



Atla-ANZTLA Scholarship Recipient Report

by Rebecca Zimmerman

Catholic Theological Institute, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

The Atla-ANZTLA Scholarship is provided by the American Theological Library Association to ANZTLA, for the professional development of theological librarians in the Pacific region. The scholarship is aimed at developing high standards of librarianship and each year applications are submitted from librarians who wish to make use of this opportunity. Professional development may take the form of attendance at the annual ANZTLA conference, or further study in the field of information science. As well as being able to support Cindy Lola from the Pacific Adventist University in PNG to attend the 2019 conference, there were sufficient funds to also support Rebecca Zimmerman from the Catholic Theological Institute in Port Moresby to undertake some online study units. Rebecca used the scholarship to study three online units and has done very well in all of them. The report below was submitted by Rebecca on completion of her study.



With my grant from ANZTLA, (the Atla-ANZTLA Scholarship) I took three online courses through the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services, a division of the American Library Association: *Fundamentals of Cataloging*, *Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management*, and *Fundamentals of Collection Assessment*.

Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management was the first course. I learned about core lists and the RLG conspectus. I started keeping a spreadsheet of books to acquire organized by priority and sortable by recommendation source. I drafted the beginnings of an acquisitions policy. There was a long course reading about faculty consultations for periodical subscriptions, so I designed and administered a survey as I prepared my journals budget for 2020. From the lists of further suggested reading, I obtained materials on how to select books for a core collection, which I will consult as I order books for 2020. This course was useful to me as a selector thinking about how to systematize and prioritize what I was doing.

The next course was *Fundamentals of Cataloging*, which I had hoped was going to be about how to decide which Dewey number to use when doing original cataloguing, but it was almost entirely about MARC, RDA, and FRBR. It was very technical, and outside of my experience, so I found parts of it rather arcane. The class did start with a historical overview of cataloguing principles going back to Cutter, which was illuminating. Contrary to my expectations, there was only one small section on subject cataloguing. I did learn about the importance of a controlled vocabulary. I started working on the subject headings for our catalogue to try to rein it in to a more controlled vocabulary, which past cataloguers did not take care to use. I was able to identify a few small MARC errors that were causing some catalogue entries to display incorrectly. Although I found some of the material inapplicable to my small, simple library in a developing country, I did learn some overarching principles for cataloguing.

Fundamentals of Collection Assessment was probably my favourite from a pedagogical point of view. I enjoyed turning in written assignments each week; I felt like it helped me apply the material and understand it thoroughly. (The other classes just had multiple choice quizzes.) I appreciated the individual feedback on my written assignments from the lecturers as well. I designed an assessment for reviewing selected Dewey numbers for potential weeding, which the assignments throughout the course helped me to refine. The assignment for each week would ask you to use the material covered and write up how it applied to your specific project. I discovered during my stocktake in January 2019 that we had some books catalogued in unused Dewey numbers, like 244. I decided that rather than move all the books to the correct places, I should assess them for weeding first. The books in those numbers were more likely to be out-of-date and removing some books would lessen the amount of re-cataloguing I would have to do. I also



noticed we had some Dewey numbers that had a large number of books catalogued incorrectly in them - 239 had many ecclesiology books -- so I added those Dewey numbers to my list for potential weeding assessment. I completed most of my assessment in the month between the end of classes and the close for the holidays. I moved all the books that were published after 1980, were published by important authors, and/or had 3 or more checkouts; these metrics include both user-centred and collection-centred, subjective and objective measures, as I was taught. This course was a nice confluence between my current job as a librarian and my prior training in social science.

I would like to thank the Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association Board and Atla for the opportunity to take these classes. I feel that I have grown as a librarian over the course of the year.