

Catholic Education

Today



CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
MELBOURNE



A sustainable
and just future

TERM 3, 2018

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AND HUMANITY

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SUSTAINABILITY
IN THE HOME

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A Christian prayer in union with creation

*Excerpt taken from Pope Francis' encyclical letter
Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*

God of love, show us our place in this world
as channels of your love
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
Enlighten those who possess power and money
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good,
advance the weak,
and care for this world in which we live.
The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you!
Amen.



Catholic Education Today is produced by Catholic Education Melbourne,
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.

Feature Writers Christian Kerr, Michael Elliott, Rachel Saliba

Graphic Design Jump Rope Design

Photography Mark Dadswell

Printing Printgraphics, Mount Waverley

Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of
Catholic Education Melbourne. 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: (left to right) Tom, Matthew and Jamie from
St Patrick's School, Mentone



@CEMelbourne

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discussion designed for parents.

From the Executive Director



Stephen Elder
Executive Director

The other school funding matter

Federal funding issues have so dominated debate
over education policy for close to 18 months that it's
been almost possible to forget that we will be heading
to the polls to choose a state government at the end
of November.

We all know the greater Melbourne area is booming.
Not only does our city have the fastest growing
population in the country, but a string of suburbs
on the city's fringes grew by over 10 per cent last
financial year alone.

This creates an extraordinary challenge when
it comes to providing essential services such
as schooling – a challenge Catholic education is
happy to help both Labor and the Coalition with.

We already run the second largest school system
in Victoria and know the state government couldn't
do it alone. We're also helping lessen the burden
on taxpayers and state schools by building our own
schools in key growth areas, but more could be done.

Our research indicates that Catholic school enrolments
could grow by up to a third if greater government
support was available to build the facilities needed
to meet demand.

This wouldn't just create a new wave of savings for
taxpayers and reduce strains on government schools.
It would enable us to take advantage of an established
track record of making public money go a long way.

Catholic school communities already raise at least
80 per cent of every dollar they spend on capital
works: school buildings and the like. With this
in mind, we have three main requests for state
politicians ahead of the November poll.

We'll be asking for capital funding support for
Catholic schools – the introduction of a mechanism
that links state government capital spending support
for Catholic schools with state government capital
spending on its own schools, along with support for
land acquisition and the removal of restrictions on
how and where funding can be used, making Catholic
education more responsive to parental demand.

We'll also ask for planning law reform, for the state
government to cut through the red tape and different
layers of regulation that slow the development of
new schools.

And we'll be asking the state government to provide
the sort of support it's already giving its own schools
to fix safety hazards in existing facilities, such as
asbestos and flammable cladding.

Our school communities have made Canberra stop
and listen. We now need to ensure state politicians
acknowledge the importance of our Catholic schools.



For the planet – and humanity

With Melbourne's dams at their lowest level this decade and much of the country facing the worst drought in half a century, there could scarcely be a more appropriate time to talk about education for sustainability.

The global nature of environmental challenges such as climate change makes the search for solutions almost overwhelming. At the same time, however, the local footprints that we leave upon the earth can be all too clearly seen. The power to reduce – or even remove – their traces is therefore in our hands. And learning how to exercise that power in our schools not only teaches a wealth of applications of practical science, but reinforces a key mission of Catholic education – creating confident young people willing and able to make a contribution for the better.

'Catholic social teaching calls for a sustainable and just future, with its emphasis on the dignity of the human person, solidarity and the common good', Matthew Navaretti (from the Catholic Identity team at Catholic Education Melbourne) explains.

Popes from the nineteenth century have told how respect for the natural world is intertwined with respect for our fellow human beings. Indeed, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells how the wonders of creation lead us of faith: 'Light and darkness, wind and fire, water and earth, [these] speak of God and symbolize both his greatness and his nearness'.

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Catholic social teaching calls for a sustainable and just future, with its emphasis on the dignity of the human person, solidarity and the common good.
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MATTHEW NAVARETTI
(CATHOLIC IDENTITY TEAM,
CATHOLIC EDUCATION
MELBOURNE)

Pope Francis reminded us of our responsibilities to care for creation in his 2015 encyclical letter *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*. 'We are not God. The earth was here before us and it has been given to us.' That same year, Francis established the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, held annually on 1 September. The day, the Pope wrote, offers 'individual believers and communities a fitting opportunity to reaffirm their personal vocation to be stewards of creation, to thank God for the wonderful handiwork which he has entrusted to our care, and to implore his help for the protection of creation as well as his pardon for the sins committed against the world in which we live'.

These writings provide the underpinnings of the sustainability curriculum of schools across the Archdiocese of Melbourne, which sees them involved in projects from the mangroves of Western Port Bay to the beaches swept by the Southern Ocean along the Surf Coast.

Sustainability, the Johannesburg Earth Summit declared at the start of the century, means: 'enough ... for all ... forever'.

>> CONTINUED PAGE 4



For the planet –
and humanity
(CONTINUED)

The planet we live on is a gift from God. Care for others obliges us to hand it on in good condition to those who follow.

Sustainability can be the basis of a multifaceted curriculum which not only draws on and expands our knowledge of science and technology but lets our children grow as confident, caring and capable individuals – not only aware of their responsibilities for the planet but of their capabilities as human beings and the steps that can be taken at an individual, local, national and global level to ensure its future.

By participating in local projects to protect or repair habitat and biodiversity, children can see the immediate impact of their efforts. They are further empowered and grow in confidence by participating in class or school-wide decisions to analyse and reduce their waste output, decreasing water consumption and cutting down on the use of non-renewable energy. There is both a tangible element to their sustainability learning and the knowledge that they are joining with others also committed to the greater good.

Catholic schools have become statewide leaders in sustainability, attracting the interest of government and environmental organisations for their leadership

and building new relationships that will enhance their learning.

St Louis de Montfort’s School, Aspendale, has been heralded ‘top of the class’ statewide as a sustainability ‘super school’ after a decade of implementing innovative sustainability practices and teaching students and the school community ways to reduce, reuse and recycle water and waste and cut energy consumption.

Its efforts have been rewarded with a string of prizes, most notably Sustainability Victoria’s ResourceSmart Schools program School of the Decade award, which it won last year.

‘Sustainability has become part of our identity at St Louis’, says teacher Julie Wynne, a past winner of the ResourceSmart Schools award for Primary Teacher of the Year and a key driver of the school’s sustainability curriculum.

She lists some of the ‘learnsapes’ at St Louis de Montfort: an aquaponics garden, vegetable garden, permaculture area, propagating shed, orchard, chicken coop, bird aviary, animal enclosure, composting system, worm farm and reptile habitat, along with an outdoor kitchen made from repurposed shipping containers.

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CRC St Albans’ tree change

Catholic Regional College (CRC) St Albans has committed itself to an ongoing revitalisation project of habitat along Kororoit Creek, one of the major watercourses of the Port Phillip catchment.

Last term Year 9s from the college, a 2017 ResourceSmart Community Leadership School of the Year award winner, planted 1,000 native grasses, shrubs and trees along the banks of the creek at Deer Park – and community projects officer Hayden O’Doherty promised they’ll be back to do more.

The planting project is part of a collaboration between the college, Melbourne Water and the Friends of Kororoit Creek, and the area will be monitored by both the college and Melbourne Water.

‘We talked to the Friends of Kororoit Creek and Melbourne Water and they helped us select the species of plants that are most suited to the area’, Hayden said. ‘Melbourne Water helped us select a site and we’re really looking at rebuilding habitat, particularly for local flora.’

Overdevelopment has threatened the rich range of species (land, air and water) that once called the creek and its surrounds home.

‘This is a permanent initiative. We’ll be back here every year’, Hayden added. ‘We’ll be monitoring the growth of the plants, what particular animal species are down here and it’ll become part of our biodiversity audit.’ ✦



This is backed by natural playspaces where children have the opportunity for increased imaginative play, physical activity, wellbeing and resilience, and to develop a stronger connection with nature.

Julie talks of the immediate and long-term benefits of sustainability education. 'We believe there is a strong link between student wellbeing and sustainability', she says. 'Sustainability is a fantastic tool to ensure student wellbeing and engagement and our aim is to develop sustainable citizens, empowered to take positive environmental actions.'

St Louis is not alone, with other Catholic schools winning statewide acknowledgment for their involvement in sustainability programs.

As Pope Francis said: 'There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions, and it is wonderful how education can bring about real changes in lifestyle. Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting which directly and significantly affect the world around us.'

Through sustainability education, Melbourne Catholic schools are showing how those little actions can make a big difference. ✦



St Mary's Castlemaine's five-star triumph

St Mary's School, Castlemaine, has received a rare honour, becoming one of just 38 schools statewide to achieve the highest rating of '5 Stars' from Sustainability Victoria's ResourceSmart Schools program.

Principal Bronwyn Phillips said students, staff and the school community have all worked to embed sustainable practice across the curriculum 'as part of our Catholic school culture and commitment to sustainable living'.

St Mary's students have taken charge of action to minimise waste, save energy and water, promote biodiversity and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

'Earth work intrigues and grounds our children', Bronwyn noted. 'It supports wellbeing and in turn connects them with spirit.'

The achievement was celebrated at the start of August with a special assembly attended by local MP, Maree Edwards; Mount Alexander Shire Mayor, Bronwen Machin; ResourceSmart Schools Facilitator, Michelle Barton; Sustainability Victoria's Cyrella Field; members of the parish and School Advisory Council; and parents, students, teachers and friends.

According to Sustainability Victoria: 'Achieving 5 Stars is where schools embed sustainability in everything they do. Schools minimise waste, save energy and water, promote biodiversity and take action on climate change to benefit their school and community. Leadership is demonstrated ... through mentoring, sharing stories, attending conferences, hosting teacher network meetings and engaging with other environmental groups.' ✦

St Aloysius Queenscliff – the Stewards of Swan Bay

St Aloysius' School has taken advantage of its proximity to the Queenscliff Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre on the shores of Swan Bay to develop a unique marine science education program.

Backed by a generous grant from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning's Port Phillip Bay Fund awarded earlier this year, the school has implemented a two-year project under the guidance of science and sustainability leader Nicole Sadler to work on improving Port Phillip and Swan bays.

'The Stewards of Swan Bay project is aimed at inspiring primary students and helping them teach others about what they learn in school', Nicole explained. 'It involves activities ranging from

revegetation to seaweed and seagrass mapping that sees students, families and community members working to improve and learn about the local environment.'

The project involves teaming with Deakin University not only to assist with curriculum, but in a unique partnership that sees Deakin marine science student volunteers working with St Aloysius pupils in weekly science classes – a real inspiration to students.

'I enjoy learning about the ocean', Year 4 student Eamonn said. 'We do good activities that are interesting and fun. I enjoy going down to the beach to take photos and monitor the place and see the differences.' ✦

How parents can support learning about Sustainability in the home

Sustainability has been a recurring theme throughout my children's educations. Often children learn about sustainability through their inquiry unit at school and are challenged to build an understanding of how their actions as humans impact the environment around them. It is an important lesson.

Learning about sustainability provides children with the opportunity to learn not only about the environment but human nature and to develop an awareness of their human footprint on the planet.

The recent ABC series *War on Waste* has highlighted how our behaviour impacts the sustainability of native flora and fauna, providing a great focus for us as a family to build awareness in our home of the waste we generate and the impact this has on our environment.

My son and I recently took our dog for a walk along the local creek and noticed how much rubbish was being caught by the reeds and trees that had fallen across the waterway. As we walked, we discussed how nature has a means of filtering the rubbish as it gets caught along the way but, once it rains again, that rubbish will continue downstream into the bay and eventually the open sea.

Our conversations are all about learning and connecting. They enable children to witness in their own communities what they are learning at school, to think about their own behaviour, and they provide an enhanced learning opportunity that is easy for parents to engage in.

Supporting learning about sustainability in the home can extend to discussion on what we are throwing in our bins and what we could reuse or recycle. Another way to engage children is by purchasing products with recyclable packaging. Children can find these in the supermarket, then separate plastics, cardboard and other items to make sure they are placed in the right bins at home.

Taking action to encourage sustainability can be this simple, with parents engaging with their children in a way that complements what they are learning at school. Parent engagement is about seizing these moments with our children in everyday life and providing enhanced learning opportunities that also bring families closer together, sharing conversations and knowledge.

For further information about Catholic School Parents Victoria, visit the CSPV website at www.cspv.catholic.edu.au. †

By Rachel Saliba,
Catholic School
Parents Victoria

“ Learning about sustainability provides children with the opportunity to learn not only about the environment but human nature and to develop an awareness of their human footprint on the planet.

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Sapphire's *shining example*



Sapphire Khodr will leave a bright legacy when she finishes at **St Catherine's School, Moorabbin**, at the end of the year.

The Grade 6 student had already won media coverage for her 'Warmer Nights, Brighter Days' initiative, working with classmates and local business to provide 85 backpacks filled with blankets, toiletries, notepads, pens and other items for the St Vincent de Paul Society to distribute to homeless and vulnerable young people.

Sapphire has now been named an Indigenous Literacy Student Ambassador: one of only 10 in Australia.

She was able to raise almost \$1,500 to support Indigenous literacy projects through a book swap, raffle and silent auction. Sapphire approached the AFL for support, scoring signed guernseys from the 2018 Collingwood and Hawthorn teams, to help her reach the impressive fundraising total.

As Sapphire's time at St Catherine's comes to an end, she'd like to be remembered as a person who inspired other students to think about the needs of others instead of themselves.

Teacher Sandra Surace speaks of Sapphire's vision. 'There are so many initiatives all around the world where we send things abroad to people who are suffering, but she said: "Hang on a second. There are people here, people right here in our community who are suffering, kids like me."'

Another teacher, Kath Barca, says she believes Warmer Nights, Brighter Days, 'will be an ongoing project' for St Catherine's. And Sapphire? Kath is adamant, saying: 'I see great things happening with her'. ✦

In a
world of
ordinary

Nathan
ACU graduate

create
extraordinary.

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AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Welcome Archbishop Peter



At the start of August this year, the Archdiocese of Melbourne warmly welcomed our new Archbishop, Peter A Comensoli.

Photos by Naim Abelahad



“As members of the Church, we can all find youthfulness in Christ, in the Holy Spirit moving through us, directed by the Father, stirring us to action.”

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He joins us having served as the Bishop of Broken Bay for three years, and as an auxiliary bishop in the Archdiocese of Sydney for the three years before that.

In his homily at the Mass of his installation, Archbishop Peter spoke of the need for the Church to be a church of action. The Church is not a services agency or the buildings in which we worship but, rather, ‘a living being, the pilgrim People of God’, he said.

‘Our common task, then, is a missionary one,’ Archbishop Peter said. ‘We have been anointed and sent with the gospel of Jesus Christ into our families, our local neighbourhoods, and the wider society.’

As an integral part of the Archdiocesan community, Catholic schools are part of the living, vibrant People of God that our new Archbishop has spoken about. Our renewed mission in Catholic education – as parents, principals, teachers and central office staff – is to work together in faith so that young people might embrace a view of themselves and the world that leads to peace and the prospering of the whole of creation.

Having seen the impact of federal government funding policies on enrolments and fees in his former Diocese of Broken Bay – and having already been involved in discussions on the matter with the Prime Minister – Archbishop Peter is aware and appreciative of the great work of Catholic school communities in the Archdiocese in bringing about the resolution of the funding debate for Catholic schools nationally.

Archbishop Peter has already been inundated with requests, and began visiting schools in August. St John’s Regional College, Dandenong, was the first school community to celebrate Mass with our new Archbishop, just two weeks after his installation. With commitments in Rome during October for the Synod of Bishops on Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment, and heavy commitments in November, Archbishop Peter will be unavailable for many school visits for the rest of 2018 but is eager to resume visiting as many schools as possible in 2019.

We are blessed to be sent an energetic Archbishop who is keen to engage with the young people in our school communities and across Melbourne. Please keep Archbishop Peter in your prayers as he takes on the momentous work of leading the Archdiocese. †



Archbishop Hart

Now-Archbishop Emeritus Denis Hart acknowledged the sacrifices of Catholic school families, thanked Catholic education and spoke of his own schooldays in his farewell message to the Archdiocese of Melbourne before handing over to Archbishop Peter A Comensoli at the end of July.

‘As a young boy I grew up in the Jesuit parish of Hawthorn. I went to St John’s School with the Marist Brothers and later with the Jesuits at Xavier College’, Archbishop Hart said.

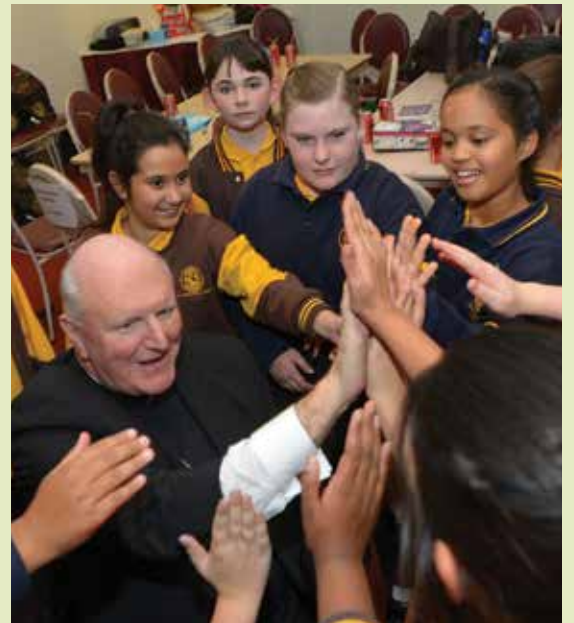
‘Melbourne is a big and diverse city, with a Church comprised of people with remarkable gifts’, he continued. ‘I am well aware of the sacrifices that families make to give their young people a Catholic education, as well as our people in education.’

In his 17 years at the helm of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, the largest archdiocese in Australia, Archbishop Hart stood as a champion of Catholic education.

‘Since his consecration in 2001, Catholic Education Melbourne has opened 37 new schools and student numbers have climbed’, Executive Director Stephen Elder said.

But Archbishop Hart’s work in education has extended far beyond the archdiocese and had a global influence on Catholic schools.

In 2006, he gave his backing to the Enhancing Catholic School Identity research study. As well as acting as a fundamental influence on Melbourne’s Catholic schools, the project has now turned into a survey of interest among educationalists worldwide. ✦



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Archbishop Hart’s work in education has extended far beyond the archdiocese and had a global influence on Catholic schools.

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No business like show business

From the spectacular opening number to the finale with hundreds of performers on stage, *Time to Shine* sparked at the State Theatre in July.

Following auditions and months of rehearsals, the stage was set for a showcase of singing and dancing with secondary students from across the Archdiocese of Melbourne. Students from over 40 schools performed musical numbers from stage and screen to the delight of the audience. Special guests Issa Schultz (from the Seven Network's *The Chase Australia*) and saxophone legend Wilbur Wilde joined students for performances of 'Tongue Twisters' and 'Sax'.

'*Time to Shine* means so much to me. It's offered me the chance to blossom as a performer and allowed me to work with industry professionals', said Amber-Rose Sindoni from St Aloysius College, North Melbourne.

The students worked with music coaches, choreographers and a team of dedicated teachers and parents to create a spectacular show at one of Melbourne's most prestigious theatres. An edited version of *Time to Shine* will be screened on the Seven Network later this year. A DVD of the performance is available for \$35 from Catholic Education Melbourne. To order, contact Bronwyn Egan at began@cem.edu.au. ✦





Refugees

Learning to build a better nation

Lavita Mossop, from Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in Ringwood, has a story that provides the perfect introduction to the work Melbourne's Catholic schools are doing with migrants and refugees.

While teaching a group of seven-year-olds, I talked about the Holy Family living in exile as refugees', she explains.

"Wait!" said a shocked little Sudanese girl. "I didn't know that Mary, Jesus and Joseph were black!"

This cute line has profound consequences. As Lavita asks, 'How will this refugee child's self-image impact on her resettlement and aspirations?'

Our schools are doing more than teaching the migrant and refugee experience, and welcoming migrant and refugee students into their school communities. They are using their position as community hubs to tackle the issues Lavita talks about, providing practical support to assist with resettlement and create a more inclusive society by helping new arrivals navigate a new culture, a new language and a new school system.

This can involve school-based education services and opportunities for involvement that stretch beyond the classroom into the home and wider community.

Good Samaritan Primary School in Roxburgh Park is breaking down barriers and assisting with resettlement by providing citizenship classes, English classes – with special sessions for mums – and a parent friendship group through its Jericho Community Learning Village, as well as offering support with IT and computers, and a weekly sewing session.

Lavita's school has refugees from Myanmar's persecuted Chin minority who have come directly from Myanmar or via camps in India and Malaysia, along with others from Sudan and Iraq and families without English from a myriad of backgrounds.

According to Lavita, one of Our Lady of Perpetual Help's initiatives is its Tuesday Meetings: informal one-hour sessions designed to create connections and build relationships with refugee and English as an Additional Language (EAL) families.

'We discuss home and school cultures, living in Australia and Australian education', Lavita explains. 'We focus on parent affirmation, parents' concerns, newsletter items, children's discipline, consumer rights, news items like recalled products, or even study courses.'

'Many things are new for us, it is very important for us to know about them to help our children. I have many difficulties but with God's guidance he has brought me to this good place, Our Lady's School and the Tuesday Meetings', notes Kim Van Nei, a Falam mother from Myanmar.

'I improved my English and made friends with other migrant families. I had lots of fun too', says Yuming Seng, a Chinese grandmother.

'After Tuesday dinner, we would sit around the table and Mum always shared what she had learned from the meeting and we learned from her too', Yuming's daughter, Lifei Zhou, adds. 'It made us feel much closer to the school and school community.'

Lavita believes providing these opportunities for inclusion and learning creates a place for migrant and refugee parents at the heart of school communities, rather than leaving them stranded on the peripheries. That's important for them and their children's education – and for all of us.

As Lavita says, 'these amazing and diverse mums, dads – and their children – can be freed to thrive and contribute their richness to Australian society'.

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Our schools are doing more than teaching the migrant and refugee experience, and welcoming migrant and refugee students into their school communities.
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Building connections

William Abur, African Family Liaison Officer at **Thomas Carr College, Tarneit**, is putting his own experience – and a recently awarded PhD – to work building connections with Australian society for young refugees and their families.

William, originally from South Sudan, moved to Australia in 2006 after a decade living in refugee camps in Kenya. He found work as a settlement social worker, dealing mainly with young people.

It became apparent to him that young people who chose to participate in areas such as sport seemed to integrate better into life in Australia, while those without such social connections became disengaged: observations he has now formalised in a doctorate examining the benefits of participation in employment and sport as basic strategies to assist people with refugee backgrounds settle better.

William explains, 'the families and individuals whom I worked with regularly raised the issue of unemployment and the resulting financial difficulties. They also raised the issue of feeling a lack of connection to the broader community, and lack of knowledge about opportunities for young people to engage in recreational and leisure activities.'

The college is not only grateful, but extremely proud to have William on staff. 'He is a wonderful example to all students, staff and parents', principal Andrew Watson says, praising William as someone 'willing to go above and beyond for not only his colleagues, but for the students and families of Thomas Carr College'. ✦

A show of hope

Students from **St Mary's School, Williamstown**, put August to good use, devoting the month to raising funds for the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre.

Their efforts finished with the 'Show of Hope' art exhibition in Catholic Migrant and Refugee Week.

The exhibition used photographs from around the world to inspire students to create art about the refugee experience, hosted guest speakers and sold prints to raise funds for the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project.

'Whatever we donate – food, money, time or just a show of hope – it will make a big difference', student Jade said of the experience. 'I learned that when we all come together in a show of hope, it makes the biggest difference of all.' ✦



Community in overdrive

Cr Geoff Porter has taken a year off from teaching at Holy Child Primary School, Dallas, to serve as mayor of the City of Hume. Cr John Kavanagh has taken a year off from teaching at St Matthew's School, Fawkner North, to serve as mayor of the neighbouring City of Moreland. With many years of teaching and local government between them, the pair share their wisdom about these different yet similar roles.

What was the spark for entering local government?

Geoff: I've lived in the local area all my life, and I had a fantastic upbringing and was always doing things outside. When you're involved in teaching, you begin to develop a better understanding of the community. The more I learned about the community, the more I wanted to be involved and wanted to make a difference. Not all of the decisions councils make are popular, but they're always done in the best interest of the people involved and the local community, and I wanted to be part of making that difference.

John: I've got a family history of involvement in politics. My grandfather was minister for health, housing and forestry and a member of parliament for Carlton from 1932 to 1955, as well as a Melbourne City councillor. My brother was a member of Victorian parliament, my cousin is humanitarian Moira Kelly and my grandmother campaigned for the welfare of female prisoners, so growing up in that environment encouraged me to put others before myself.

What are the similarities and differences between teaching and local government?

John: It's all about service. Teaching is about service and I believe being a councillor is about serving the community as well. Teaching prepares you for that. There are times when you're dealing with people in difficult circumstances and people who are disappointed with something. Teaching has prepared me well for working with residents and their concerns, but the big difference is the variety of people you come into contact with.

“Teaching is about service and I believe being a councillor is about serving the community as well.”

“When you're involved in teaching, you begin to develop a better understanding of the community. The more I learned about the community, the more I wanted to be involved and wanted to make a difference.”



Cr Geoff Porter and Cr John Kavanagh

Geoff: What's similar is working to make the lives of people better. To see the number of ways different groups are engaged with the community reminds me of the school setting, but on a much larger scale. Our role is to listen to the community, to understand what is good, what is bad and how we can make a difference in people's lives. I would encourage anyone who's been involved in schools to be involved in the broader community because teachers have the skills to listen, understand and make change.

What are some of the challenges in your communities?

Geoff: Cost of living pressures. We have to be diligent with the use of public money, and there are a lot of things councils do because they aren't being done by other levels of government, but we don't want people falling through the cracks. We want to give new arrivals in the country the support to make sure they're truly welcomed into Australia and into our local communities. There's a duty of care to make sure we're doing as much as we can.

John: A change to manufacturing and factory closures in the area has had a huge impact on our local communities. A lot of people feel that council can do everything for everyone. There's no doubt that local government is the closest level of government to the people, but we can't be all things to all people.

What are the opportunities?

John: When I started on council in 2004, we had almost no contact with our neighbouring councils. Now we meet together regularly to make sure we can get the best outcomes possible for our communities. It's like the pentagonal collective that we have at our

schools, where five schools work together to improve maths outcomes for all students. By working together for the common good, we can achieve more.

Geoff: Being in neighbouring municipalities gives us the opportunity to work together on the big ticket items. Something I'd like to see us doing as a collective is the reduction of waste or converting waste to energy. One council can't do that, but if we all collaborate we can make a great change to the health of the planet.

What's the best thing about being a teacher and a mayor?

Geoff: It's important to be able to share the message to follow your dreams and keep your aspirations alive. I have received a number of letters from local students asking about waste and recycling, so it's great for me to know they're taking an interest in current events, particularly around people's health and our environment. Be it a school or the wider community, it's a great privilege to be part of.

John: Teaching in the municipality in which I'm a councillor is a benefit to the school and the council. We're both in schools that have a high refugee population, and it's very comforting for the children and parents to see that in Australia anyone can be elected to anything. Both of our schools are outward-facing communities and, when you can make links with the many groups and organisations, it's community in overdrive. ✦

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Bringing Faith to Life



Homelessness priority for new Junior Lord Mayor

Melbourne's latest Junior Lord Mayor, Grade 6 student Chloe Amalfi of **Genazzano FCJ College, Kew**, officially took up her new role on 30 August, Melbourne Day. Chloe, whose platform for the role impressed judges including Lord Mayor Sally Capp and Nine News presenter Peter Hitchener, nominated CBD homelessness as a key priority, later telling 3AW she would like to see council work with the state government and welfare agencies to develop support and employment programs specifically tailored for the city's rough sleepers. Chloe follows in the footsteps of a long line of students from Melbourne Catholic schools in taking on the role of Junior Lord Mayor. ✦



Junior chefs cook-off

In May, **Sacred Heart College, Kyneton**, hosted its Junior Chef competition at the college's hospitality centre. The 48 competitors were Grade 4 students from six Catholic primary schools from the Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander shires.

Sacred Heart senior hospitality students mentored the competitors – providing guidance and assistance, and quickly building a rapport with the junior chefs.

The winning team from **Holy Cross Primary School, New Gisborne**, received a \$250 voucher towards their kitchen garden. ✦



MLMC wins netball cup at Worawa Aboriginal College sports carnival

On 22 May, **Mount Lilydale Mercy College (MLMC)** was invited by Worawa Aboriginal College to take part in their sports carnival. Hosted on the spiritual land of Coranderrk in Healesville, MLMC students, along with others from various schools, were extended a warm welcome.

The football and netball tournament is held in recognition of Reconciliation Week, with girls from Years 8–10 competing after a Welcome to Country and traditional smoking ceremony.

MLMC claimed a second successive Naomi Atkinson Memorial Trophy for netball after an unbeaten run through the six pool rounds before beating Firkbank Grammar School in the semi-final 10–5 and winning the grand final 13–7 against Shelford Girls' Grammar. ✦

Graduate teachers celebration

The 14 June celebration at the Catholic Leadership Centre officially welcomed 160 graduate teachers to Catholic education. The Mass at St John the Evangelist Church was celebrated by then-Archbishop Denis Hart with the master of ceremonies, Reverend Linh Pham. Mass was followed by high tea at the Catholic Leadership Centre during which the attendees heard from guest speakers.

The graduate teachers were inspired by Catholic Education Melbourne Executive Director Stephen Elder's address on leadership, and two recent graduates – David Bellis from **Marcellin College, Bulleen**, and Emma Canning from **St Peter's School, Epping** – also addressed the attendees with reflections on their teaching experience and words of advice. ✦



Refugee Week at Thomas Carr College

Members of the community gathered at **Thomas Carr College, Tarneit**, to celebrate Refugee Week in June with a symposium and art engagement project launch.

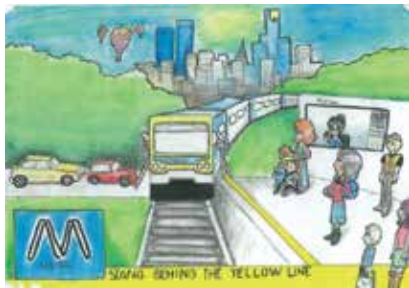
The college was successful in obtaining an 'Identity, Inclusion and Connection' grant from Wyndham City Council to fund the art engagement project, which will involve a local artist mentoring the students in the development of mosaic artworks.

Principal Andrew Watson, Liturgy Captain Kerry Wang and Wyndham City Council's Nicola Wright broke tiles to be used in the final artwork. Once completed, the mosaic will be permanently displayed on an exterior wall of the college and will act as an ongoing symbol to staff, parents and other stakeholders of the welcoming of refugees into the community. ✦



Stay behind the yellow line

Artist Chloe Hidalgo from **Holy Name School, Reservoir**, was announced winner of the Metro Trains Rail Safety poster competition. Chloe's work reinforces the importance of everyone staying behind the yellow line to promote rail safety. ✦



St Kevin's student wins PESA state final

Samuel Roach of **St Kevin's College, Toorak**, was chosen as the Victorian winner of the 2018 Plain English Speaking Award (PESA) after six inspiring Victorian students took to the stage at Treasury Theatre on 25 July to demonstrate their outstanding skills in research, speechwriting and public speaking.

Samuel, whose speech 'The phase' discussed boyhood and the coming of age, received a trophy donated by the Australia-Britain Society (Victoria) and a book voucher donated by the English-Speaking Union (Victorian Branch). He went on to compete in the national final in Darwin on Sunday 12 August 2018. ✦



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Schools garden grants

The Victorian Schools Garden Awards (VSGA) grants program recognises the importance and value of gardens and outdoor spaces in progressive modern education. Held in tandem with the awards program, the grants program is designed to encourage schools to start new gardens and provides funding towards school garden projects.

During May, the VSGA evaluated 210 grant applications received from 120 Victorian schools. Forty-one successful schools shared in \$40,000 worth of vouchers and products, and now have the opportunity to undertake their proposed garden projects.

The following Melbourne Catholic schools received VSGA grants in 2018: **Holy Name School, Reservoir; MacKillop Catholic Regional College, Werribee; Parade College, Bundoora; St Joseph's School, Sorrento; Mary Immaculate School, Ivanhoe; Christian Brothers' College, St Kilda East; De La Salle College, Malvern; and Sacred Heart School, Yea.** †

A Science Week world record

An important world record was (unofficially) broken in August at **Marymede Catholic College, South Morang**, as part of National Science Week.

Previously held by Black Pines School in California, the world record for 'the largest gathering of people dressed as Albert Einstein' was broken with the help of **St Joseph's School, Mernda, St Paul the Apostle, Doreen, and St Mary's School, Whittlesea.** The 541 wigged and moustached students from the four schools broke the previous record by 237 people. The college will now collate all the evidence and send it to the Guinness World Records headquarters in London for official verification. †



Early learning at Marymede

An early learning centre has been officially opened at **Marymede Catholic College, South Morang**. Then-Archbishop Hart and member for Yan Yean, Danielle Green MP, unveiled the plaque at the new centre which is offering kindergarten programs for three and four-year-olds.

The Marymede Early Learning Centre will also offer classes in art, science and Italian with access to the college's facilities. Sixty children are currently enrolled, with an additional 140 children expected to be enrolled by the end of the year. †



Avila book launch

Avila College, Mount Waverley, recently announced the launch of a new children's book. Aimed at primary school readers, the book was designed to demystify secondary school and assist with the transition journey.

Written, illustrated and designed by Avila students who are members of the college's Quill & Ink Writer's Guild, the book features two stories, 'The Scarlet Ribbon' and 'Where is Ms Purr?', together with a set of activities and puzzles. †



Mercy in our community

Students from **Mercy College, Coburg**, came to the aid of a seriously injured student from a neighbouring school who had suffered a significant fall from her bike.

On their bus ride home, Mercy College students witnessed Coburg High School student, Erica, fall off her bike. Year 7 Mercy students alerted the driver to the situation and immediately called for an ambulance, then senior Mercy students left the bus and stayed with Erica until one of her parents and the ambulance arrived at the scene.

Erica and her mother later attended Mercy College for morning tea to express their appreciation and to formally thank the quick-thinking Mercy students who didn't hesitate to offer support when another student was in great need. ✦



Marcellin student represents Australia in science

Marcellin College, Bulleen, Year 11 VCE student Stephen Catsamas represented Australia at the UNESCO-sanctioned International Science Olympiads in July and was awarded a bronze medal. Stephen and 16 other young Australians competed against some of the smartest secondary school students in the world.

Stephen outperformed thousands of other students in selection exams and training to represent Australia in physics. He also received a bronze medal at the 2018 Asian Physics Olympiad (APhO) in Hanoi, Vietnam. ✦



St John's students 'on track'

Over the school holidays, **St John's Regional College, Dandenong**, hosted the Mushroom Group's 'On Track' music program. Over five days, students expanded their knowledge of music and gained new skills relating to DJing and rapping.

Part of the program involved collaborating in small groups to produce a rap. Starting with a writing exercise to clear their minds, the students then wrote down lyrics while listening to some music. Everyone was encouraging and many were open to sharing ideas or verses they came up with.

A typical day consisted of advice from mentors, with the occasional special guest talking about the music industry. These segments were considered insightful and many lessons were gained from the professionals' experiences. The program ended with a student performance on the last day. ✦



Partnership with passion

With 2018 its first year of operation, **Lisieux Catholic Primary School, Torquay North**, was honoured to be approached by the VCAL team from **Clonard College** in Geelong to participate in a partnership to enhance its outdoor spaces.

Clonard College VCAL students engage in a program known as Backyard Blitz, which requires them to plan a local outdoor makeover initiative. The process involves collaboration with hosts, design work, occupational health and safety (OHS) considerations, measuring and construction. The project allows students to develop skills in an industry that many have not been exposed to previously and provides the opportunity to 'get their hands dirty' in a creative and authentic way.

After a period of planning, the students spent two days on site at Lisieux and constructed a chicken pen, installed raised vegetable gardens, painted a wall mural, and erected bollards which were painted in house colours and marked with Lisieux students' handprints. ✦



“

There is a nobility in the duty to care for creation through little daily actions, and it is wonderful how education can bring about real changes in lifestyle.

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POPE FRANCIS, *LAUDATO SI'*, N. 211