

Catholic Education

Today



MELBOURNE
ARCHDIOCESE
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



Faith in
the future

TERM 1, 2021

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TO THE 2021
SCHOOL YEAR

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FOR EVERY
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SUCCESS

Nunc dimittis

Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace,
just as you promised;
because my eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared for all the nations to see,
a light to enlighten the pagans
and the glory of your people Israel.

Lk 2: 29–32

*The gospel reading for the Presentation of the Lord
(2 February)*



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Catholic Education Today is produced by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS), James Gould House, 228 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne Victoria 3002.

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ISSN 1441-2802



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Acknowledgments Thank you to those who contributed to the articles and to the staff and students of the schools featured in this issue.

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Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of MACS. The editor reserves the right to amend or reject any item submitted for publication.

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Catholic Education Today is printed on environmentally friendly recycled paper.

Cover image Students at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Werribee



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Editorial

A few weeks ago, your child was one of over 155,000 students who started the school year at a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

Walking through the corridors of our schools, the joy and excitement of students have been obvious. The many happy, smiling faces are recreating our vibrant Catholic learning communities, reminding us that a new year brings hope and possibility for the future.

Hope is at the centre of a uniquely Catholic learning journey and of our desire to inspire the full flourishing of each student across religious, physical, cognitive, emotional and social domains.

It will encourage us to overcome any challenges that lie in the year ahead and to look forward with great expectation to what 2021 will bring. Schools are planning many events and activities that will give students and parents the opportunity to stretch themselves and grow their sense of belonging and purpose.

School communities will celebrate their Catholic identity, highlight academic achievements and support students to explore areas ranging from health, the environment, animal welfare to wellbeing, and more.

Alongside these activities, schools that are governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) will give parents the opportunity later this year to play an even greater role in their child's education by serving on a School Advisory Council (SAC). As last year demonstrated, parents are essential partners in educating children and our schools benefit from your participation in their academic and spiritual life.

You can follow the activities of schools in the Archdiocese through [Catholic Education Today](#) or via the [news and events](#) section of the MACS website www.macs.vic.edu.au. Schools will continue rolling out innovations to teaching and learning, building on the leaps taken through the challenges of 2020.

From our first schools in Victoria, founded more than 150 years ago, innovation has been at the centre of the Catholic learning experience. The rows of wooden desks have now been replaced with brightly coloured furniture, and blackboards have made way for computers and tablets.

Our schools will continue to showcase new and innovative approaches to teaching and learning to deliver an education that prepares students to live fruitful lives and make meaningful contributions to our society.

Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Melbourne continues to spread its footprint across Melbourne. Parents can be sure that the foundations of Catholic education remain strong. The year ahead holds great promise for all of us as we, with your support, continue on the learning journey with our students.

A warm welcome to students starting their journeys and to those continuing on. There will be much for us to experience and celebrate together over the course of what we hope is an exciting year for everyone in Catholic education. ✝

Welcome to the 2021 school year

St Joseph's Catholic
Primary School, Werribee



On behalf of Catholic education in the Archdiocese, I extend a warm welcome to all families, principals, teachers and staff to the 2021 school year, especially to those joining our community of schools for the first time.

I particularly welcome members of our new school community at **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Werribee**, which has opened this year.

Preliminary enrolment data for 2021 suggests an increase in the number of students across the Archdiocese, taking enrolments to over 155,000 students in 333 primary, secondary and special schools. We thank all families for the trust you place in our schools and the quality of education they deliver.

This year marks a new era for Catholic education with the establishment of Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) by Archbishop Peter A Comensoli.

This change sees 290 schools owned by the Archdiocese and its parishes transferred to MACS, which becomes responsible for the governance and operation of the schools.

The reform builds on the rich legacy of parish priest governance and ongoing pastoral leadership of Catholic schools, and also provides the opportunity to continue to support our religious institute schools, ensuring all Catholic schools thrive and develop as a mission of the Archdiocese.

A key feature of the new arrangements for MACS schools is the establishment of School Advisory Councils (SACs), providing a structure for collaboration between school leaders, parish priests, parents and school community members. I encourage parents and carers to participate and engage in the vital work of their school councils.



I encourage parents and carers to participate and engage in the vital work of their school councils.



The pandemic we all faced in 2020 made for a challenging year for school communities as they worked hard to support the learning continuity and wellbeing of students, staff and families. However, there are also positives to come from the experience, including more flexible ways of teaching and learning, and strengthened partnerships between schools and families that I trust we can build on this year.

Once again, welcome to the school year. I look forward to all of us working together to deliver on our mission to nurture young people whose minds and lives are empowered by their Catholic education to be active, responsible and virtuous contributors to the common good.

With best wishes

Jim Miles – Executive Director
MACS



Jim Miles – Executive Director
MACS

Archbishop Peter A Comensoli



Opportunities for every student to reach their potential

Catholic schools strive to provide a high-quality, faith-based education of the 'whole person' that nurtures each child's unique talents.

Our schools work in partnership with families to develop young people whose minds and lives are empowered by their Catholic education to be active, responsible and virtuous contributors to the common good.

Respecting the dignity, diversity and contribution of each person, Catholic schools seek to be compassionate in all their relationships and strive for excellence in all they do, from serving their communities to being academic leaders.

A holistic approach to education enriches the intellectual, physical, spiritual and emotional lives of students. This emphasis on the whole person has also been endorsed by academic research, with a Curtin University study showing Catholic school graduates enjoy higher levels of life satisfaction.

In keeping with their Christian ethos and a long tradition of education for the disadvantaged, Catholic schools also aim to be inclusive by keeping fees low and remaining accessible to all who seek their values.

Some 15% of Victorian Catholic school students are identified as eligible for Australian government disability funding. A further 15% are from low-income families and around 25% of students have a language background other than English.

In an important indication of the inclusive character of our schools, a Melbourne Institute study shows that Catholic school students are far less likely to be bullied than those attending government schools. As part of this, Catholic schools not only aim to create zero-bullying environments based on a genuine concern for others, but also strive to be leaders in child safety.

Catholic schools encourage parents to become involved in their children's learning and engage in school life. By working together, schools and families can create an effective learning environment and a climate of mutual respect.

As always, Catholic schools continue to respond to the expectations of parents and the changing landscape of contemporary learning to engage students and prepare them as global citizens, equipped to face the world with confidence and sensitivity to social justice issues.

Parents Belinda and Ian McKay with Leita (Year 5) and Ethan (Prep) from St Martin of Tours School in Rosanna say the school's Catholic faith brings people together and strengthens their sense of community and belonging.



“

Catholic schools encourage parents to become involved in their children's learning and engage in school life.

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Parents Ian and Belinda McKay from **St Martin of Tours School, Rosanna**, said what they most value about their school is that their children learn about their faith and live it each day.

'Faith brings people together and strengthens the sense of community and belonging.

'We have experienced this faith in action many times at our school through the support we have received from the teachers and school community, particularly during challenging times when our daughter has undergone treatment for leukaemia', they said.

Thuy, a parent from **Sacred Heart School, Fitzroy**, said: 'We are fortunate at Sacred Heart to have teachers who are friendly, caring and supportive. I feel safe here, and my kids feel safe too.

'Our school is great at helping my child to learn and provided amazing support during remote learning. I hope 2021 will be a normal school year, full of success and happiness for my child', she said.

A commitment to social justice and community service is a vital part of the holistic education offered by Catholic schools.

Agatha Scandizzo and Angela Cremona are the St Vincent de Paul student program leaders at **Nazareth College, Noble Park North**, in 2021.

'As Vinnies leaders, we aim to implement our faith in everything we do. We feel it is our responsibility to help those less fortunate, as Jesus did.

Faith brings people together and strengthens the sense of community and belonging.

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‘The Vinnies team helps bring our school community together and makes a difference in people’s lives.

‘We are always amazed by the generosity of our school community, yet it is seeing the impact of our work that is most rewarding’, Agatha and Angela said.

A growing sector

With Catholic education’s growing popularity as a school choice and the expansion of school communities planned over the next decade, it’s an exciting time for the Catholic school community in Victoria.

This year more than 155,000 students – more than one in five – are enjoying a Catholic education in 333 schools across Melbourne. Catholic education is by far the second largest provider of schooling in Victoria.

In 2020, two new Catholic schools opened in the rapidly growing areas south of Geelong: **St Catherine of Siena Catholic Primary School, Armstrong Creek**, and **Iona College Geelong, Charlemont**.

In 2021, **St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School, Werribee**, has opened.

Planning is underway for additional schools in coming years to meet the needs of families, particularly in the western and northern regions of Melbourne. These include:

- St Lawrence of Brindisi Primary School, which is scheduled to open in Melton South in 2022, with a site purchased for a secondary school in the parish scheduled to open in 2023
- Holy Cross Primary School, which is scheduled to open in Craigieburn in 2022
- Mary Queen of Heaven Primary School, which is scheduled to open in Gladstone Park in 2023, along with a new primary school in Hoppers Crossing North. ✝



Agatha Scandizzo and Angela Cremona are the St Vincent de Paul student program leaders at Nazareth College, Noble Park North, in 2021. They say the Vinnies program helps bring their school community together and makes a difference in people’s lives.

Did you know?

- University of Melbourne research has found that Catholic schools add an average of six points to tertiary admission ranks, or ATAR scores, at the crucial career-defining end of a student’s school journey.
- A Curtin University study makes special mention of the ‘social capital’ contributed to the greater good of the community by graduates of Catholic schools.
- A 2020 report, *Australian Schools and the Common Good*, found that Catholic school graduates are the highest earners with an average annual household income of \$99,722, according to a recent study of Australians aged 25–39. This compared with \$90,849 for independent school graduates and \$85,489 for government school graduates.



St Bernadette’s School, Sunshine North, has been recognised by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) for consistently delivering strong progress in NAPLAN writing assessments by adopting innovative pedagogical practices, informed by evidence, at both whole-school and classroom levels.

Faith in the future

Catholic Education
CELEBRATING 200 YEARS

Faith in the future

This year is the bicentenary of Catholic education as communities around the country celebrate 200 years since the opening of Australia's first Catholic school.

The National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) announced the theme for the celebration is *Faith in the future*. It symbolises the contribution of the past and the commitment of Catholic schools to enliven the faith of students and to prepare them to make valuable contributions to their communities and the world.

Australia's first Catholic school opened in Parramatta, in Sydney's west, in October 1820. Founded by Irish priest, Fr John Therry, the school taught 31 students in its first year. From those humble beginnings, Catholic schools in Australia now teach more than 750,000 students with over 80,000 teachers and support staff.

In 1839, the first Catholic school in the Port Phillip District, later known as Victoria, opened on a site near the current St Francis' Church in Melbourne.

The oldest continuously operating Catholic primary schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne are **St Mary's School, Williamstown**, and **St Mary's School, Geelong**, both established in the 1840s.

Academy of Mary Immaculate, Fitzroy, established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1857, is Melbourne's oldest continuously operating Catholic secondary school.

The year of celebration includes prayer cards for every student and staff member in Catholic schools around the country. A song, 'Faith in the future', has been composed by renowned Catholic singer-songwriter Fr Rob Galea.

“Catholic schools in Australia now teach more than 750,000 students with over 80,000 teachers and support staff.”



Academy of Mary Immaculate, Fitzroy



Each diocese will celebrate this special anniversary at a national Mass to coincide with the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians on 24 May.

More information about the 200th anniversary of Catholic education in Australia, including stories and resources, is available on the *Catholic Education: Celebrating 200 Years* website www.200years.catholic.edu.au.

You are invited to share your own stories of Catholic education via email ncec@ncec.catholic.edu.au.

Respectful, kind and courageous

Shelley Ryan is new to principalship, new to the Archdiocese of Melbourne and is leading our newest primary school, **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Werribee**. At the beginning of the 2021 school year, Shelley shares her thoughts about the joy of leading a brand new Catholic school community.



“ Each of us is the face of God, and my hope is that all of our students share their unique gifts with our school and the world. ”

What does a Catholic educator require?

A Catholic educator requires a commitment to the vision for the school, and to keep coming back to that vision as a foundation for everything we do. We're working alongside each other as a community, and we need to walk together in a caring and inclusive way. We listen to understand, and we build trust with each other to support the most important people in our community – our students.

What do you like about leading a Catholic school?

As a brand new principal, I wholeheartedly believe that it's about the life-giving relationships that we build with all of the stakeholders in our school. I find that a real privilege, and it allows me to connect with people, hear their stories, and then enable them to create their own story with us. It feels very special to be in a role that allows me to experience that every day.

Leading a Catholic school, I have an unrelenting commitment to developing lifelong learners. In the spirit of our school's patron saint, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, I want to serve our community, walk with our community, hear and encourage everyone to have a voice, listen to the hearts of each other, and do all of this to ensure that our students are ready to meet the future.

What are the greatest opportunities for your families today?

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an enormous impact on so many people in our community over the last 12 months, and our families are so courageous and trusting in our school's vision and mission. I'm so grateful that during 2020, our families had the opportunity to help create what our new school should be, and how we can best support our students to be everything they want to be.

What are your hopes for the future?

I want our students to leave here knowing themselves, knowing their strengths, knowing what can be challenges, knowing how to overcome those challenges, and ultimately to contribute to a better society.

My hope is for our students to believe they can make a real difference to the world by being respectful, kind and courageous, and it helps knowing that everyone who works here cares about the wellbeing of our students. Each of us is the face of God, and my hope is that all of our students share their unique gifts with our school and the world. ✦

Sport and physical education are **back on track**

Sports and physical education are an essential part of the culture in Catholic schools. They enrich the lives of students and provide them with an array of opportunities to engage in physical activity, enhance their wellbeing, and build strong relationships and life skills.

Due to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, many sporting competitions and physical education activities took a back seat in 2020. This year, Catholic schools are looking forward to reinvigorating these vital programs.

Jacquelyn Hateley, Education Officer with the Student Wellbeing team at Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS), says the health and physical education curriculum at Catholic schools provides opportunities for young people to be active and healthy.

‘Physical and mental health are inextricably linked, and Catholic schools place a high priority on encouraging and supporting young people to regularly participate in physical activity.

‘Sport and physical education help students develop a sense of connectedness and belonging, which are key protective factors for mental health and wellbeing’, she said.

Engaging in physical activity and sports can also contribute to the development of essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, innovation, curiosity, perseverance, self-direction, planning, adaptability, self-discipline, initiative and communication.

According to **St John’s School, Frankston East**, physical education teacher Mark O’Sullivan the school’s health and physical education program’s main focus is to enhance the health, safety and wellbeing of students.

“

Sport and physical education help students develop a sense of connectedness and belonging.

”



The St Thomas the Apostle School, Blackburn, mixed netball team was crowned School Sport Victoria State Champion in 2019.

Year 11 student Erin Carroll from **Kilbreda College, Mentone**, was selected to play in the Australian under-18 cricket team after representing Victoria at the female National Championships in Tasmania in January 2020.

A left-arm pace bowler, Erin represents Kilbreda College in the Secondary Catholic Sports Association (SCSA) indoor cricket competition and is now well on the way to achieving her dream of playing in the Women’s Big Bash League (WBBL).



'Sport and physical education are important elements of the curriculum we offer at St John's', he said.

'The health and physical education learning area has strong foundations in scientific fields such as physiology and nutrition, which inform what we understand about healthy, safe and active choices.

'As well as improving fitness, participation in sport and physical education develops a sense of fair play and self-confidence.

'Physical education is timetabled for all students from Prep onwards at St John's and opportunities are provided for students to participate in a large range of sports at inter-school levels.'

St John's also hosts a yearly 'sports expo' each February to provide an opportunity for students and families to learn about the range of sports offered at the school and how to get involved.

Catholic schools play a critical role in promoting physical, social, emotional and spiritual development, as well as supporting the wellbeing and mental health of students in their care.

A good example of this is **St Thomas the Apostle School, Blackburn**, where the development of teamwork skills through sport is considered an important building block to help children succeed in the future.

Principal Angela Lacey said that the 'success in sport builds confidence, which can in turn improve academic confidence and performance'.

St Thomas' sports teams' recent achievements include winning the 2018 and 2019 School Sport Victoria mixed netball state championships, the 2019 girls' basketball state title in the Hoop Time Championships, and the school's PE teacher, Sean Kavanagh, was named individual Coach of the Year by School Sport Victoria in 2019.

'Our community is extremely proud of what our students have been able to achieve', Ms Lacey said.

Many Catholic schools offer programs and pathways to support and develop high-level and elite junior athletes.

James Anthony, a **De La Salle College, Malvern**, Year 12 student has been selected in the under-19 Italian cycling team, and in 2021 will live in Italy and compete in Italian and European cycling events.

Through a joint arrangement with Virtual School Victoria and De La Salle College, James' education for the coming year has been tailored to his unique needs and circumstances.

St Monica's College, Epping, has launched a new High-Performance Centre at its Dalton Road Campus.

The centre features the latest in functional training equipment such as multiple customised strength rigs that can accommodate up to 20 students and



Kolbe Catholic College, Greenvale Lakes, has launched a sporting academy program in 2021.

The Kolbe Catholic College Sporting Academy will provide a developmental and applied structure for learning that is informed by the Victorian Curriculum, Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) standards of operation.

Initially focusing on basketball, the academy aims to assist talented young male and female basketballers to achieve at the highest levels of performance, and help them with their personal education, vocational development and sporting aspirations.

a four-lane indoor running track that allows focused training on sprint starts, power development and weighted battle rope training.

Principal Brian Hanley said the centre is an exciting addition for the school's sport academies program.

'Our college is committed to providing developing athletes every possible support to be their best. Our sport academies all have elite coaches who are experts in their field, and we will continue to support them with the best facilities we can provide', he said.

Health and physical education in Catholic schools play a vital role in promoting the development of lifelong, healthy lifestyle habits by providing a well-organised and active environment in which students can participate in a wide range of sports and physical activities. ✦



Success in sport builds confidence, which can in turn improve academic confidence and performance.



James Anthony, De La Salle College, Malvern, will continue studying remotely and flexibly while competing for the Italian under-19 cycling team in 2021.

Student **success**



Melanie Noonan – Sacred Heart Girls' College, Hughesdale

Sacred Heart Girls' College, Hughesdale

Melanie Noonan was not only the 2020 VCE dux of **Sacred Heart Girls' College, Hughesdale**, but also received a scholarship to study engineering at Monash University.

'Science has been a way to understand how the world works, and through engineering I hope to improve people's quality of life and help take better care of the planet', she said.

'Working hard while also taking the time to look after myself was the way I was able to achieve my goals and be accepted into my dream course. My advice to other students is to choose the subjects you love and follow your passions; it will make VCE so much more enjoyable.'



Ben Bugeja – Whitefriars College, Donvale

Whitefriars College, Donvale

Ben Bugeja, Year 12 student and Mantua house captain at **Whitefriars College, Donvale**, received the principal's award in 2020 for his inspiring leadership.

Principal Mark Murphy praised Ben for his leadership which will be remembered for years to come.

'This is an occasional award, which may be presented to a Year 12 student who has achieved commendably in Year 12 in spite of some particular and special hardships, which he has had to contend with throughout the year.'

Ben's advice to his peers is to 'give the exams your best shot. The effort and work you have put into your studies throughout the year will hold you in great stead to achieve your best'.



Leila Ferhat – Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School, Sunbury

Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School, Sunbury

Leila Ferhat from **Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School, Sunbury**, has been presented with the Josh Bull Community and Citizenship Award for demonstrating a strong sense of community spirit.

As the child of an essential worker, Leila was onsite at the school throughout 2020 and showed a commitment to others in leading by example. She always found time to support other students, in particular the younger students. Through her kind-heartedness, patience and calmness Leila demonstrated her genuine spirit in being an active citizen in her community.

St Margaret Mary's School, Spotswood

Lola from **St Margaret Mary's School, Spotswood**, won a poetry competition with her poem reflecting on isolation during last year's lockdown. The competition, organised by Australian author Jacqueline Harvey, invited students to write a poem inspired by 2020.

Isolation is as it seems

Dull and annoying, we all wish it could end

But millions are dying around the world

Who could be selfish enough to let them suffer

They're trying to get a vaccine now

Stop the protests, pal.

And I know all don't trust the government.

But now, I guess we'll have to try.

What is the purpose of this storm, what is the purpose, now?

Oh oh oh now.

And now some can't even breathe

And we can't even leave

stuck inside nothing to do

my senses know we're all going through, it now. †



Lola – St Margaret Mary's School, Spotswood

The many benefits of sport for children's learning

Learning comes in all forms whether it be physical, spiritual, mental or academic, as well as through incidental experiences that shape every person as a unique individual.

Some alarming information recently published in the *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* highlighted that, while physical activity is well-known to provide multiple health benefits in children and adolescents, 81 per cent of those aged 11–17 years are insufficiently physically active.

Sport and physical activity have major benefits in all aspects of life, including mental, social, physical, and spiritual health and wellbeing.

Sport has played a huge role in my life, both as a child and as an adult. As a child it was a chance to escape and excel in something I was good at. I loved the freedom of movement it provided, the chance to make friends, to be challenged, to compete and learn to improve in a specific set of skills.

Sport at school provided me with opportunities to explore different sports and then decide which one I preferred. School offers this for many children and as parents we are able to support the exploration of sport, exercise and movement for our children in our local communities.

The team camaraderie in sport provides many lessons in forming friendships, collaboration, working on strategies and skills as a team, and the satisfaction of bringing all the training together to make it work, and in some cases to win. These are some of the essential skills being encouraged for future employability by [many experts](#).

There is no better feeling than when you and your team win. However, the most important life lessons are in the losses. Losing is a part of life. There can never be two winners. This is a life challenge everyone has the opportunity to master through participation in sport and competition, and is such an important lesson for children to learn.

By Catholic School Parents Victoria

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Sport and physical activity have major benefits in all aspects of life, including mental, social, physical, and spiritual health and wellbeing.

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Sport strengthens mental capacity as the brain is trained to carry out skills through repetitive and disciplined practice. Your mind is able to push you to the limit when your body is tired and to persevere when things get tough. This skill helps people through many tough times in life – the skill of perseverance, of resilience and a never-give-up attitude carries through into adulthood and can provide the strength needed when life becomes challenging. ✦



connect
The power of connection

Who is representing Catholic school parent perspective in Victoria?

Catholic School Parents Victoria provides parents with opportunities to contribute their perspective in education. Follow us on social media and visit our website for further information.



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[in](#) [f](#) [ig](#)

Students to designers

Students at **Caroline Chisholm Catholic College, Braybrook**, launched a mini-market to sell their designs as part of their end-of-year assessment.

The VCAL design students created the mini-market project and employed their numeracy and entrepreneurial skills. The products on sale were designed and made by the students using resin. The items were sold to the wider school community with all proceeds going to charity.

Monique Dalli, Head of Design and Technologies at the college said, 'the students led the initiative from start to finish'. ✦



Photo courtesy of Brimbank & North West Star Weekly.

In the spirit of giving

Last year students from **St Paul's School, Coburg**, showed their faith in action through their community spirit.

St Paul's Mini Vinnies group asked their community to put together Christmas hampers for those experiencing homelessness or food insecurity.

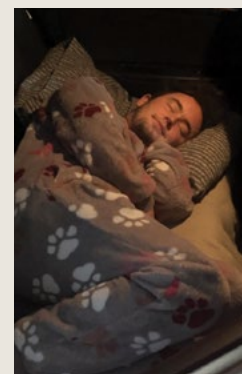
'The response we received was overwhelming. We filled the van to capacity and were very touched by our community's kindness, considering we had just come out of lockdown and some were doing it tough too', said Religious Education Leader, Joe Keane. ✦



'Winter School Sleepout'

Students and staff at **Mount St Joseph Girls' College, Altona**, participated in the St Vincent de Paul Society 'Winter School Sleepout'. Usually this involves students signing up to sleep at school for one night to raise awareness for Australians experiencing homelessness, however, due to COVID-19 restrictions participants could not be at school.

Instead, students and staff were able to select how uncomfortable their night would be – whether sleeping on the couch, floor or in the backyard. ✦



Learning to change the world

As the first students of the college, the inaugural Year 7 cohort at **Iona College Geelong, Charlemont**, put forward 152 proposals for who they felt the college should name their four school houses after.

The proposals identified the Catholic values that their chosen person had shown during their life. The new college houses are:

- Chisholm House (after Caroline Chisholm) representing Compassion
- MacKillop House (after Mary MacKillop) representing Leadership
- Glowrey House (after Mary Glowrey) representing Excellence
- Francis House (after Pope Francis) representing Courage. ✦



Leading reading

The book lovers at **Lumen Christi School, Point Cook**, have once again shown their commitment to reading while supporting the MS Readathon.

The school has not only earned the title of the second-highest fundraising school in Australia, but it can also boast Australia's top fundraiser. In 2020 the school raised \$24,115, including \$9,678 by student Aarya Valera. Last year, the school had over 40 students participate in the MS Readathon, reading over 1,137 books. ✦



Visit from the Consul-General of the UAE

Principal Lila McInerney of **Mercy College, Coburg**, was delighted to host United Arab Emirates Consul-General Dr Nariman Al Mulla and special guests for an open and affirming discussion around interfaith dialogue and tolerance.

'This provided an opportunity for our college community to do as Pope Francis has asked of us – to go and to encounter everyone, in the shape of our common image', Mrs McInerney said. ✦



Crazy Sock Day

Crazy Sock Day at **St James the Apostle School, Hoppers Crossing North**, was a great success. The day of fun came at the end of a six-week effort to learn about, and raise funds for, the work of Catholic Mission in Cambodia.

Students and staff were invited to come to school with crazy socks and a gold coin donation. ✦



Swapping screen time for green time

To celebrate the fifth anniversary of *Laudato Si'*, and to launch the Season of Creation celebrated from 1 September to 4 October, students at **Our Lady of the Nativity School, Aberfeldie**, spent a day replacing their screen time with 'green time'.

Students went on nature walks, created collages with elements of God's creation, made nature faces, experienced creation meditations and decorated their driveways with chalk drawings based on the Season of Creation. ✦



Virtual awards presentation

John Paul College, Frankston, recognised students who achieved academic excellence and displayed outstanding personal qualities in 2020.

As COVID-19 restrictions meant the college was unable to host its Awards Evening, the gathering took the form of a video presentation instead, which virtually commended the accomplishments of students. ✦



Genazzano recognised for innovative learning programs

Genazzano FCJ College, Kew, has been recognised for its innovative learning programs as part of *The Educator's* Innovative Schools list for 2020. The college was recognised for its iLEARN Profiler and Emergence Program.

The Profiler is a strength-based tool which invites a student view of strengths, challenges, classroom experience, mindset, approach to learning, metacognition, motivation and more. The Emergence Program combines exceptional learning opportunities with a new microcredentials platform and a dynamic digital ePortfolio. ✦



Schools commemorating Remembrance Day

Students from St Paul's School, Coburg, and Iona College Geelong, Charlemont, commemorated the day by taking part in different Remembrance Day activities.

Ella from St Paul's School had the opportunity to present a wreath at the local RSL and students at Iona College led the school's Remembrance Day service. ✦



St Macartan's making connections

In a lovely gesture of community engagement, the students of St Macartan's School, Mornington, created cards and artwork for the local hospital, The Bays. Staff at the hospital were delighted with the gift.

Year 6 leaders at the school also reached out to some local sports stars and celebrities, some of whom are former students of St Macartan's, to create short videos encouraging the students, teachers and parents during remote learning. ✦



Shared Stories 2020

Last year, students from 26 Catholic schools across Victoria shared stories through prose, poetry and art, with many focusing on the COVID-19 pandemic as part of 2020's *Shared Stories Anthology*. The anthology provides remarkable insights from students ranging from Prep to Year 12 on their responses to the pandemic, both from local, personal and global perspectives.

The annual compilation of the anthology of creative works commenced in 2006 and forms part of the permanent collection of the State Library Victoria. ✦

Letters to the elderly in Ocean Grove

Students at Our Lady Star of the Sea School, Ocean Grove, showed their care for the elderly parishioners in their community by writing them letters.

The vital school-parish links provided a strong sense of identity and belonging for the children who were eager to participate in community activities such as writing letters to the elderly parishioners who might be feeling lonely during lockdown. ✦



Dancing the story of the black-throated finch

Last year, **St Mary MacKillop Catholic Primary School, Bannockburn**, won the Best Raising Awareness Story Award and the National Environment Award in the Wakakirri Challenge.

Wakakirri is Australia's largest performing arts event for schools. Through dance, the school told the story of the black-throated finch – an endangered species of birds that only live in one small, isolated part of Queensland. ✦



Clonard VCAL students lead R U OK? Day

The 2020 Year 12 VCAL class of **Clonard College, Herne Hill**, initiated a college community campaign in partnership with R U OK? Day to allow everyone to participate in a national day of action and to check in on each other's wellbeing.

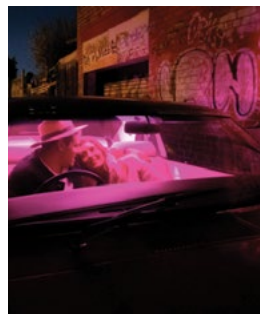
The VCAL students who led the project weaved together multiple strategies in an overall campaign that included sending care packages to all Year 12 students, running photo competitions, implementing a range of practical education resources, dressing up in yellow to show solidarity for the cause, and producing a powerful collaborative video that raised awareness, engagement and action. ✦

Virtual art shows

Loreto Mandeville Hall Toorak, Toorak, hosted its inaugural virtual VCE Art Show to showcase the works of its talented students. The VCE Art Show was launched by Australian contemporary artist Petrina Hicks and displayed the works of 70 of the school's VCE Art, Studio Arts, Visual Communication Design and Media students.

Loyola College, Watsonia, divided its 2020 Visual Arts Show into two virtual galleries: one for students in Years 7–11 and another specifically dedicated to Year 12 students. Teachers congratulated the students in a video message, acknowledging the challenges faced by students last year and celebrating their creativity.

Thomas Carr College, Tarneit, produced its 2020 Art and Technology Exhibition as a YouTube video with the theme 'Strength & Courage'. The theme for the exhibition recognised the talents of students completing their works of art and production tasks remotely. ✦



CRC Melton – 40 years in the making

Catholic Regional College, Melton, celebrated its milestone 40th anniversary in style, despite the limitations of remote learning, by launching a commemorative book *Catholic Regional College Melton – 40 Years in the Making*.

The book describes the college's visionary leaders, its committed and passionate staff, and the events and traditions that have become central to college life. ✦



An inspiring leader

Suzanne Farley, Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching at **Caroline Chisholm Catholic College, Braybrook**, was recognised by *The Knowledge Review* as one of the 10 most inspiring education leaders in Australia.



Suzanne has helped improve the school's academic results in numerous ways. She implemented the Reading Program in collaboration with the University of Melbourne, which boosted the school's NAPLAN results. ✦



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