	70,531
Income in Advance	523,018	182,000
GST Payable	23,101	20,882
	687,354	273,413
8 PROVISIONS		
Current		
Provision for Annual Leave	57,857	57,167
9 RETAINED EARNINGS		
Retained earnings at the beginning of the financial year	1,304,595	1,197,898
(Net loss) Net profit attributable to the association	43,728	106,697
Retained earnings at the end of the financial year	1,348,323	1,304,595

Profit and Loss Statement for the year ended 30 June 2011

	2011 \$	2010 \$
INCOME		
Fees for Board and Lodging	146,045	148,272
Gift and Donations Income	476,220	513,648
Grants	1,309,357	1,176,447
	1,931,622	1,838,367
OTHER INCOME		
Interest Received	95,156	56,394
Dividends Received	119	119
	95,275	56,513
	2,026,897	1,894,880

Profit and Loss Statement for the year ended 30 June 2011

	2011 \$	2010 \$
EXPENSES		
Audit Fees	3,500	3,000
Administration Costs	20,742	20,550
Advertising	10,978	5,529
Accreditation Fees	-	3,842
Bank Charges	1,880	2,118
Cleaning	5,335	5,949
Depreciation	30,895	30,794
Fundraising Expenses	65,129	58,106
General Expenses	11,350	5,207
Hire of Plant & Equipment	2,998	1,671
Household		22,911
Insurance	7,941	8,803
Living Costs	78,553	69,103
Medical	9,951	8,313
Motor Vehicle Expenses	9,603	9,340
Postage	2,842	3,389
Printing & Stationery	20,846	15,181
Professional Fees	24,208	54,187
Professional Development	14,994	2,406
Recreation Activities	8,701	11,888
Repairs	44,769	51,517
Stipend	28,631	22,923
Subscriptions	9,435	3,946
Superannuation Contributions	113,369	90,826
Telephone	71,253	73,213
Travelling & Entertainment	4,531	4,119
Utilities	36,550	34,887
Wages	1,306,785	1,131,522
Workcover	37,400	32,943
	1,983,169	1,788,183
(Loss) Profit before income tax	43,728	106,697

Report on the Financial Report

I have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report of the McAuley Community Services for Women, which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2011, the income statement and cash flow statement, a summary of significant accounting policies other explanatory notes and the declaration by the directors.

Directors' Responsibility for the Financial Report

The directors of the company are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, which form part of the financial report are appropriate to meet the requirements of the Corporations Act 2001 and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The directors' responsibilities also include establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on my audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1 are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that I comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement, of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal

control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the, reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the director's financial reporting under the Corporations Act 2001. I disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Independence

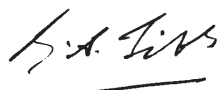
In conducting my audit, I have complied with the independence requirements of the Corporations Act 2001. I confirm that the independence declaration required by the Corporations Act 2001, provided to the directors McAuley Community Services for Women on 30 June 2011 would be in the same terms if provided to the directors as at the date of this auditor's report.

Auditor's Opinion

In my opinion, the financial report of the McAuley Community Services for Women is in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, including:

- i. giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2011 and of its performance for the year then ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1; and
- ii. complying with Accounting Standards in Australia and the Corporation Regulations 2001.

Yours faithfully,
A.A. GIBBS & COMPANY PTY LTD



BRYAN GIBBS
Registered company auditor
20 Cotter Street
RICHMOND VIC 3121

Dated this 29th day of October 2011



Catherine McAuley founded the Sisters of Mercy with determination to help women who were marginalised and 180 years later, we are still confronting significant social issues.

Family violence, mental illness and homelessness are indiscriminate – they affect people of all ages, from all socio-economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

McAuley Community Services for Women advocates for change.





McAuley Community
Services for Women
a ministry of the Sisters of Mercy

McAuley Community
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