



The **ACES** Club

Our Monthly Newsletter: April 2024

President's Report

Dear friends and subscribers,

I hope the year has gone off on a great start for you all! In this month's newsletter, I would like to draw your attention to a few key events that will be happening in the near future.



Firstly, as already mentioned in the previous newsletter, Andrew Kern and Katerina Hamilton from the CiRCE Institute will be visiting Australia in less than two months' time. During their tour they will deliver public talks and offer professional development sessions to teachers and parents. The full details and location of all events can be accessed by visiting this website: <https://www.classicaleducation.com.au/>. I especially encourage teachers who are interested to attend. As many of these sessions are accredited with state educational bodies, they provide requisite teacher training hours so the cost can likely be covered by schools. If anyone wishes to offer any assistance to ACES regarding the Andrew Kern tour, please email John Smyth: jtsmyth@gmail.com.

Once again, the CiRCE Institute is hosting a free two-day online conference, held over 26-27 April 2024. The theme of the conference is *"Teaching in Place: Education like your child belongs."* Registrants will receive full access to all recordings of each session if you are unable to attend live or simply wish to review a session. Among the

excellent speakers this year is fellow Australian Ben Crocker, who also spoke at last year's conference. If you wish to register, please follow the instructions by visiting this website: <https://circeinstitute.org/events/teaching-in-place/>.

Another exciting piece of news is that ACES is organising its first face-to-face public information evening. This event will be held at the Religious Centre, Monash University (Clayton Campus, Victoria) on Thursday 9 May (see flyer below). The purpose of this talk is to introduce classical education to people who have no knowledge or a very limited understanding of it. I strongly encourage all our followers and supporters in Melbourne to attend this event and to promote it to friends, work colleagues, etc. I would especially like to thank Fr Geoff Harvey from the Good Shepherd Orthodox Church for hosting this event for ACES. It would be a great blessing if similar events can occur in other cities across Australia. For this to happen, of course, keen volunteers who embrace ACES's vision are required. Public information sessions are one of the key elements in the strategic plan of ACES. It is through conversations with members of the public that awareness of classical education is implemented.

To this end, last month ACES hosted its second online curriculum development meeting with interested persons. The meeting was a very fruitful one and the team will continue to meet throughout 2024 in the area of curriculum development. If there is any teacher who is interested in joining this new and exciting project please do not hesitate to contact ACES: contact@classicaleducation.org.au. A summary report on the curriculum team is provided in the articles below.

Finally, I would like to thank each one of you for your continued support of ACES. In the last three years we have made significant progress but there is still a lot of necessary groundwork that needs to be completed. We have had much valuable support, even at a financial level. Nonetheless, many Australians have never heard about classical education or if they have, do not fully grasp it. We at ACES would like to continue our plan to inform the broader community through means beyond social media and the internet, such as radio interviews, articles in newspapers and having stalls at educational conferences in each city. That too is an essential component of our strategic plan. For the above to happen, ACES relies on your passionate involvement and support. Our movement will not grow by relying on the work and efforts of very few people. As I have mentioned many times, every person has talents and gifts that he or she could use to serve the common good.

Yours sincerely,

Kon Bouzikos
President of ACES

Articles of Interest

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT TEAM - AN UPDATE

This short article, available [here](#), provides an outline and update of the ACES's curriculum team. The aim of the project is to create a comprehensive classical curriculum that fits an Australian context and can be certified against the Australian Curriculum. We have had two meetings since the end of last year, devised guiding principles, highlighted some key questions that need to be addressed and planned our way forward. Our next meeting will be focused on how to effectively implement the trivium in a 21st century classroom, where we will be supported by staff from *Beautiful Teaching*. If anyone is interested in hearing more about this project or would like to be involved, please email ACES: contact@classicaleducation.org.au.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF LANGUAGE A poem by Denise O'Hagan

"All poetry, as discriminated from the various paradigms of prosody, is prayer." Samuel Beckett

I never bent my head to tread the short
flight of stone steps down, carefully, or
noticed that they were damply uneven,
dipping in the middle. The silence and
cool never closed their clammy arms
around me, nor did my eyes adapt slowly
to take in the gloom. The single light-bulb,
wire-looped from the peeling ceiling, and
suspended in front of her raised portrait,
never swayed before me. Yet technology
proves an efficient conduit: I enlarge the photo
little by little, notice more. On the low-slung
vaulted ceiling, mould nests in the cracks;
behind the plaster, the dull gleam of ancient
limestone; variegated tiles line the floor,
cracked, crooked. This is no heritage-listed,
tourist-trodden city crypt, titillating visitors
with hidden tombs of unnamed saints; even the
altar chair had lost its seat. And yet, and yet -
reader, I could write this poem differently, seeing
this rank, dank place of poverty as begging the
biggest question of all, and furnishing an answer
in a different kind of language. I could see in the

punctilious cleanliness of the icon's plastic casing,
not incongruity, but the distillation of infinity;
in the burning of the light-bulb, the stubborn
glow of that which defies description, and lies
beyond the daily realm of all we see and hear
and touch and taste, and symbolism's poor
cousin, the known landscape of words.



Note: Based on the above photograph, taken by my father of a small crypt in a church in the south of Italy, c. 1980. A crypt, from the Latin *crypta* (vault) is a stone chamber under the floor in a church which often contains coffins or other religious relics. It may also contain an *altarino*, or little altar.

First published in *Anamnesis*, D. O'Hagan (Recent Work Press, 2022). Denise O'Hagan is a Sydney-based editor and poet, born in Italy, and former poetry editor with *The Blue Nib*. Her poetry collection *Anamnesis* was a finalist in the *Eric Hoffer Book Award* (USA) and the *Eyelands Book Award* (Greece) and shortlisted in the *Rubery Book Award* (UK). Visit her website: <https://denise-ohagan.com>.
