



2010 AWARDS

PERKINS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE INDIVIDUAL

CANBERRA

MONDAY 8 FEBRUARY

Presented by

PROFESSOR JOHN WARHURST

DEPUTY BOARD CHAIR, CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES AUSTRALIA

**Check against delivery

PERKINS AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE – INDIVIDUAL

This award is presented to an individual who has shown outstanding commitment to service. The award is open to people from our agencies and also to people in the wider community.

The award is presented in honour of Bishop Eric Perkins, who spent his life committed to the Church's outreach to the poor and was the first Victorian priest to qualify as a social worker.

He was ordained a priest in 1940 and in partnership with Monsignor JF McCosker he had a major impact on national Catholic social policy, through peak bodies such as the National Catholic Welfare Committee and its successor the Australian Catholic Social Welfare Commission.

Highly Commended: Fr Leo Donnelly, Parish Priest Port Macquarie

Leo Donnelly was nine years old when he got the idea of becoming a priest and never lost that desire.

Since then he has spent the past 56 years dedicated to the community of Port Macquarie Lismore.

He entered the seminary at 15 and spent nine years studying, including four years in Rome. He was ordained at 24 years and was appointed to Port Macquarie in 1951 for three years. After 13 years as bishop secretary diocesan chancellor in Lismore, he returned to Port Macquarie where he has been an innovator in education and aged care in the community.

He lists starting the vocational education school in Port Macquarie as the highlight of his career.

Port Macquarie has for some time now been described as a LIGHTHOUSE Parish - testament to his vision and leadership.

He is proud of the parish education system which now boasts three primary schools and four secondary school campuses with around 3,000 students.

St Agnes Aged Care has more than 600 residents and a new 112 bed high care facility at Emmaus was started late last year.

Centacare provides a comprehensive range of services from financial counselling and Aboriginal Intensive Family Support Services to Community and Outreach services.

And in recent years the Parish's missionary endeavours help less fortunate near-neighbour dioceses in PNG, the Solomon Islands and the Kimberleys.

These many essential responses to community have come about because of Fr Donnelly's commitment to his faith and his community.

During his life he has discovered faith, questioned faith and made a lifetime commitment to his faith.

In his own words, it's been a good life, not particularly easy, but a good life.

It is indeed a pleasure to present this award to you tonight Fr Leo.

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