

# Famous for Listening

Hugh MacKay challenges over 80 faith leaders from across Australia to imagine **“Marist schools becoming famous for the culture of listening”**.

Hugh MacKay, author of the ‘Kindness Revolution’ addressed Marist Directors of Mission and Religious Education Coordinators in an online colloquium on 21 March and was joined by keynote speakers Dr Catherine Keenan and Isaiah Dawe.

Participants reflected on the theme ‘Known and Loved – Dignity for All’ and its implications for forming young people, creating spaces for their voice to be heard, and building inclusive communities where people are known and loved.

With his 60-year career in social research, Hugh contextualised what it means to be ‘Known and Loved’ and have ‘Dignity for all’ against the wider sociological, political, and demographic signs of our times. He made the point that in our current climate of interconnectedness “kindness is in our power, even when fondness is not” (Samuel Johnson). Hugh went on to say:

*I think there is a universal dream of a better society. It’s the dream of a kinder, more compassionate, more cooperative, more respectful, more inclusive, more egalitarian, more harmonious, less violent, less cynical society. Do you dream of that kind of society*

***What about Marist schools becoming a catalyst for this? What about Marist schools becoming known as loving schools? What about Marist schools becoming famous for the culture of listening that’s fostered in your school communities?***

*That your community become known as places where students learn how to build a harmonious society through the experience of living in a harmonious school community.*

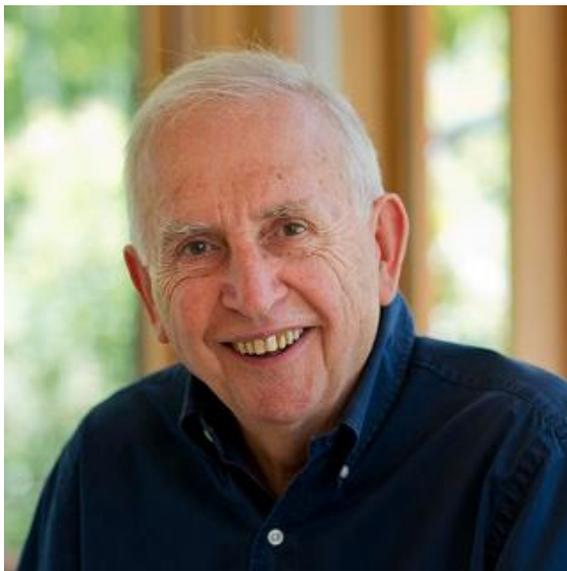
***Wouldn’t it be wonderful if people saw loving kindness as the hallmark of a Marist education.***

Dr Catherine Keenan, co-founder and executive director of the Sydney Story Factory, asked the Marist educators what they can do to encourage their students to have an amplified voice and agency through writing?

Isaiah Dawe, CEO of the Sydney-based not-for-profit called *ID. Know Yourself*, spoke of turning his negative experience of foster care into the motivation for founding the first Aboriginal mentoring organisation to support Aboriginal youth in out of home care.

The program also included opportunities for collaborative workshops, an exploration of Guiding Principles of Marist Faith Formation and how these can be animated in faith communities.

Hugh finished with a powerful question, **“ask yourself, at the end of the day, has kindness been at the core of my encounters?”**



Hugh MacKay, author of the ‘Kindness Revolution: How we can restore hope, rebuild trust and inspire optimism’



Dr Catherine Keenan, Sydney Story Factory



Isaiah Dawe, ID. Know Yourself



St Gregory's College Campbelltown, Acknowledgement of Country  
Known and Loved – Dignity for All