

Veteran journalist Geraldine Doogue receives Honorary Doctorate from ACU

Respected Australian journalist Geraldine Doogue has been awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Australian Catholic University (ACU).

Doogue, whose journalism career in print, television, and radio has spanned more than four decades, was conferred a Doctor of the University (Honoris Causa) in Sydney on October 17.

The honorary award recognises Doogue's contribution to initiatives in association with the Church and promoting religious tolerance, as well as her contributions to the well-being of the nation through her work as a journalist and generating conversations about the faiths by which people lead their lives.

"I am thrilled because I've got a great soft spot for ACU and have watched it grow and develop as a national university through my entire journalism career," Doogue said.

After taking up a cadetship at The West Australian newspaper in Perth, Doogue worked as an international correspondent for News Limited before returning to Australia to launch a career in broadcast journalism. She was the face of influential programs such as *Nationwide* and *Eyewitness News*.

After establishing herself as a serious journalist with formidable training in reporting hard news stories, Doogue's Catholic faith and curiosity launched her into content that went beyond the headlines. This included her work as the first presenter of ABC Radio National's *Life Matters* program, nearly two decades of hosting *ABC Compass*, and conversations with Church leaders on her podcast, *Plenary Matters*.

"I'm a searcher myself and a lot of the quick-grab news, which I can do and I've been trained to do, never fully satisfied me," Doogue said.

"In my career, there has been a pattern of looking for material that doesn't necessarily hit the predictable headlines day after day, but which is very important to Australians' sense of themselves.

"My proudest journalistic achievement is getting a program on air like *Life Matters* which focused on the society, on the culture, and the things that didn't make the headlines.

"And with *Compass*, we tried to give new life to the idea that people's search, however they describe it, is exceptionally important in their lives and is often completely under-rated and overlooked.

"The search is very, very important and Australia is in a curious place. I still don't think there's nearly enough coverage of what animates people deep down."

Following her conferral of a Doctor of the University, Doogue gave an Occasional Address to hundreds of ACU graduates, encouraging them to find their own voice in the course of their careers.

"You've got to be quite dogged, but also strategic because you're often not allowed to find your own voice. You'll have to find it against people's desire," Doogue said.

"Do not be a perfectionist, do not let the best be the enemy of the good. The older I get, the more I believe in that."

ACU Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Zlatko Skrbis congratulated Geraldine Doogue on receiving the university's highest honour

"Geraldine Doogue is an inspiring journalist and media figure, who exemplifies the mission of the Australian Catholic University, in her unwavering commitment to the pursuit of knowledge, the dignity of the human person, and the common good," Professor Skrbis said.

"Not satisfied with the increasing click-bait culture, Geraldine has always strived to delve deeper into the humanity of a news story, reflecting her passion for meaningful storytelling and fostering understanding among her audience.

"ACU is proud to honour Geraldine Doogue as a Doctor of the University."

Australian Catholic University has specialists who can comment on news matters relating to their area of expertise. Please direct requests to ACU's [Media Team](https://www.acu.edu.au/media-enquiries) at [acu.edu.au/media-enquiries](https://www.acu.edu.au/media-enquiries).

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ACU's highest honour was also bestowed on Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) founder Natalie Mary Paton AM earlier on October 17. It is Mrs Paton's first honorary doctorate from an Australian university.

Addressing ACU health graduates, Mrs Paton said it had been 70 years since she graduated as an Occupational Therapist. Her journey since then was marked by her work with the Nursing Mothers' Association, now ABA.

"It was an enormous challenge, no money, no office or equipment, just three books and the acquired knowledge of six mums," Mrs Paton said.

"It is possible for one person to make a difference not necessarily building an organization but as you graduates enter your profession and career, your journey can be full of satisfaction and pleasure as you treat and support your patients."

Official photos of Geraldine Doogue and Mary Paton's honorary doctorate conferrals are available on request.

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