

## **Citation for Honorary Award Bishop George Browning**

The award of Doctor of Letters recognises the outstanding contribution the Right Rev George Browning, Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn has made to Australian society, the Anglican Church and Charles Sturt University.

George Browning was born in England. He emigrated to Australia in 1960 at the age of eighteen. On arrival in this country he worked as a jackeroo and shed groom. He then studied at the College of St John the Evangelist in Morpeth where he graduated with first class honours in the Licentiate in Theology.

George Browning was made a deacon in 1966 and ordained priest in 1967. He served in church appointments in northern NSW and the Hunter, prior to appointment as Vice-Principal of the College of St John from 1973 to 1976. In 1977 he became Rector of the parish of Singleton and Rural Dean and Archdeacon, a position he held until 1985.

In that year he was consecrated Bishop in the Diocese of Brisbane where he served until 1993. From 1988 to 1991 he held concurrently the position of Principal of St Francis Theological College.

On 30 May 1993 Bishop George was installed as the ninth Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn.

As the Anglican Bishop in the national capital George Browning has made important and highly valued contributions to the life of Canberra and Australia.

He is an Honorary Ambassador for Canberra; Co-Chair of the Canberra Community Foundation; and, Co-Chair of the Canberra Bushfire Recovery Appeal.

Nationally, George Browning has served as a member of the Review Committee for the Australian Honours System and of the Ethics Committee of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. He is a member of the Advisory Council of the Climate Institute.

In his church and civic leadership George Browning has become widely recognised as an advocate for improvements in aged care; for the environment; and for the promotion of harmonious relations between communities from differing cultural backgrounds.

George Browning has made major contributions to strengthening ecumenical and interfaith dialogue and engagement and to theological education. In these contexts he has worked closely with CSU and has enriched the life of the University.

In 1995, as chair of the Council of St Mark's National Theological College, George Browning played a leading role in the creation of the School of Theology at CSU. He has continued to provide leadership and support to the School as it has grown to be Australia's largest university based School of Theology and the home of CSU's Research Centre in Public and Contextual Theology and the Centre for Ageing and Pastoral Studies. George Browning has particularly encouraged the development of

distance learning programs in theology for the benefit of non-metropolitan communities.

In 1998 George Browning brought to CSU a proposal for the creation in Canberra of a national centre devoted to ecumenism, interfaith dialogue and reconciliation. An important part of the proposal was the offer to make available for the construction of the centre a magnificent site on Lake Burley Griffin originally given to the Anglican Church for the construction of a cathedral.

The Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture was soon established through an agreement between the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn and CSU with Bishop Browning serving as the foundation Director. He has remained a member of the Board of the Centre following the appointment of a permanent full-time director.

The Centre's academic and community based programs have flourished. George Browning's vision of a space in the national capital (a cultural and spiritual space as well as a geographical space) for dialogue and engagement between Australians from all backgrounds and traditions has proven timely and important. His continuing leadership, energy and skills have been essential for the growth and success of the Centre.

Chancellor, I present for the award of Doctor of Letters, Bishop George Browning, an outstanding church and civic leader who has greatly enriched CSU's academic programs and community engagement.