

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## ***Hope for the Reign of God and the future Church in Oceania***

The Association of Practical Theology in Oceania (APTO) recently held its tenth Annual Conference at the Mercy Conference Centre in Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand. The theme of this year's conference was 'Hope for the Reign of God and the future Church in Oceania.' The Most Reverend Winston Halapua delivered the keynote address. In addition to this, there were several papers and workshops presented and it was attended by people from various Christian denominations and countries within the Oceanic region.

Dr Anthony Maher, President of APTO, said the conference was a terrific success and presented a rich and diverse opportunity for people to collaborate about a range of issues related to practical and pastoral theology.

"The theme was interpreted broadly and approached from within the disciplines of practical and pastoral theology."

"The presenters dealt with themes such as globalisation; the growth of secularism; Christian action to reduce inequality; and contextual theology engaged with a range of marginalized people both in the church and throughout the world, including refugees and people with a disability. Papers also dealt with the nature and mission of the church in Oceania, the inter-relationship of Christian faith and culture, environment, ethics, social justice and political theology."

Mr Zachariah Duke, Secretary/Treasurer of APTO, said the conference papers were "incredibly reflective, dynamic and transformative, and enabled participants to test current research findings in a collegial and collaborative way."

Members of APTO also elected its new Executive for a two-year term: Dr Anthony Maher (President), Dr John Collins (Vice President) and Mr Zachariah Duke (Secretary/Treasurer). "I would like to thank our outgoing Executive: Dr Bet Green, Dr Philip Gibbs, Dr Jenny Close and Dr Anne Bond, for their leadership and tireless efforts in making APTO as strong as it is today!" Dr Maher said.

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***The Association of Practical Theology in Oceania (APTO) is a professional association for researchers, scholars and practitioners who are working, teaching and/or researching in the field of practical theology.***

We welcome inquiries from people who are interested in joining our Association. For more information on APTO go to: <http://www.apto.asn.au/> or contact Dr Anthony Maher, President, APTO, [amaher@cis.catholic.edu.au](mailto:amaher@cis.catholic.edu.au).