

Faith in Marriage Conference - CatholicCare

By Allison McNally



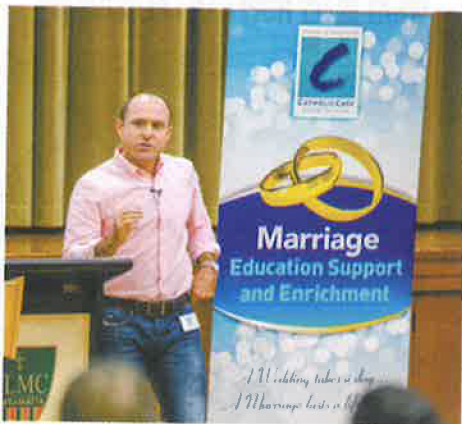
Very Rev Fr Peter Williams addresses delegates.

The 3rd Annual Faith in Marriage Conference was held on 23 August in Parramatta. The theme of the conference, 'Marriage - A Culture of Love & Life', was reflected in the addresses by the guest speakers Jonathan Doyle and Tim and Lara Kirk as well as the introductory comments by the Diocesan Administrator, Very Rev Peter Williams.

Father Peter reminded us that the Church offered a rich theology to inform our understanding of marriage and this understanding is founded on our knowledge of God and Jesus Christ. Marriage is a vocation; a calling from God to love.

Jonathan Doyle addressed the topic, 'The world will be Saved by Beauty - How Great Marriages can save the 21st Century'. He encouraged attendees to be proactive in communicating the truth, beauty and goodness of marriage.

Jonathan gave a picture of the pressures that exist to redefine marriage. He turned our attention to Imperial Rome and the Christians who lived out their faith. Their witness of faith-filled marriages and their charity in caring for divorced women and abandoned children had a



Jonathan Doyle from Choiceez Media,

faced by young men and women in our society were expanded, together with the necessity to help them develop a new narrative.

In conclusion, Jonathon reminded the audience that the Church was a mission and encouraged all to develop a sense of mission, find a place where you can serve, decide what you can do to contribute and always 'fix your eyes' on Christ.

The afternoon session was conducted by Tim and Lara Kirk. Their address on 'Marriage, Faith and Family' was a personal presentation of what worked practically in their marriage and with their children.

Tim stated that the Church existed to evangelise and challenged the audience to think about how we live out the call to evangelise. He quoted Pope Francis who said that families need to be witnesses. They need to show fidelity, patience, openness to life, respect for the elderly and presence of Jesus in the family.

Society needs functional families who are illuminated by the good news of Jesus to be credible witnesses. They are families who model in their lives what they believe in their hearts, they have Jesus in the centre.