

Catholic Education

Today



CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
MELBOURNE



Season of
hope and joy

TERM 4, 2018

3 THE JOY
OF GIVING

5 FROM DARKNESS
TO LIGHT

6 CELEBRATING
ADVENT

8 MAKING A
DIFFERENCE
WITH STEM

12 AROUND THE
ARCHDIOCESE

Let us love, not with words but with deeds

*Excerpt taken from Pope Francis' Message for the
First World Day of the Poor (19 November 2017)*

Blessed, therefore, are the open hands
that embrace the poor and help them:
they are hands that bring hope.
Blessed are the hands
that reach beyond every barrier
of culture, religion and nationality,
and pour the balm of consolation
over the wounds of humanity.
Blessed are the open hands
that ask nothing in exchange,
with no 'ifs' or 'buts' or 'maybes':
they are hands that call down God's blessing
upon their brothers and sisters.



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discussion designed for parents.

From the Executive Director



Stephen Elder
Executive Director



Premier Daniel Andrews
announcing Labor's
commitment to Catholic
schools, with Deputy Premier
James Merlino, Member for
Pascoe Vale, Lizzie Blandthorn
and Executive Director Stephen
Elder at Corpus Christi School,
Glenroy



Opposition Leader Matthew Guy
at St Louis de Montfort's School,
Aspendale, for the Liberal
Nationals funding announcement

Term 4 of 2018 brings a remarkable year to an end
for Catholic education across Melbourne: a year in
which the quality of our schools, the importance of
our mission, and the strength and contributions of
our parents and school communities have all been
publicly recognised at the very highest levels.

When the year began, we were facing the very last
decision anyone involved in education wants to make
– the decision to close schools, with all the heartache
and disruption that causes.

Federal government funding policy left us with no
alternative. The future for Catholic schools was
grim. The roots of our system, our parish primary
schools, were going to shrivel. With the roots
damaged, the branches could not grow. A decline
in primary students would lead to a gradual decline
in our secondary school numbers. We would end up
with a weakened, stunted system, one – like all trees
whose roots are damaged – at risk of withering and
susceptible to storms.

Together, we fought back. We fought back with
a campaign based on solid evidence that the
entire might of Canberra's bureaucracy could not
successfully rebut and have been rewarded with fairer
federal funding arrangements that, while not perfect,
offer a brighter future for our schools.

Importantly, the federal government has also now
recognised something that I know matters to you all –
your explicit right as parents to choose an affordable
school that you believe will be best for your children.

Both the Labor and Liberal parties recognised the
importance of Catholic schools in the lead-up to the
Victorian state election, backing an unprecedented
four-year, \$400 million package for new and
upgraded facilities, the majority of which will go
to the Catholic system.

Both parties also spoke about the important role
Catholic education has in meeting the demand
created by Melbourne's population boom – a very
public endorsement of the quality, strength and
significance of our system.

'We simply couldn't educate all of our kids across
Victoria without our partnership with Catholic
schools', Labor leader Daniel Andrews said.

His Liberal counterpart, Matthew Guy, spoke about
how increased funding increased parent choice
in education.

We end the year with our leaders acknowledging
the quality and importance of Catholic schools:
schools with both fair fees and facilities as good as
any found elsewhere.

Parents have played an enormous role in all this. The
politicians have seen your work in our schools, all the
fundraising and working bees, and your willingness to
take a stand when this work is under threat and send
a clear message: 'Catholic education matters'.

We just need to keep up the pressure for the weeks
or months until the federal election to cement a year
of gains. ✝

The joy of giving



Hayden's Helping Hands feeds Melbourne's homeless at its annual Christmas Eve BBQ

The Church marks the end of the year with Advent, four weeks of waiting and preparing for the celebration of the birth of Jesus at Christmas, as well as his return at the second coming.

It is a season of joyful anticipation – not least for the holidays, time with friends and family, and the celebrations and gift-giving Christmas brings.

But Melbourne's Catholic schools emphasise giving all year round.

This, too, is part of a process of preparation. One of the most important roles of Catholic schools is to form young people committed to the love, compassion and justice of the gospel: men and women of faith, strength and knowledge with the ability to provide leadership in the broader community as they actively seek to transform the world.

Throughout history, serving others has been a mark of greatness. Mother Teresa, now canonised as Saint Teresa of Calcutta, is a well-known example of this greatness. But there is a specifically Christian dimension to service, to giving, in Catholic schools that Saint Teresa also illustrated so importantly.

'Christian service attends to the other, the human person stripped bare of dignity, of friendship and of life's essentials', Paul Fumei, Education Officer in the Catholic Leadership team at Catholic Education Melbourne, explains.



Melbourne's Catholic schools emphasise giving all year round.



>> CONTINUED PAGE 4

From little things ...

Homelessness in different parts of Melbourne can be a visible and disturbing issue for children used to the security of home and family.

Catholic schools across the city work closely with the St Vincent de Paul Society or through their own 'Mini Vinnies' social justice groups to provide essential items for the homeless, particularly during our wet and chilly winters.

Hayden Rujak, now in Year 6 at **Holy Trinity Primary School, Eltham North**, however, has taken this one step further. With support from his parents, younger sister Stephanie, his school and parish community, he established his own charity, Hayden's Helping Hands.

'Every weekend my family and I, sometimes friends also, go into the city and help the homeless people by leaving them food, water, blankets, toiletries, etcetera', he said.

Hayden and his team have set up a website and maintain an active Facebook presence to keep supporters informed of the charity's activities and how others can get involved.

Hayden feels his work helps give the homeless dignity. 'They don't want to be ignored', he explained. 'They want to be treated like they matter.'

He believes his grassroots-level, small and approachable group makes it easier for people to become involved in charity work. 'There's a lot of people who want to help in some small way but don't know how to go about it', he said. 'Hayden's Helping Hands helps them to do this.'

And he isn't worried about the size of his charity. Instead, he draws inspiration from the words of Mother Teresa. His motto has become: 'I alone cannot change the world but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples'. ✦



The joy of giving (CONTINUED)

'In Christian service, it is not only the universal other that is served but God's own self that is encountered and served', Paul continues, quoting the Gospel of Matthew: "'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers (and sisters), you did it to me'" (Mt 25: 40).

The Christian service programs that run across Melbourne Catholic schools provide students with an opportunity to develop empathy, compassion and a sense of justice through the giving of meaningful and active assistance to their fellow citizens.

The diversity of works they undertake – organising social justice groups, fundraising, tutoring refugee or other disadvantaged students, supporting community meal programs, providing support for children in care, working with the elderly, and assisting external charity drives and social justice programs, to name just a few – illustrates the different ways schools put gospel values into action.

Our students have the opportunity to make the world a better place and help others reach their potential. They are challenged to discover their gifts and how they can use them in the service of others.

Students soon discover that not only are the people they assist benefiting, so too are they – and that is truly a great gift. ✦



Marian College students display the bags they created in support of asylum seekers

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Our students have the opportunity to make the world a better place and help others reach their potential.

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Bags of support

With so much emphasis on the plight of asylum seekers in offshore detention, students from **Marian College, Sunshine West**, decided to use their first Social Justice Week to create something practical to give to refugees and asylum seekers already in the community while highlighting their needs.

They worked during lunchtimes to design and create calico bags for Asylum Seeker Resource Centre clients to use, a project Year 12 student Tina said both brought 'light to a topic that is important for everyone to be aware of' and allowed the project leaders 'to engage our fellow students in supporting those who are in need'.

Her classmate Teresa said the project not only raised awareness of refugee issues, but helped inspire young people 'to reach out to those who are in need with compassion, no matter how small their actions'. ✦



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In Naser's painting, the gate represents MITA and the girls' visits, which have given the refugees hope. Through their combined love and prayers, Naser feels as though the gate has been opened and he can already begin to feel free.



Our Lady of Sion students with the painting they commissioned for the college

From darkness to light

The issue of refugees is depicted by the media on a daily basis. But reading the words on a page is very different to seeing the reality. This was not Manus or Nauru. This was Broadmeadows, a 45-minute drive from our school. In our local community, people are being kept in detention for seeking asylum in Australia.

By Sophie Chan
and Lydia Ting
Year 12, Our Lady of
Sion College, Box Hill

Every fortnight a group of Year 12 students from Our Lady of Sion College visit the people inside the Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation (MITA) centre to offer them fellowship. We had no idea this simple act of light-hearted conversation would prove to have such a significant impact on our lives and theirs.

Our visits to MITA have opened our eyes to both the despair and the determination of the human spirit:

We witness devastation – in the tears of parents, at the celebration of their daughter's first birthday: a beautiful child who deserves to celebrate with a real cake in a real home.

We witness defeat – in the slumped shoulders and fallen faces of those who speak of their broken homes and their stolen dreams, who speak of their freedom as a far-off fantasy.

We witness injustice – when we learn that the majority of people we visit have been detained for five or more years. That is the same length of time in which we have completed our entire high school education.

“
Through prayer,
we can change
the world.
”

We witness heartbreak – when at the end of the visit, we walk out of two separate doors into opposite realities. They walk back into indefinite detention and we walk forward into a world of possibility and purpose.

But we also witness hope – in the gentle nature of a self-taught artist, who paints beautifully vivid paintings of hardship as well as hope.

We witness joy – in the laughter while teaching our friends how to dance the Nutbush and Macarena.

We witness faith – when we hear about a man's deep trust in God and the strength his belief provides him.

We witness strength – in these individuals who have endured unimaginable hardship and yet are still capable of beaming smiles and pure laughter.

How can you reaffirm someone's humanity, when they are confined in a small space and unable to move freely? This experience has allowed us to humanise this big political issue – to put a name, a face and a story to the refugee crisis.

At times, it is easy to feel powerless against the wall of governmental bureaucracy that dictates these people's lives. Yet, we do hold power, as depicted in the painting by a detainee, Naser, titled 'From Darkness to Light' that we commissioned for our school. He explained that it is through our visits and prayers that we are able to foster hope for his future. He reminded us that, 'through prayer, we can change the world'.

In a particular conversation, we were discussing our aspirations for the future but when we asked about his aspirations, he simply said, 'I am different to you. I cannot dream like you. Even if I get out, I have no family, no job, nothing.' This was heartbreaking and it is for this reason we are inspired to provide fellowship and solidarity for these people. It is our hope that, one day, they will be able to dream once more and receive the rights we are privileged to be born with. ✝

Advent —

Season of hope and joy

When the Church celebrates the liturgy of Advent each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Saviour's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming. By celebrating the precursor's birth and martyrdom, the Church unites herself to his desire: 'He must increase, but I must decrease'.

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, N. 524

Advent is the season of new beginnings, a season of longing and light. It is marked by a spirit of expectation, anticipation and preparation for the coming of Christ: past, present and future. As we wait for and prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ at Christmas, we hope and give thanks for Christ's presence within us and in the world and in the sacraments, and we look to the future, waiting for Christ to come again. Our preparations, therefore, should have all three comings in mind.

The Church's liturgical year begins with Advent and leads up to Christmas. This year Advent begins on Sunday 2 December. Over four Sundays we will journey with the wisdom of Luke's Gospel, which offers us images of transformation and hope. In the Scriptures we read of the dry, barren wilderness bursting into bloom; of broken hearts healing; of a barren woman and a young virgin both conceiving children. It is the season of the impossible becoming possible.

As we journey through Advent, we take time to pause and reflect on our lives, and spiritually wait in our 'darkness' for the light to shine. We wait with hopeful expectation for our promised redemption, just as the whole world did before Christ's birth, and as the world does now, as we await his promised return.



The word *Advent* comes from the Latin *advenio*, 'to come to', which in turn translates the Greek word *Parousia*, in reference to Jesus 'coming in glory at the end of time'. Throughout the season we recall the long centuries in which the chosen people longed for the appearance of the Messiah. We too experience this same longing for the coming of Christ into our hearts.

Celebrating Advent

We are blessed here in Australia to have Advent heralded by the colour of jacarandas, with their beautiful violet blooms, which is the liturgical colour of Advent. This colour characterises the penitential seasons preceding the great feasts of the Church. This time of pause and preparation directs our hearts and minds to be ready to meet Christ. It is marked by prayer, fasting, good works and generosity towards others, especially the poor. Traditionally, all great feasts have been preceded by a time of fasting, which makes the feast itself more joyful.

In the weeks before Christmas our focus is very much on food and gifts and other arrangements for celebrating Christmas itself. Advent reminds us that we need to prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ and to look at how we can be more Christ-like in our lives. For instance, there is much we can do to help others at this time, from contributing gifts for children in need, to volunteering at soup vans, or visiting someone who is housebound or in a nursing home. These are things we can do with our children to underline for them the real meaning of Advent and Christmas.

The Advent wreath

The Advent wreath is another way to enter into the prayerfulness of the Advent season. The Advent wreath is a circle of evergreen branches containing four candles (three violet and one rose) and another (white) candle in the centre. The circular shape symbolises the life of God, who is without beginning or end, and the greenery represents the ever-fresh offer of God's love to us.

Lighting the candles of an Advent wreath symbolises the coming of light, the coming of Jesus, into the world. The custom of lighting an Advent wreath of candles originates in the ancient Northern European custom of lighting a fire wheel at the winter solstice in December. The fire wheel was lit to celebrate the gradual return of the sun after the shortest, darkest days of winter. Christians adapted this symbol to celebrate the coming of Christ, the light, who transforms the darkest depths of our world.

The Advent wreath marks the progression of the season as the candles are lit, week by week, accompanied by prayer.

The first Sunday of Advent symbolises **Hope**. We light the 'Prophet's Candle' (violet) to remind us that Jesus is coming.

The second Sunday of Advent symbolises **Faith**. We light the 'Bethlehem Candle' (violet) to remind us of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

The third Sunday of Advent symbolises **Joy**. We light the 'Shepherd's Candle' (rose) to remind us of the joy the world experienced at the birth of Jesus.

The fourth Sunday of Advent symbolises **Peace**. We light the 'Angel's Candle' (violet) to remind us of the message of the angels at Jesus' birth: 'Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men'.

The central white candle is lit on Christmas Day and represents Christ.

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For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness', who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

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2 CORINTHIANS 4: 6

Families can make their own Advent wreath and use it as a focus for prayer, at dinnertime perhaps. As the season progresses, the whole family is drawn into the prayerful waiting for Christ's coming. And there are many more ideas for celebrating Advent as a family.

The Advent wreath represents the long time when people lived in spiritual darkness, waiting for the coming of the Messiah, the Light of the world. Each year in Advent people wait once again in darkness for the coming of the Lord: his historical coming in the mystery of Bethlehem, his final coming at the end of time, and his special coming in every moment of grace.

Yet Advent heralds more than Christ's birth. It paves our way toward celebrating Christ as God-with-us, God in human flesh. 'And the Word became flesh, and lived among us' (John 1: 14). This profound mystery is at the heart of our faith, and is the source of our joy at Christmas. ✦



Solution focused

The STEM MAD (Making a Difference) Showcase brought together 60 teams of students from Catholic primary and secondary schools to share their learning in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. With projects as diverse as designing outdoor learning spaces, water filtration devices for use in developing countries, cognitive enrichment toys for elephants and mobile apps to promote wellbeing, the day was a showcase of innovative approaches to solving real-world problems. +



STEM MAD



- 1 St Christopher's School, Airport West
- 2 St Monica's College, Epping
- 3 St Roch's School, Glen Iris
- 4 Our Lady of the Rosary School, Kyneton
- 5 St Aloysius College, North Melbourne
- 6 Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College, Bentleigh
- 7 Stella Maris School, Beaumaris
- 8 Catholic Regional College, St Albans
- 9 St Columba's College, Essendon
- 10 St Thomas More's School, Hadfield
- 11 Aquinas College, Ringwood

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Advocating for children with learning differences – a parent’s perspective

Having a child with a learning difference is unexpected for most parents and comes with a myriad of adjustments for the family. Our experience started out as a time of confusion, anger and sadness. Our beautiful child was going to face some tough hurdles. Like many before us dealing with the complexities of dyslexia, we discovered a determination and need to understand and learn as much as we could to help our child’s journey through school be successful, enjoyable and positive.

Children with learning differences face challenges inside and outside the classroom. Dyslexia affects not only the ability to engage and access the academic curriculum, but self-esteem, confidence, social engagement and emotional regulation: all of which impact a child’s friendships and learning. For parents, it’s overwhelming and difficult to know how best to assist.

We decided to build our understanding. We read articles, joined support groups, and spoke with therapists and teachers. Armed with this and the personal knowledge we had of our own child, we needed to find a constructive voice with key school staff to ensure we all worked together to achieve our common goal. We approached this by creating an environment of open communication with the teacher and school leadership team.

Many families in our situation have regular planning sessions called ‘Program Support Group meetings’. At these meetings, which are most beneficial when they are structured with clear documentation, everyone involved in the child’s education is invited to create a plan.

Before a meeting, we think about our goals for the term and the year. We discuss these with therapists who might be working with us. We are then able to walk into the meeting, confident we know where we are currently and where we are heading.



Children achieve more when parents and educators collaborate, communicate and genuinely work together to help each child.



By Amelia Matlock,
Catholic School
Parents Victoria

We wanted our child’s schooling to be a positive experience and this inspired me to join our school education board. I saw a need to represent children with diverse learning requirements. Having that voice would benefit the broader community, particularly when 10% of Australian children are dyslexic and every school has dyslexic students.

I also recently joined Catholic School Parents Victoria, a decision inspired by my involvement with our school education board, in order to bring the parent voice of children with additional learning needs to a system and state level.

Children achieve more when parents and educators collaborate, communicate and genuinely work together to help each child. Our experience has led us to see that conversations we have with our children’s educators are critical, and parent knowledge must be listened to and acted on in supporting children’s learning needs. ✦



Are you a Catholic school parent or carer with a passion to make a difference in education?

Catholic School Parents Victoria are a team of passionate parents of children in primary and secondary Catholic schools, who contribute parent perspective in education at a system, state and national level across five key areas of advocacy.

The CSPV five key areas of advocacy are:



CSPV are seeking current Catholic school parents or carers to join our team in 2019-2021.

As a CSPV volunteer council member you will have the opportunity to contribute and provide parent perspective on education issues and policy in Victoria through engagement with State and Catholic education authorities.

To apply as a volunteer council member you will be currently involved on a school board or parent group at your school.

For an information pack please contact the CSPV Executive Officer, Rachel Saliba on 03 9267 0458.



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Together we can do great things

Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School, Sunbury, will open its doors in January and Principal Krystine Hocking will be the first to welcome students to the beginning of their learning journey in a brand new school.

What does a Catholic educator require?

As Catholic educators, we need to provide opportunities for every child to be successful. We have a new learning community where exciting opportunities are given to our children so they're able to fulfil their true potential, realise their gifts and build positive self-esteem, resilience and a close relationship with God. It's about them making sense of their world in a faithful community. I have a passion for creating a nurturing and innovative learning environment that caters for the diverse needs of all students.

As a foundation principal of a Catholic school, I want to acknowledge the important role our schools have in preparing children for their lifelong journey. I want our students to develop the skills and dispositions needed to enable them to flourish.

What do you like about working in Catholic schools?

Catholic schools are communities of compassion where we're called to care for those in need and shape the world for a common good. I have this opportunity to create a parish school community and I'm committed to providing an environment where faith is nurtured through authentic relationships. I'm very lucky to work in partnership with two other Catholic primary schools and a Catholic secondary school, and we can learn so much from each other.

Catholic schools should be places where families have a sense of hope based on the experience of God's love and care, where parents feel welcomed and actively encouraged to be part of their child's learning. We recognise that each person is different and we commit to respect each other and empower all to achieve their full potential. Together we can create a clear vision that centres on Jesus with the child at the heart of everything we do.

The greatest challenge for parents today ...

... is our ever-changing world and how education has evolved as a result. There's a tremendous amount of pressure for our children to be the best at all times. This has an impact on their wellbeing and we're seeing high levels of anxiety. We should want our children to be the best *for* the world and not the best *in* the world, and our challenge is to instil that hope.



Building a strong culture of parent and school engagement is essential. Parents are the child's first educators and together we can support their academic achievement as well as their spiritual, emotional and physical development to prepare them for a rapidly changing world. We need to find opportunities for families to connect with what their children are learning at school and how they learn at home, respond early to learning challenges and extend their learning around the things they are passionate about.

In five years time ...

... Holy Trinity will be a vibrant, inclusive, thriving and faithful community. It's all about our students and their learning, and I want them to be the best for the world and to be able to deal with the challenges and difficulties they may experience in their lifetime.

I also want to say ...

If you're going to be the principal of a school, you may as well build one, and I'm very fortunate and very blessed. It's a great opportunity to be a foundation principal. I see what I do as a vocation – it's not just a job – and to be able to lead a parish community is very empowering. We can never underestimate the impact we have on the future generations we teach. Mother Teresa once said: 'I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things'. ✦

“ I have this opportunity to create a parish school community and I'm committed to providing an environment where faith is nurtured through authentic relationships. ”

Bishop visits Antonine College

On a visit to the Cedar Campus of **Antonine College**, Foundation to Year 6 students formed a guard of honour when His Excellency Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay accompanied the relics of Saint Maroun. This unique experience reminded students of their connection to the Maronite story and helped strengthen their values, spirituality and faith. The community will soon gather to celebrate yet another historical event, as it is also the college's 20th anniversary this year. ✦

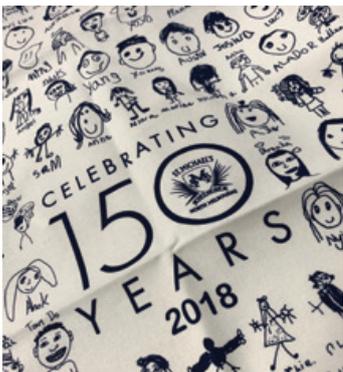


Winning designs support Homelessness Week

Students Julie and Delvana from **Catholic Regional College, St Albans**, won a design competition in support of Homelessness Week. Concern Australia asked students to create imaginative designs for t-shirts that would later be sold to raise funds and help end youth homelessness. The winning designs were exhibited at the Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre in Carlton. ✦

St Michael's turns 150

In September, past and present teachers and students celebrated the 150th anniversary of the founding of **St Michael's School, North Melbourne**. Following a Mass led by Bishop Terry Curtin, the school was open for former students to reminisce and look through a collection of photographs, historical documents and memorabilia. ✦



Music to smooth transition

In a new initiative for **Our Lady of Sion College, Box Hill**, students transitioning from Year 6 were invited to take part in instrumental music lessons and ensemble rehearsals at the college. The program also involved participating in performances and activities designed for the girls to get to know each other. According to former Arts Learning Leader and Director of Bands, James Le Fevre, students who come to the college with experience in music engage with their studies to a fuller extent, exhibit greater social development skills and form stronger relationships. ✦



Drama to the double

St Patrick's School, Mentone, impressed everyone by managing two school productions at the same time. Students performed both *The Wizard of Oz* and *Dinosaurs Before Dark* in front of hundreds of people at Monash University's Robert Blackwood Hall. This double production was a testimony to the commitment and dedication of teachers and students alike. ✦



Blake thrives at his autism-inclusive school

Blake loves attending **St Joachim's School, Carrum Downs**, which has embraced inclusive education practices and supports autistic students. He has access to a 'peaceful place' that helps him calm down whenever he feels overwhelmed. As he experiences light sensitivity, Blake is allowed to sit with his back to windows and wear sunglasses in class. Every morning, the vice principal meets Blake and informs him of his daily agenda so he knows what to expect. However, the most helpful adjustment is Blake's teacher's adoption of 'one voice'. Speaking in one tone helps his concentration, as it doesn't trigger his auditory sensitivities or confuse him. Blake's mum praised the school, saying it has been unwavering in its support of his needs. ✦



Reading pays it forward

Holy Eucharist School, St Albans South, collected hundreds of books to sell in support of Indigenous literacy. Junior Literacy Coordinator Leanne Bonello organised the October sale as part of the school's commitment to social justice awareness and action. Noting the additional benefit of increasing students' book collections, she said: 'It's been great to see them sharing their love of literature while supporting such an important cause'. ✦



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An artistic presentation

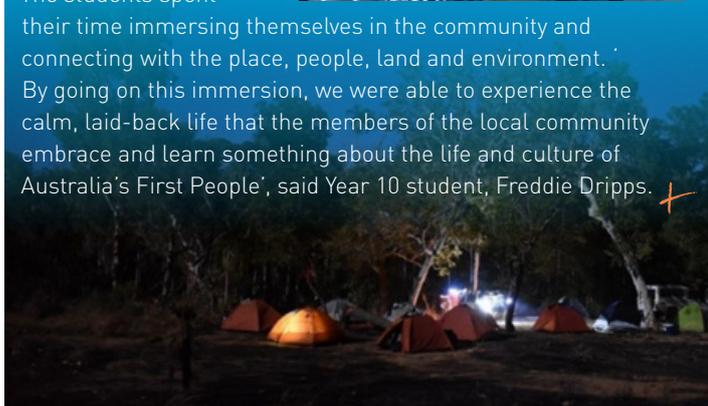
Early in Term 4, **Presentation College Windsor** celebrated all things creative at its annual art show. Students from Years 7 to 12 contributed to the exhibition, filling the school's hall with paintings, drawings, sculptures, mixed media and textiles.

The college's 2014 dux, Damaris Kean, was guest speaker at the show's opening night. Her work, *276*, won Australian Catholic University's Social Justice Award at the Catholic Education Melbourne Visual Arts Exhibition in 2015. ✦



St Joseph's students' Daly River immersion

In September, a group of 16 boys from **St Joseph's College, Newtown**, travelled to Daly River, also known as Nauiyu Nambiyu, in the Northern Territory. The students spent their time immersing themselves in the community and connecting with the place, people, land and environment. 'By going on this immersion, we were able to experience the calm, laid-back life that the members of the local community embrace and learn something about the life and culture of Australia's First People', said Year 10 student, Freddie Dripps. ✦



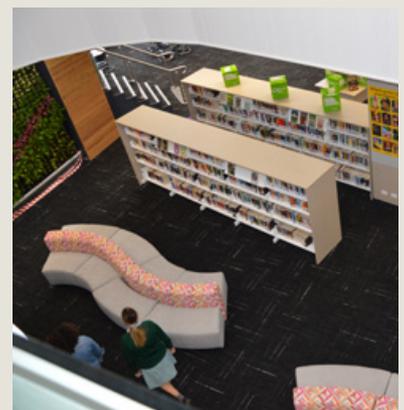
'Differences do not define anyone'

Students from **St Mary's School, Williamstown**, visited the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre in Footscray for Catholic Migrant and Refugee Week. The purpose of their visit was not only to donate goods, but also to give hope to those seeking a new beginning in life. Students reflected on their experience by acknowledging that refugees are 'as important as any human' and 'need our generosity and support'. ✦



New library for Clonard College

Corangamite MP, Sarah Henderson, officially opened the new library at **Clonard College, Herne Hill**. The school received \$1.5 million from the Federal Government to fund the project. 'Students and teachers thrive when their schools have modern and up-to-date facilities', said Ms Henderson, 'that's why the Federal Government is proud of the Capital Grants Program, which has benefited thousands of schools across the nation.' ✦





#remember

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Armistice that ended World War One and **Holy Name School, Reservoir**, is one of eight schools invited by RSL Victoria to decorate a 1.2-metre letter as part of the #REMEMBER project.

Students at Holy Name School have been decorating the letter 'M' with paper poppies to commemorate Remembrance Day. The huge letters will be brought together to make the word 'REMEMBER', which will be displayed in November at several of Melbourne's iconic landmarks including the Shrine of Remembrance and Government House.

Apple Distinguished School

St Lawrence School, Derrimut, has been recognised as an 'Apple Distinguished School' for 2018–2020 based on its innovative approach to learning, teaching, leadership and documented results of academic accomplishment. 'The selection ... highlights our success as an innovative and compelling learning environment that engages students and provides tangible evidence of academic accomplishment', said Principal Julie Corsaletti.



Junior Gifted and Talented Day

Siena College, Camberwell, proudly hosted the first 'Junior Gifted and Talented Day' for 2018. Over 140 students from local schools joined an enthusiastic group of Siena girls to participate in the intensive program of short lectures aimed to provide those in Years 7 to 9 with an opportunity to interact with other like-minded individuals. Together, they explored a range of interesting and thought-provoking ideas about relevant modern-day issues, and gained a broader understanding of the world.



Mixed netball finalists

Students from **St Thomas the Apostle School, Blackburn**, won the School Sport Victoria primary mixed netball state final in September. As the 2017 runners-up, the team were determined to put all their energy and strength into this year's competition. With support and cheering from the sidelines, they fought tirelessly to win the game and ultimately claimed victory with a score of 20 to 11.

Tech in Action

St Thomas More's School, Hadfield, held a 'Tech in Action' professional learning day for teachers and students by teachers and students. Guests from local schools and businesses were present to provide students with information about the ever-changing world of technology. Teachers and students had the opportunity to attend keynote presentations by industry experts, share their thoughts and creations with representatives from Google, and learn from one another.



“

For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness', who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

”

2 CORINTHIANS 4: 6