Sunday night 14 April, 2002 OPENING ADDRESS
at Sydney Convention Centre,
Darling Harbour at 5:30pm

THANK YOU SPEECH BY SUSAN SCANLAN after the speech from Lucy Turnbull, Sydney City Councillor.

Thank you, Lucy, for your inspiring and insightful address. We look forward to our Congress visitors discovering the City of Sydney and its invigorating spirit which you so successfully promoted for the Olympic Games 2000. Please accept this small gesture of our appreciation for your contribution tonight. Ladies and Gentlemen may I have your attention please.

Distinguished Guests, Fellow Alumnae and Friends,

Welcome, Bienvenue, Bienvenidas

For the next week, Religious of the Sacred Heart, Sacred Heart Alumnae and friends will gather to examine Matters of the Heart - the theme of reconciliation on a personal and international level.

This Congress is part of the journey undertaken by women and men educated by the Religious of the Sacred Heart around the world. The Society promotes social awareness and responsibility in its goals. The theme for this week will examine matters of peace, justice and reconciliation.

In this context we recognise the fundamentals importance of human life, dignity and opportunities. True peace involves more than the mere absence of war. this is surely more evident after September 11 and the growing global conflict that we observe daily.

In our beautiful and safe Australia, we acknowledge a greater individual responsibility to reflect and be active in the cause of reconciliation and peace.

This Congress present a unique opportunity for the Sacred Heart family to exercise its unlimited potential to touch the lives of others with the Spirit of Reconciliation and Tolerance.

Sir William Deane, former Governor General of Australia, delivering the Sydney Peace Prize Lecture at the University of Sydney in 2001, said:

"It is essential, in the interests of true peace and justice, that we always remain conscious of the importance,- the preciousness - of the life and dignity of each innocent victim and violence and injustice, particularly each child".

During this week, we will share and explore the journey of our education and the unfolding of our personal stories. We will examine the role of women and men making a

difference; we will discuss reconciliation through generosity and tolerance, especially in relation to global issues. A further emphasis will be placed on worldwide reconciliation with indigenous people in both the Australian and International context.

We will share a day of reflection guided by the theme "Many hearts beating as one".

The Congress will then close with a farewell liturgy to encourage us to find the heart to continue the journey.

We will take this journey, in the words of Sister Clare Pratt, as individuals sharing an openness of spirit in a common search for justice and peace.

On behalf of AMASC, World President, Trish Burns, Congress Convener, Vickie Greig and the Australian Sacre Coeur Association, I thank you for taking this journey with us and I wish all of you a rewarding and memorable week.