

ACU confers its highest honour on HIV/AIDS care pioneer

Australian Catholic University (ACU) will confer its highest honour, Doctor of the University (*Honoris Causa*), on Sister Angela Mary Doyle rsm AO at a ceremony in Brisbane on Friday.

The University's Chancellor The Hon. John Fahey AC will bestow the award on Sister Angela in recognition of her pioneering work establishing care for people suffering from HIV/AIDS and for her unwavering commitment, even in retirement, to the mission of the Mater Hospital in Brisbane and to Catholic healthcare as a whole.

Sister Angela will deliver the occasional address to graduating ACU nursing and healthcare students. In a speech sprinkled with wisdom, advice, and a healthy dose of humour, she will talk about the core values of truth, academic excellence and service.

Despite the fear and uncertainty that shrouded the relatively unknown virus in the 1980s, Sister Angela demonstrated great pastoral care and compassion by stepping in to work with the Queensland AIDS Council to personally care for individuals suffering from the disease. Of that period, she says: "As a Sister of Mercy, I couldn't stay silent." Her interactions with patients led to friendships and spoke volumes to her caring nature.

That characteristic determination to fight for others is an ongoing trait throughout Sister Angela's distinguished career which is highlighted by honours including Queenslander of the Year in 1989 and the Australian Achiever Award from the Prime Minister in 1990.

The Taiwanese Minister of Foreign Affairs presented Sister Angela with the Friend of Foreign Service Medal in 2017 for her notable commitment to the Taiwanese community in Australia. Though her language skills were rusty, she accepted the award in Mandarin. Sister Angela had learned Mandarin at TAFE so she could better help Taiwanese families navigate the healthcare system and to advocate for them.

An administrator at the Mater Hospital for 22 years, Sister Angela also served as the Senior Director of Health Services for the Mater Complex until 1993. She undertook the role of Executive Director of the Mater Hospitals' Trust until 1997 and was a Board Member until 2003. The Queensland Business Leaders Hall of Fame inducted her as a member in 2009.

Beyond her significant contributions to the Mater Hospital, Sister Angela has demonstrated her commitment to serving the common good for decades. In addition to fostering relationships with the Taiwanese community in Brisbane, she has contributed to the Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu-Chi Foundation and taken an ongoing interest in advocating for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's health and welfare.

A perpetual student, Sister Angela says: "My life has been one of constant learning."

Exemplifying the tradition of the healing ministry of the Church, Sister Angela's lifelong devotion to service and learning through faith has made a tangible impact on countless lives near and far.

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***Photographs available after the ceremony**