

# CRAGC MONTHLY MEMO

MARCH 31, 2020

We're delighted to announce that the new CRA Governance Collaborative is up and running as of March 2, 2020.

You will recall that the CRAGC is the new entity that grew out of the CRA Emerging Futures Initiative One Committee. That committee was established by CRA to contribute to re-imagining the expression of the universal charism of religious life, focusing on the emerging issues for the living and governance of religious life as it is evolving in Australia.

The Emerging Futures committee reported to the 2018 and 2019 National Assemblies and held workshops -in September 2018, June and September 2019. A number of papers have been prepared and distributed.

In late 2019, the CRA Council resolved *to accept responsibility to undertake the role of Commissary for Religious Institutes moving towards completion. This is with the proviso that the Council would be appointed to this role by the relevant Ecclesial Authority on the request of the Religious Institute concerned.*

On February 27, 2020 CRA President Peter Carroll fms delivered to CICALSAL in Rome the *Submission from Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) to Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICALSAL) regarding the appointment of CRA Council to hold the canonical role of Commissary.* We had planned that Anne Lane pbvm, Monica Cavanagh rsj and Mary Wright ibvm would meet with CICALSAL in late April to progress our submission, but that will not be happening until the Covid-19 crisis has passed.

So, while we await the permission for CRA to act as commissary for religious institutes who request that service, we are forging ahead with co-designing the raft of services that do not require Vatican approval. In late January we met in Melbourne with five religious institutes who are seeking assistance as they move forward. All our future meetings will be on Zoom: we held one on March 25 and more planned for April. Judy Lawson is working with one other institute and CRAGC has brokered services for that institute.

The Covid-19 situation has put on hold many of our planned activities for the early part of this year. In September last year, we were asked to provide information events open to the members of religious institutes. We had planned such events in Perth and Adelaide and were considering dates for Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. Obviously until gatherings are once more allowed, information events will be on hold. We have resource documents that we are going to upload to the CRA website when the Members Only page becomes available.

The current travel bans are also affecting the first meeting of the CRAGC Transition Committee scheduled for April 8. We plan to meet in fourteen individual Zoom meetings across four states! We are very appreciative of the women and men who have accepted the invitation to join the Transition Committee and contribute their expertise and experience to our endeavours.

Committee Members	
Anne Lane pbvm	Chair (RI)
Bobby Court	Ordinary member
Catherine Brabender rndm	Ordinary member (RI)
Clare Nolan rsc	Ordinary member (RI) CRA Council
Des Powell	Ordinary member
Gabrielle McMullen	Ordinary member
Monica Cavanagh rsj	Deputy Chair (RI)
John Spillane	Ordinary member
John Thompson fms	Ordinary member (RI)
Gabrielle Morgan pbvm	Service user rep (RI)
Stancea Vichie mss	Service user rep (RI)
In attendance	
Sharon Price rsm	Transition Manager
Judith Lawson op	Charism animator
Peter Cranko	Organisation consultant

Another activity affected by the travel bans is the international networking that we hoped to continue face-to-face in August this year. Over the last two years, we have had significant contact with the Wisconsin Religious Collaborative (WRC), with Jayne Helmlinger csj, Carol Zinn csj and Mary Hughes op from the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), and with Pat Murray ibvm from UISG. The intention this year was to spend two days in Milwaukee with the board and staff of the WRC; to have a meeting in Dallas of the UISG, LCWR, CRC (Canadian Religious Conference) and CRAGC personnel; and individual meetings with Pat Murray ibvm, Carol Zinn csj, Alain Ambeault csv and Amy Hereford csj -RCRI (Resource Center for Religious Institutes) canon lawyer. We'll be continuing to meet on Zoom and Skype for 2020!

Archbishop Mark Coleridge, President of the ACBC, has been very generous in his support of the CRAGC. Archbishop Mark provided a letter to accompany the CICALSAL Submission, vowing support from the ACBC for the initiative. On March 18, Anne Lane was invited to attend the Permanent Committee meeting of the ACBC, to brief the archbishops and seek their advice. That meeting was extremely encouraging, with all the archbishops in support of the initiative and suggesting ways to inform all the Australian bishops of the role of the Governance Collaborative for religious institutes coming to completion. In fact, while CRAGC was set up for CRA members, the archbishops asked if institutes that were not members would also have access to the services -and, of course, Anne agreed that all were welcome to apply for assistance. CRAGC has now provided the paper prepared for the Permanent Committee meeting to be distributed to all Australian bishops and the Governance Collaborative will be an agenda item at the next ACBC meeting.

Yesterday, Monica Cavanagh rsj and I made the first report of the CRAGC to the CRA Council. We spoke to a written report that we had provided two weeks prior. We gave some further information about the Zoom meetings that we have been able to hold with religious institutes in transition, about the plans we have to work with the CRA Council to further explore the role of the Commissary as it may evolve for CRA and about the effect of Covid-19 on chapters planned for 2020.

Last year we sought contributions from you to fund the start up of CRAGC. We surmised that it would cost \$1.2 million to operate for the first two years. CRAGC has received contributions of \$865,000.00 and we invite any religious institute still considering a contribution to make that at any time. The Governance Collaborative has a dedicated account within the CRA accounts: BSB 062-784, Acc Number 6395202, Name: CRA Govern. Collaborative. Forty-eight institutes expressed interest at various levels, from being kept informed about the Governance Collaborative to being first users of services. As we begin to work with individual religious institutes, that work will be on a user pays basis.

The CRAGC office is at Strathfield -Suite 4F, 9 Redmyre Rd- thanks to the generosity of the Presentation Sisters, Wagga Wagga. We do not have a landline, but Judy and I both have mobile numbers and email addresses. Judy's number is 0417 272 030 and her email is [judith.lawson@cragc.org.au](mailto:judith.lawson@cragc.org.au) and my contacts are 0429 070 561 and [sharon.price@cragc.org.au](mailto:sharon.price@cragc.org.au) Judy has a two day a week position for CRAGC and my position is three days per week. We are both flexible when it comes to which days so that we can offer the best service to those who wish to use CRAGC. We continue to work with our contractors: Peter Cranko as our facilitator, with Greg Costello for IT and finance and with Ann Paynter for events registrations, whenever we are able to hold them!

We invite you to be in contact with us for any queries about this first newsletter and we will send a newsletter to you once a month. On the following page I have included a table that summarises the services that CRAGC is beginning to offer and we would be pleased to hear from you with any questions about the services.

Sharon Price rsm, Transition Manager CRAGC

CRAGC shared services on offer will include, but not be limited to:

Service stream	Including but not limited to the following
Care and support for RI members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care coordination, pastoral care, accommodation and living arrangements, individual companionship and advocacy</li> <li>• Funeral arrangements</li> </ul>
RI admin, finance and operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Archives</li> <li>• Compliance</li> <li>• Finance, investments and property</li> <li>• Safeguarding and professional standards</li> <li>• Redress</li> <li>• Upkeep of graves</li> </ul>
Ministry support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage resources for mission</li> <li>• Support RI members in individual ministry</li> <li>• Trustee for incorporated works / PJPs</li> </ul>
Transition support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assisting RI transition planning including: canonical, spiritual, human, operational, administrative and legal dimensions</li> <li>• Assistance with preparation of key transition documents e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Distribution Plan</li> <li>– Recommendation to Ecclesial Authority (regarding appointment of Commissary)</li> <li>– MoU with Governance Collaborative</li> <li>– Phased in transition process</li> </ul> </li> </ul>