

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020**

### **Opportunity for Australian Catholic Women in a Time of Uncertainty**

Women and the Australian Church (WATAC) will launch a series of challenging online conversations in June. Each conversation will involve women leaders who will address issues in social justice, theology, biblical studies, spirituality, church reform and feminism.

The first session, **Women and the Plenary Council** will take place on **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020** at 6pm (AEST: Sydney), 5:30pm (ACST Adelaide/ Darwin) and 4pm (AWST Perth).

In this session, Clare Condon, former provincial of the Good Samaritan Sisters, and Debra Zanella, Chief Executive Officer of Ruah Community Services, will discuss aspirations for the Plenary Council and how the voices of women and other marginalised groups can be included.

In 2013, Clare Condon was awarded the Australian Human Rights Commission Medal for her ability to make a difference through the congregation's commitment to Women and Children and Refugees. She is an educator with an abiding commitment to social justice in Church and Society.

Debra Zanella's previous leadership experience includes senior roles in specialised Drug and Alcohol Services, Catholic Hospital Executive Management and other related health and community services. With 20 years' experience in the community sector, Debra is a strong advocate for vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

With COVID-19 causing uncertainty in the economy, society and in our faith lives, WATAC President, Andrea Dean, said, "This is an opportunity for women to connect across the nation and to discuss issues that matter. We can make these conversations, which we call 'WATAC Presents', freely available using technology."

Speakers have also been arranged for Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> August and 13<sup>th</sup> October. Register on the WATAC site: <https://watac.net.au/>

Details on accessing the online Zoom session will be emailed. Those without internet access can join the session by telephone.

Established in 1984, Women and the Australian Church (WATAC) is an incorporated organisation committed to a Church characterised by equality. For more information please contact Andrea Dean [chair@watac.net.au](mailto:chair@watac.net.au); <https://watac.net.au/>