

I love a party. And we sure had one for BCA in Melbourne. What a privilege and pleasure to speak at BCA's 90th Anniversary Celebration. What joy filled our hearts! Oh, the delight in hearing of God's love spread throughout Australia by men and women and boys and girls committed to Christ and his work, "Australia for Christ".

During the afternoon Brian Roberts with Ernest and Ida Horth began to compile a list of BCA missionaries who had served in Tasmania, including themselves! We could trace back to the 1850's when the Society appointed a missionary to the wharf workers at the Hobart docks. More recently in Tasmania we have initiated a new mission project: 'The Imagine Project'. This initiative develops its 'imagining' of new strategic approaches to mission from the "New Bush" concept. This strategic mission approach has been developed by the BCA National Director, Brian Roberts, and presented in an outstanding and well researched address given at both the Australian Bishops' Meeting 2008 and the Tasmanian Clergy Conference 2008. Tasmania is not alone in giving thanks to God for the 90 years of gospel ministry through BCA. Rural and regional towns, communities and families throughout Australia have been greatly blessed.

What is the message BCA missionaries share? Jesus Christ, crucified and risen.

As Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the tomb in that early morning dawn their feet were suddenly scrambling for a foothold due to the sudden earthquake. As if this was not sufficiently fearful, an angel, his appearance like lightening and his clothing white as snow, rolled back the stone and sat on it. But they were not the only ones who were fearful. Confronted by all of this, the Roman guards who were guarding a dead man, through fear themselves became like dead men! (I love this sentence. I think Matthew must have had a grin on his face as he wrote it.)

The words of the angel to the two Marys have rung out through the centuries,

"Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." (Mt 28:5-7)

This is BCA's message. BCA missionaries have run and told "with fear and great joy" this transforming message. Heaven has rejoiced when men and women, boys and girls, throughout Australia have come to worship Jesus Christ, Lord and Saviour.

Listen to John Masefield's doublet –

'Do you think he is dead?'

'No, I don't.'

'Then where is he?'

'Let loose in the world.'

BCA, let Christ loose in the world.

BCA, let Christ loose in Australia.

BCA, Australia for Christ.

- Go for it!
- And God bless you mightily!

John Harrower

Bishop of Tasmania