

Catholic Education

Today



CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
MELBOURNE



**Funding: fairness,
fact and fiction**

TERM 2, 2018

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FOR JUSTICE
TOGETHER

12 AROUND THE
ARCHDIOCESE

Prayer of Desire

Inspired by Psalm 27:4

One thing I ask of you Lord,
For this I long:
to live in your house O Lord
all the days of my life,
to behold your beauty O Lord,
to savour the sweetness of your words,
and to dwell in your temple.
Amen.



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From the Executive Director



Stephen Elder
Executive Director

While we shiver through the winter, there are some signs of change, of warmth. It is impossible not to feel inspired by the extraordinary range of activities and accomplishments we see every day in our Catholic schools across the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

Although we can only highlight a handful in every issue of *Catholic Education Today*, there are many substantial examples. They range from seeing our STEM students act as town planners and drivers of new economic opportunity, our schools work for understanding and reconciliation between black and white Australia, the valued involvement of our parent communities and all the school-specific activities that deepen the faith of Catholic students, equipping them with a keener knowledge that will not only enhance their future success but enable them to make a greater contribution to our society.

There is change in the leadership of our Church, with Denis Hart, a bulwark of support for Catholic schools, retiring after 17 years as Archbishop of Melbourne and Peter A Comensoli taking his place. We thank Archbishop Hart for his leadership and counsel and welcome Archbishop Comensoli, mindful of the battles he has fought for Catholic education in his former Diocese of Broken Bay in New South Wales.

The Turnbull Government's review of SES scores, the key determinant of funding for non-government schools, has confirmed what Catholic Education Melbourne has said all along – that they discriminate against Catholic schools and Catholic school parents. The Prime Minister's mid-July meeting with representatives of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference offers a good start to further negotiations as an election draws ever closer.

As you may have seen from media reports over recent months, we have been working hard to ensure that the federal government's school funding policies do not discriminate against any sector. Catholic Education Melbourne is committed to seeing a fair and efficient use of government funds.

Importantly, there are signs of thaw in relationships with the Turnbull Government. Although it seems we are slowly being included rather than frozen out of decision-making, it is too early to say we have achieved a breakthrough in our battle to keep Catholic education open, affordable and accessible in the wake of the Gonski 2.0 package.

Mindful of the potential closeness of an election, this edition of *Catholic Education Today* concentrates on funding facts: where we are now and what needs to happen for a fair outcome to prevail. †

Facing the facts on funding

It may sound like an exaggeration, but the future of Catholic education in Australia is at a crucial turning point.

Catholic education matters. Its significance to parents across Australia is reflected in the fundamental facts: as the nation's second biggest school sector, it is entrusted with the education of over three-quarters of a million students in some 1,750 schools.

Catholic schools strive to provide an education that develops engaged and purposeful young people, able not only to thrive but to make a difference in a complex world.

All this is at risk because of government funding policies.

What's happening and why does it matter?

Education Minister Simon Birmingham's unfair Gonski 2.0 funding package threatens Catholic education's ability to continue providing high-quality, affordable and accessible, faith-based education to all those who want it.

Gonski 2.0 effects radical changes to how Catholic education is funded, both at an individual school level and across the different statewide systems. In fact, leaked Education Department figures indicate the sector could be left \$4.6 billion worse off over the next 10 years.

In a worst case scenario, these changes will result in fee increases in many Catholic schools and may ultimately cause hundreds of schools across Australia to close. Local parish primary schools, the foundation



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of the Catholic education system, are particularly at risk, compromising the right of parents to choose a school that best meets their children's needs.

Campaigning by Catholic education, parents and school communities has spared the sector from the full force of the Gonski 2.0 measures until 2019, but Senator Birmingham has already cut the amount of funding for more than one in three Victorian Catholic schools this year. This has put a strain on the entire Catholic school system as it tries to fill the funding gaps.

In the long term, however, this approach will be unsustainable. Without changes to funding arrangements, Catholic education will be threatened by fee increases and school closures.

Why the urgency?

A federal election could be held any time between now and May next year. This election environment increases the sector's ability to put pressure on political leaders to support Catholic education, but also requires prompt action from parents and school communities as part of a compelling, cut-through campaign for fairer funding.

>> CONTINUED PAGE 4

Opposition Leader Bill Shorten has already written to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, pledging that Labor, if elected, would restore the \$17 billion it says have been cut from funding across all school sectors. Mr Shorten has said, 'Our calculations confirm Catholic schools would be more than \$250 million better off in our first two years of government alone, and billions of dollars better off over the decade'.

At the same time, the Turnbull Government has a fresh opportunity to repair much of the damage done to Catholic schools by Senator Birmingham's funding changes.

School SES scores

Catholic schools' greatest concerns with the Gonski 2.0 funding changes involve the bureaucratic method of calculating school SES scores. SES – short for 'socio-economic status' – scores are supposed to measure the ability of parents at individual schools to afford fees. Small changes in scores can lead to large changes in funding.

School SES scores are based on the combined Census information from 'neighbourhoods' (statistical areas of about 150 households) where school students live. They assume that all families from a statistical area are the same and can afford to pay the same school fees.

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Catholic education has produced extensive research showing that this assumption is incorrect and instead SES scores *overstate* the amount Catholic school families can afford to pay in fees and *understate* the resources available to families with children in exclusive independent schools. This distortion means less money goes to Catholic schools and more to independent schools, placing an unfair fee burden on Catholic school families.

The research on SES scores was presented to Senator Birmingham well before the release of Gonski 2.0. He ignored it when drawing up the funding changes, even though the original Gonski Report had recommended changes to SES back in 2011, but later, under pressure from Catholic education, parent groups, school communities, education experts and members of parliament, agreed to an SES review.





The review, released in July, offered a complete vindication of Catholic education's opposition to the school funding policy changes and defence of low-fee schools. It found SES scores are biased in favour of independent schools, underfund Catholic schools and could be made more accurate by using better targeted Census data or other measures of parental income.

These findings give the government a chance to change school funding policy and tackle key concerns of Catholic schools. The clock, however, is ticking for Senator Birmingham.

By failing to listen to Catholic education last year, not holding genuine consultations and releasing the Gonski 2.0 funding arrangements without making the changes to SES urged in the original Gonski Report, Senator Birmingham has already wasted close to 18 months.

Worse, he has created a situation where Catholic and other non-government schools around the nation have returned for Term 3 and are starting to plan for 2019 without knowing what funding will be available from the Australian Government.

So what happens now?

At the moment, there is a clear difference between the Coalition and Labor Opposition policies on Catholic school funding. If Labor wins the federal election, many Catholic education concerns would be resolved.

The SES review has given the Turnbull Government the chance to hit the reset button, but while the school system waits to see how Senator Birmingham responds, Catholic education will not stop campaigning for firm changes to Gonski 2.0 – and there are plenty of opportunities for parents and school communities to get involved.

Action is required now, not promises. Anything else will simply delay the transition to fairer funding.

Senator Birmingham appears to have put off real reform until at least 2020 and, unsurprisingly, independent school lobbyists have urged an even longer delay. If he is trying to defer a final decision until after the next election, the Senator should know he is in no position to say 'trust me' to Catholic education.

What can parents and schools do?

The Catholic education sector is already enormously grateful for the hard work of its parents and school communities in the fight for fair funding. But clearly, the battle isn't over.

Catholic school communities are well-informed, mobilised and ready to campaign, and will be watching closely to see how the government responds to the SES review.

Between now and the election, as events unfold, schools will be provided with up-to-date information on how to continue the battle. This will include:

- material to assist families and schools to write letters to Turnbull Government MPs and Senators on the impact of Gonski 2.0 and the need for swift changes to funding
- guides on how parent groups and school boards can lobby federal parliamentarians.

The trust placed by school communities in the Catholic system is sincerely appreciated and will ideally be repaid by the sector working together to preserve parent choice and the affordable, accessible, quality Catholic education valued by all. †

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Geelong students' global

STEM success

The STEM skills of seven students from Christ the King School, Newcomb, and their vision for urban renewal has taken them from Geelong to Singapore to a victory in the *FIRST* LEGO League Open Invitational Central Europe 2018 in Hungary, a triumph Principal Jose Blackley has heralded as a 'defining moment' for the school.

“ Along the way they were tested on their ability to think critically, apply maths and science skills, and design, program and operate an autonomous LEGO EV3 robot to showcase the benefits of STEM learning.

”

The group were all primary pupils at Christ the King last year when they entered the state division of the *FIRST* LEGO League Competition and progressed to the national finals.

Their vision to turn the old Alcoa aluminium smelter site at Point Henry into a carbon emission-free tourist attraction won them the Australian Inspiration prize and a place in the international competition.

Technology and the environment

The students – Jack Bond, Makaira Le, Zali Mew, Will Scott, James Sells, Jessica Sullivan and Joshua Walpole – worked for six months to redesign Point Henry as a totally sustainable tourist site they named 'Gardens of Change'.

Along the way they were tested on their ability to think critically, apply maths and science skills, and design, program and operate an autonomous LEGO EV3 robot to showcase the benefits of STEM learning.

Despite half a century of industrial operations, Point Henry wetlands have remained an important bird habitat for the critically endangered orange-bellied parrot and a range of migratory species that call the site their southern home.

As part of the research component of the competition, the students were faced with a real-world water challenge, creating a totally sustainable irrigation system for their Gardens of Change alongside experts from local utility Barwon Water.

In the final assessment, the team also had to demonstrate that they understood the ethical implications of their design and put the concept in the public realm for community exposure and comment.

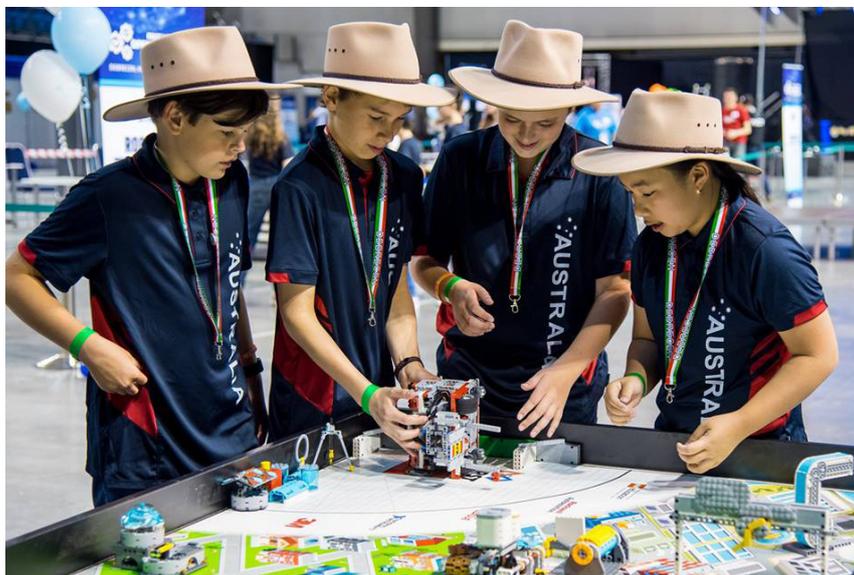
Such was the impact of the Christ the King idea, that it was raised in the Victorian Parliament and a feature on the proposal displayed on the City of Greater Geelong website was viewed over 7,000 times.

Success and acclaim

As a result of their concept and teamwork, the students were awarded the Australian Inspiration prize and a trip to the international finals.

The team, many now in secondary school, faced a fresh challenge: raising \$40,000 to fully fund their travel to Europe. After tin-rattling, selling raffle tickets and establishing a GoFundMe page, the journey to Hungary was made possible by support from Catholic Education Melbourne and industry partnerships.

On the way the team stopped in Singapore to see the inspiration for their Point Henry concept, the Supertrees, a tourist attraction of eighteen 16-storey high tree-shaped forms constructed around the Singapore waterfront that provide a vertical garden of over 160,000 plants from some 200 species, generate their own electricity through solar cells and contain a 128-metre long walkway.





One final test awaited the Christ the King team on their arrival: as one of the youngest teams, they were facing off against 15, 16 and 17-year-olds. Ultimately, age proved no handicap to the Melbourne Catholic education representatives in their battle against the world's best STEM students.

They were awarded first place in the Core Values – Teamwork section of the contest ahead of 67 international teams, while teacher and team coach Aisha Kristiansen received the Adult Mentor/Coach Award.

Valuable lessons

Principal Jose Blackley has been particularly delighted with the win, given that Christ the King is a lower socioeconomic status school. 'It is testament to our belief that our students are capable of achieving outstanding results, given the right levels of support and opportunity', she said, describing the win as 'inspiring' for the school and the Geelong community.

Aisha developed the theme, saying, 'This recognition affirmed that our approach to education creates meaningful and long-lasting opportunities', describing her own award as 'the culmination of many people working together to achieve an amazing outcome for our students'.

Team member Makaira Le feels the squad won a second award: 'an award of opportunity and new friends'.

Her colleague Joshua Walpole said their triumph 'doesn't just show a victory, but reveals the hard

work that goes into making this team what it is', while Zali Mew stressed the teamwork aspects. 'Winning first place in the Core Values – Teamwork category was the best award to win because it proved how well we collaborated, communicated and worked together', she stated.

Aisha sees the win as a victory for Christ the King's approach. 'Christ the King aims to create critical, creative and collaborative learners, and this underpins all of our learning and teaching programs throughout the school', she said. 'The win only affirms that we are headed in the right direction.'

The award has a particular significance in Geelong, a manufacturing and industrial centre seeking a high-tech driven future.

Jose hopes the combination of a \$2 million refurbishment that will create a new Year 3–6 project-based learning space and the win will generate greater interest in STEM at Christ the King. She believes the competition has helped parents understand how STEM fits with the more traditional elements of the curriculum.

'Parents want their children to develop transferable skills of collaboration, design thinking and high-end use of digital technology', Jose said. 'At Christ the King, there is now an agreed acceptance and desire for the children to have opportunities to excel in both the core and the interdisciplinary areas of learning.'

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JOSE BLACKLEY
PRINCIPAL

The crucial role of Catholic school families advocating for Catholic education



By Rachel Saliba
Catholic School
Parents Victoria

As Catholic school parents, you have thought very carefully before choosing a specific school for your child. It may have family links, an attractive reputation or simply feel like the right fit.

Last year's changes to federal government funding legislation for non-government schools have not only highlighted the importance of continuing to provide the choice for families of a Catholic education for their children, but raised concerns about misperceptions surrounding Catholic education that exist among politicians, the media and the public at large.

Catholic schools have been providing low-fee education for families from a broad range of backgrounds for 200 years. This has enabled children of Catholic and other backgrounds to receive a Catholic education despite their financial circumstances. The generosity of Catholic schools in providing low-fee options for families is often understated and perhaps unknown, even in our own school communities.

There is clearly a need to build more awareness of the value of our schools and for Catholic school families to become public and vocal advocates for Catholic education.

So many wonderful learning experiences happen every day in Catholic schools. Now is the time for families to be proud and share their unique stories

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Now is the time for families to be proud and share their unique stories to ensure a positive future for Catholic education.
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to ensure a positive future for Catholic education. Parent advocacy is now critical. We need your support to ensure Catholic education continues to be an affordable choice for all families.

The 2017 school funding legislation was introduced without adequate consultation with Catholic education authorities and parents. Since then, research and rigorous campaigning by Catholic education has revealed a key part of the funding mechanism, SES scores, overstates the ability of Catholic school parents to afford fees.

This has been confirmed in an independent review by the new National School Resourcing Board, handed down late in June 2018. Key findings from the review include using more accurate and immediate measures of parental income. Whatever funding decisions are made, Catholic school families will be impacted, making it vital for parents to be informed and have a voice in the process.

Victorian Catholic education authorities and school communities, along with CSPV, have been working hard to tell our politicians of the impact of the current funding model. It is imperative the federal government, no matter which political party, continues to provide choice for families, including quality Catholic schools.

CSPV encourages you to support school efforts to increase awareness in your communities and with local parliamentarians of the value of a Catholic education. It's critical for decision-makers to understand why Catholic schools should be supported and valued enough to continue to provide adequate funding for our schools.

For updates, visit <http://cspv.catholic.edu.au/>. ✦

What can you do to support this campaign?

1. Encourage families to build the Catholic school brand by sharing positive experiences on social media (created by your school).
2. Support your principal in efforts to contact and meet with local MPs to raise the concerns of Catholic school parents regarding school funding, fees and the future of Catholic education.
3. Send CSPV a story about your experience as a Catholic school family so it can be shared more widely.

Growth mindset

Robert Horwood, Principal of Stella Maris School, Beaumaris, talks about what's required for every student and teacher to flourish.

What do you like about working in a Catholic school?

Designing opportunities to spread God's message of love for all and regularly coming together as a school family to assist each other to make sense of the world with a Catholic vision.

A few years ago, as our yearly theme we used the song, 'Roar' by Katy Perry to challenge everyone in our community to be strong, active and proud Catholics. We highlighted the treasures of our faith, such as the presence of Jesus, the gift of grace, the sacraments and our clergy, and modelled gratitude for the wonderful outcomes resulting from meaningful relationships in the parish, school, local and global community.

A Catholic educator requires ...

... a very positive outlook on the world and on our future. By approaching each day with a growth mindset, educators can model and teach resilience skills so that our learners are more able to work through the tough times and celebrate their achievements in the outstanding times. Educators require an ability to co-create innovative, deep and powerful learning experiences.

Catholic educators need to welcome the delicate balance between listening to student voice and allowing students to question their identity and place in the contemporary world while maintaining a strong Catholic worldview.

The greatest challenge for parents today ...

With more parents working, the breakdown of family structures and the pressures of being time-poor, many families have less time to be together and to enjoy and discuss everyday life. The wisdom, love, support and influence of grandparents and extended family appear to be less evident in the modern family. These factors can lead to a sense of uncertainty and

anxiousness for parents, who then unknowingly pass feelings of anxiety and lack of resilience on to their children. Sometimes, real or implied pressure to be perfect, compete, achieve success in everything they do and never being allowed to fail sets our learners up to be anxious teenagers and adults.

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The challenge for all of us is to embrace new technologies but also make time to be together, to read, to play, and to win and lose board games.

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By the time I retire ...

I would like to see schools equipped with the human and physical resources to allow each child and staff member to continue to develop strong relationships so that they can flourish.

I also want to say ...

Parental contribution to learning cannot be outsourced. Stronger partnerships with the school leads to better outcomes and opportunities for our learners. Children need time to be children and to worry less about issues. The challenge for all of us is to embrace new technologies but also make time to be together, to read, to play, and to win and lose board games. ✦



Walking the Road to Reconciliation

Catholic schools from around Melbourne have marked National Reconciliation Week, with many drawing inspiration from AFL great Michael Long's famous 2004, 650-kilometre 'Long Walk' from his home in the city's suburbs to Parliament House in Canberra to highlight issues confronted by Indigenous Australians.



Aquinas College, Ringwood, kept the link to Long's beloved Bombers alive in its Long Walk this year, with former Essendon star Courtenay Dempsey, along with athletics great and former senator Nova Peris, joining the college community and guests from surrounding schools for commemorations and celebrations, a move described by Principal Darren Atkinson as 'particularly special' and 'a privilege'.

Events began with a Welcome to Country and passing of the message stick. This was followed by a prayer, before the gathering heard from the special guests.

'Ms Peris shared the story of her own mother, who was part of the Stolen Generation and removed from her mother at age eight', Darren said. 'She implored the students to embrace the full history of Australia by promoting the hashtag #DontKeepHistoryAMystery on social media.'

Darren said over 25 neighbouring schools across all sectors were invited to send representatives, making the Walk a truly community event. 'With almost 1,800 participants on the day, the Aquinas Long Walk is a key event in the Reconciliation Week activities.'

The Long Walk was described by senior students as 'truly an inspiring event, full of smiles and joy' and 'a small step in the journey towards reconciliation'.

A Year 11 student said, 'We hope to show that as a group of young people we are aiming for a better nation, full of reconciliation and respect for all'. Pointing to Nova Peris's speech the student said, 'She shared with us the idea that while we cannot change the past, it is up to us to ensure we create a harmonious future'.

Along with the Walk, the Aquinas celebrations featured performances highlighting young talent and Indigenous culture.

Parade College, Bundoora, hosted its second 'Road to Reconciliation' festival as part of National Reconciliation Week.

The Parade community was joined by students and staff from other Edmund Rice Education Australia schools: St Joseph's College, Newtown, St Kevin's College, Toorak and St Patrick's College, Ballarat, as well as Mercy College, Coburg, St Pius X School, Heidelberg West and Santa Maria College, Northcote, for a day of cultural celebrations that culminated in a Long Walk re-enactment.

Goals of the day were to continue to raise awareness of Aboriginal history and culture, and to consider where schools and society are at in relation to the reconciliation journey.

On the path to a just future



Events began with a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony, before the attendees heard from Sherry Balcombe of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry.

After breaking into groups to discuss Sherry's message and hearing a performance from Indigenous musician Jayden Lillyst, students then took part in a Q & A session with a panel including Jayden, teacher Mathew Lillyst, a graduate of the Australian Catholic University Melbourne's Bachelor of Teaching course and the 2010 winner of the Governor-General's Indigenous Student Teacher Scholarship for Victoria, Muriel Bamblett, the Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency and the winner of a broad range of awards for community service, and Indigenous educator Eva Jo Edwards, a member of the Stolen Generation who was taken from her family at Swan Hill aged five and spent the next 13 years in institutions.

Parade students spoke of the day's experiences and what they had learned.

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What it means for me is actually understanding and developing a sense of emotion and feeling towards Aboriginal culture and what happened in the past.

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RYLIE CADD
YEAR 11

'Today has been really useful for people like me', Year 11 Baxter said. 'I know a bit about the Aboriginal culture but definitely have a lot more to learn. I feel as if it just really opens my eyes to what's actually happening and how they feel.'

His classmate, Zac, agreed. 'Seeing a lot of people here who do care is pretty cool', he said.

Year 11 Rylie was full of praise for the day. 'It means that people can come together, people who are Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, to reconcile with the past and hopefully gain an understanding of what it means to continue in the future and, hopefully, what it means to have a personal reconciliation.'

'What it means for me', Rylie continued, 'is actually understanding and developing a sense of emotion and feeling towards Aboriginal culture and what happened in the past'.

The graphic features the text 'MISSION SAVER STUDENT' in large, bold, blue letters. To the left, 'Your INVESTMENT' is written above a yellow lightbulb icon. Below the main text, 'HELPS US BUILD CHURCHES' is written above an illustration of a church. To the right, 'aged care/ HEALTH FACILITIES' is written above an illustration of a hospital building, and 'and SCHOOLS' is written above an illustration of a school building. At the bottom right, a tree icon is positioned above the word 'Thanks!'.

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A day in the life of an international student

Alice Mei, an international student at Aquinas College, Ringwood, was named a runner up in the Victorian Government's 'A Day in the Life of an International Student' video competition. Alice was enthusiastic about creating her own video and enlisted her mum and friends from school to help with the filming. ✦

Simpson Prize

Sara Hinton, student at Ave Maria College, Aberfeldie, is the Victorian winner of the Simpson Prize for 2018. Sara received her certificate and medallion from the Assistant Minister for Vocational Education and Skills, the Hon. Karen Andrews MP, at a presentation ceremony at Parliament House, Canberra in March. ✦



Sara and Ave Maria College Principal Elizabeth Hanney

Going up!

'It's the first time I've ever blessed an elevator', said Archbishop Denis Hart (now Archbishop Emeritus) at St Patrick's School, Mentone, at the official opening and blessing of the school's latest addition in May. With an extension including an elevator, every classroom in the 114-year-old school is now fully accessible.

Joining the then Archbishop was Parish Priest, Fr Michael McEntee, along with representatives from the state government and Catholic Education Melbourne. Principal Tim Noonan said that while the elevator may be small in size, 'its outcome is enormous'. ✦



Premier's VCE Awards

Five students from schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne were recognised as Top All-Round VCE High Achievers for demonstrating excellence in at least five VCE subjects at this year's Premier's VCE Awards.

Emma Barham from Genazzano FCJ College, Kew; Callum Holmes from Parade College, Bundoora; Bronte Robinson and Annie Yu from Loreto Mandeville Hall, Toorak; and Albert Shen from St Kevin's College, Toorak, were all recognised in May. ✦





Celebrating harmony

The students and teachers from St John's School, Footscray, dressed in orange to celebrate Harmony Day, and also created a lasting symbol of unity by painting rocks with messages of love and harmony to be placed in the school's new garden so that students are reminded of the importance of inclusiveness long after Harmony Day has finished. ✦

Year of Youth forums

Hundreds of secondary students from Melbourne Catholic schools took part in the Year of Youth forums in May, hosted at St John's Regional College, Dandenong, Mount St Joseph Girls' College, Altona, Our Lady of Sion College, Box Hill, and St Monica's College, Epping.

Bishop Mark Edwards and international artist Steve Angrisano explored the themes of the Year of Youth and the challenges and opportunities presented to our students. Steve had everyone in stitches and in tears with his catchy songs and moving stories, while Bishop Edwards shared his personal story of vocation and treading your own path. ✦



Catholic students perform in Top Acts

The top 20 performers from the Top Class series of concerts came together for one stunning event on 11 May 2018 at the Melbourne Recital Centre, Southbank.

Three current Year 12 students from Padua College, Mornington – Savva Santoreneos, Jack Mannock and Ethan Taylor – were invited to perform after their Top Class concert was very well received by an appreciative audience. Flautist Emma Squires, from the 2017 class of Our Lady of Sion College, Box Hill, performed 'Spiral Lament' composed by Ian Clarke. Emma has also received a scholarship to work with the Grainger Wind Symphony, one of Melbourne's most respected and long-running ensembles. ✦



Standing against injustice

The students from St Paul's School, Coburg, are committed to stand up against bullying. As well as participating in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence, the students recently saw a performance of *The Power of One* and signed a pledge to speak out about bullying.

'After the play we said a pledge to never bully and promised that if we see someone being bullied that we would help him or her', said students Katarina and Jacob. 'Now we have a great understanding of what to do if we see someone being bullied or if we are being bullied.' ✦



Inaugural Western Region Sacred Music Concert

Catholic schools from the Western Region of Melbourne came together to present a 'Sacred Music Concert' on May 10. An initiative of Thomas Carr College, Tarneit, the Sacred Music Concert was designed to bring schools within the region together as a Catholic community and to celebrate their Catholic identity.

Choirs from Caroline Chisholm Catholic College, Braybrook; Catholic Regional College, Caroline Springs; Marian College, Sunshine West; Mount St Joseph Girls' College, Altona; Sacred Heart College, Newtown; St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School, Tarneit; and Thomas Carr College participated in the event. ✦



Generations in Jazz

Melbourne Catholic school students were a hit at this year's 'Generations in Jazz' festival held in Mount Gambier, South Australia, in May.

The schools brought home a number of awards, including Division 3 and 4 'Superband' winners, with students coming from Our Lady of Sion College, Box Hill; Siena College, Camberwell; Xavier College, Brighton; St Monica's College, Epping; Genazzano FCJ College, Kew; St Joseph's College, Newtown; Loreto Mandeville Hall, Toorak; and Aquinas College, Ringwood.

St Bede's College, Mentone, scored the ANZ Vocal Ensemble Awards Division 4 prize while Killester College, Springvale, received first place in the City of Mount Gambier National Stage Band Awards Division 4.3. Aquinas College student Phoebe Bengough was selected as joint winner of the Division 1 award for most promising vocalist. ✦

Biggest Morning Tea

It was a sea of yellow flowers and delicious treats as Holy Eucharist School, St Albans South, hosted a Biggest Morning Tea. An annual fundraiser for Cancer Council, it was a chance for students, staff and families to get together in the school's new building to honour those affected by cancer, and to raise much-needed funds for support and research.

The school raised almost \$1,700 for Cancer Council through donations, raffles and silent auctions. ✦



I am Victoria

Students from St Martin de Porres School, Avondale Heights, took home the Grade 5 & 6 division at the Cultural Diversity Week 2018 Primary School Short Film Competition. Their film, *I am Victoria*, was screened at Federation Square as part of the celebrations during Victoria's Multicultural Festival. ✦

VCAL Achievement Awards

Catholic schools were well represented at the VCAL Achievement Awards presented in April.

Kate Napper, Molly O'Neill and Gabrielle Sims from Sacred Heart College, Newtown, were honoured with the Senior Team Achievement Award for creating 'Little Boxes of Hope', which has brought comfort and support to young people experiencing mental illness in the Geelong region.

Sacred Heart was also presented with the VCAA Chair's Award, recognising the College's commitment to VCAL since 2004.

Liam Gray from Loyola College, Watsonia, was presented with the School-based Apprentice/Trainee Award in recognition of balancing the commitments of school, TAFE and the workplace. Liam undertook the senior VCAL certificate (Year 12) in 2017 while working as a school-based apprentice diesel mechanic and studying a Certificate III in Heavy Commercial Vehicle Mechanical Technology at Kangan Institute. ✦



Photos by Nicole Cleary, courtesy of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)



Help where it's needed

Sapphire took a classroom conversation about social justice as her call to make a difference for homeless and vulnerable children. The Grade 6 student from St Catherine's School, Moorabbin, started 'Warmer Nights, Brighter Days', an initiative to provide backpacks filled with essentials for winter, including socks, beanies, scarves, notepads, colouring books, pens, pencils, pyjamas and blankets. The backpacks were presented to the St Vincent de Paul Society at the end of Term 2. ✦

New secondary school named

On 20 May Archbishop Hart (now Archbishop Emeritus), joined by students and principals from the Geelong region, announced the name of Catholic education's newest secondary school, Iona College, Geelong.

'The Monastery of Iona was a centre of learning by the sea', the former Archbishop said. 'Just as Iona College will serve and underpin a growing community.'

Located in Charlemont, Iona College will serve the growing number of families moving into the Armstrong Creek area. Classes are expected to commence in 2020, with building scheduled to begin in September. ✦



Wellbeing Week at St Aloysius

The students at St Aloysius College, North Melbourne, were keeping themselves fit and healthy with the College's second Wellbeing Week this May.

Activities each lunchtime have focused on the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing': be active; connect; keep learning; take notice; and give back. With activities as diverse as yoga, Zumba, a shared picnic and trivia, the students have been stretched physically, mentally and emotionally. ✦



