

**University of South Australia Degree Ceremony 3 May 1993, 10.30am**  
**Conferment of the Honorary Degree of DUniv to John Anthony McDonald**  
**Citation by Professor David Robinson, Vice Chancellor**

Deputy Chancellor, the careers of distinguished people are odd things. Some have a shape which, if not quite suggesting periods of aimlessness, would at least require explanation for why particular directions were taken. Others, by contrast, follow courses which in retrospect appear to have been the natural preparations for the positions of importance which have been achieved.

The career of **John McDonald**, Foundation Chancellor of this University, has followed just such a natural course; although it may not have looked likely to him when he started his working life, in 1960, as a teacher at Norwood High School.

John McDonald was educated at St Joseph's Kingswood and Rostrevor College before tertiary studies at one of the antecedent institutions of this University, the Adelaide Teachers College, in addition to graduating in Science from the University of Adelaide.

After seven years teaching at Norwood High School, the final three as senior mathematics master, he moved to the Education Department of South Australia as consultant in Mathematics before, in 1972, becoming Director of Catholic Education in South Australia.

In that position for the past twenty one years, and as a foundation member of the National Catholic Education Commission and chair of its Schools Committee, John McDonald has played a major role; not merely in the administration of the Catholic school system in this state but in the restructuring of Catholic schooling throughout Australia and in the development of funding policies for non-government schools.

In 1980 he was made a Fellow of the Australian College of Education, while in the following year his contribution to Catholic education was recognised <sup>by</sup> ~~in~~ the award of a Papal Knighthood by Pope John Paul II.

Involvement in the governance of higher education began in 1972 with membership, and then the Presidency, of the Council of the Murray Park College of Advanced Education. On the amalgamation of the Colleges John McDonald became a member of the South Australian College of Advanced Education Council and, to no one's surprise, was elected its President in 1986; a position he held until the merger with the South Australian Institute of Technology - at which point, on 1 January 1991, he became foundation Chancellor of this the University of South Australia.

It must have been daunting, in spite of all his experience, to be faced by that Foundation Council, with its inevitable immediate post-merger sensitivities and, no doubt at times, its potential for riot. It speaks volumes for John McDonald's long experience of educational institutions, their administration and governance, that the eighteen months of his Chancellorship saw the development of a sound and coherent set of structures and policies for the new University which stand us in such good stead for the next phase of our development.

There are many of my colleagues who, in addition to recognising his immense contribution to the advancement of the institution, owe John McDonald especial thanks for the time taken to clarify complex issues, offer wise counsel, and give personal support. Tension was high at times in those early days of 1991, and his calming influence and sense of perspective is, I know, well remembered.

Deputy Chancellor, I have the honour to present John Anthony McDonald, Director of Catholic Education for South Australia and Foundation Chancellor of the University of South Australia, for the degree of Doctor of the University