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Catholic Women gather for conference to mark 10 years since launch of ‘Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus’

Catholic women from across Australia will gather for a landmark conference in Canberra this week to mark 10 years since the launch of ‘Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus’, the Report into the Participation of Women in the Catholic Church in Australia.

A highlight of the conference, hosted by the ACBC’s Council for Australian Catholic Women, will be a Photographic Exhibition of influential and inspirational Australian Catholic Women. Each diocese was invited to nominate two women for inclusion in the exhibition.

Director of the Office for the Participation of Women, Kimberly Davis said it was hoped the exhibition would encourage the celebration of all women who contribute to the life and mission of the Church in Australia.

“The Church in Australia is richly blessed by talented, gifted women who seek out a voice and place in the life of the Church,” she said. “This exhibition highlights a small sample of the expertise, knowledge and wisdom available to the Church in Australia.”

Kimberly said the conference, under the theme of “Women: Gathering, Affirming, Celebrating” aimed to celebrate the gifts and ongoing participation of the women in the Church.

“It also aims to critically reflect on what has been achieved and what is yet to be realized following the publication of the report ‘Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus’, and to affirm, re-energise and offer well-springs to participants – from scripture, contemporary life and their own inner spirit,” she said.

Speakers will include Sonia Wagner sgs who was a member of the research and planning group for the ACBC and then a member of the Commission for Australian Catholic Women which resulted from that research.

Other sessions will include Dr Mary Coloe pvbm on ‘Women in Scripture’, the Rev Dr Sarah Bachelard on ‘Accepting the Gift of our Creation: Practising Christian Meditation; and Dr Nereda White on ‘Indigenous Women in Leadership’, Kerry Bush on ‘Real Women’, and Carmel Ross on ‘Dealing with Trauma and Recovery’.

The dinner speaker will be broadcaster Rebecca Gorman and the conference will also feature sessions highlighting what’s been happening in dioceses in relation to the participation of women and consideration of the question, ‘Where to from here?’.

Delegates will also be welcomed to Government House for morning tea with the Governor-General, Ms Quentin Bryce.

For more information contact Kimberly Davis at the OPW on 02 6201 9867.