

## Beyond their studies



**Peter Hancock**

Three years ago, the Catholic Asian Student Society, associated with the Chinese Catholic Community and under the direction of Sr Teresa Marist (and now Sr Laura, a Salesian sister from Hong Kong) was looking for a volunteer to join weekly sharing groups as a presence and guide. My experiences in Asia as well as my thirty years of teaching at Australian Catholic University led me to accept this little service. I have been active at three of Sydney's university campuses over the years.

Each week, topics for the meeting are generated by the student leaders themselves and discussed. I usually have something extra in the way of a reading or prayer and afterwards invite the group to a "coffee eucharist" in the union to meet casually. It is no surprise to me what pressures overseas students face from time to time and this casual break together often is a supportive and liberating time too. As usual with university students, there is a range of personalities, language abilities and faith stages, but the idea of building a community sense, hospitality and shared values is always worth striving for.

*Peter Hancock*