

Catholic Education

Today



CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
MELBOURNE



Turning to a
hopeful world

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Prayer of Jeremiah

Inspired by Jeremiah 15: 16

When your words came to me
I devoured them.
Your words have been my delight
and the joy of my heart;
For you have called me from my youth,
I am called by your name, O Lord God.



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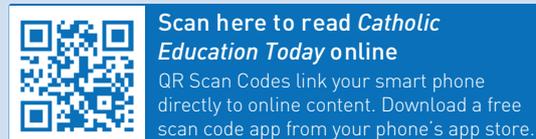
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From the Executive Director



Stephen Elder
Executive Director

Just over four months ago, the Turnbull Government released its Gonski 2.0 education funding package. After a further eight weeks of intense debate, the package was rushed through the Parliament.

As a schooling sector, Catholic education will bear the brunt of the Government's changes, despite educating 20% of students in schools nationally and nearly 25% in Victoria. Of most concern is that leaked figures from the federal Education Department show that the changes the Government has made to the funding model will leave Catholic schools across Australia \$4.6 billion worse off over the next decade.

Coupled with this are some discriminatory measures included in the new funding legislation, that will result in Catholic schools across Australia receiving an additional \$1.1 billion less funding over the next decade, when compared to similar independent schools. Victorian Catholic schools alone will be \$300 million worse off.

This is because we operate as a school system. The strength of our system is that we are able to average government funding for students across the system, which means that Catholic schools can average out parent fees, particularly at a primary level, providing a saving to many families.

Ultimately, Minister Birmingham's policy fails the tests of honesty, fairness, consistency and integrity.

That said, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have participated in our campaign to ensure fair funding for our schools. The pressure from Catholic school communities like yours has resulted in amendments to the original proposals and some key concessions. The Government has decided to retain existing Catholic system funding arrangements for 12 months while a review of the school Socio-Economic Status – or SES – score methodology is carried out.

The SES score review gives the Turnbull Government an opportunity to make changes to the new funding arrangements that will tackle many of the concerns of Catholic education.

This means that, thanks to your efforts, there will not be significant fee increases in the short term.

There is now a very clear difference between the Turnbull Government and the Labor Opposition on funding for Catholic schools. Opposition Leader Bill Shorten understands many of the misgivings held by Catholic education about the new funding policy, and has said that he is prepared to see these resolved.

We will continue to advocate vigorously for funding arrangements that ensure parental choice in education and the continued affordability and accessibility of a quality education founded on the Catholic faith and its values.

I hope that you will continue to support our efforts in the months to come for the sake of your children and your school community. ✝

Gonski, funding and the billion dollar question

At the end of June the Turnbull Government's Gonski 2.0 education funding package was pushed through the Parliament after virtually no consultation with the Catholic school sector and less than eight weeks' public scrutiny.

Despite winning some concessions, such as a review of the socio-economic score (SES) system used to determine non-government school funding and a range of other amendments, Catholic Education Melbourne Executive Director Stephen Elder says the new measures are both 'unfair and fundamentally flawed'.

Catholic schools across the state now face losing hundreds of millions of dollars in funding across the 10-year life of the package.

However, Catholic education has won at least short-term relief from fears of fee increases.

'Commonwealth government funding is the most significant revenue stream for Catholic schools,' Mr Elder said. 'The Gonski 2.0 package makes major changes to the way Canberra will allocate funds to our sector.'

'Most worryingly for Catholic education, it will remove what is known as system-weighted average funding, despite its specific endorsement in the original Gonski report released back in 2012.'

Catholic education is currently run on a 'one big school' basis.

Under the previous arrangements, Catholic education has been able to centrally distribute funds across schools to meet their special, individual needs – funding for VET and VCAL students, additional support for new or small schools, assistance for refugee and new arrival and other disadvantaged students, and professional development for teachers and schools – smoothing out the costs across the system as a whole to keep fees everywhere as low as possible.

This flexibility will be severely constrained under Gonski 2.0.

'Funding will be based on school SES scores, a bureaucratic yardstick that determines our parents' ability to afford fees – "capacity to contribute" is the expression the government uses – based on where they live,' Mr Elder said.



'Catholic education doesn't just believe this measure fails to reflect the true fabric of local communities. We believe it overstates the income of our school families and leads to pressure for increased fees.'

Mr Elder said that the government was again going directly against the findings of the original Gonski report by putting SES scores at the centre of its funding arrangements.

'The original Gonski report called for SES scores to be replaced,' Mr Elder said. 'Thanks to our lobbying, they will be reviewed.'

'The Turnbull Government has agreed to keep system-weighted average measures in place for the 2018 school year while the review into SES scores is carried out.'

This means there will not be significant fee increases in the short term.

Mr Elder said a very clear difference now existed between the Coalition and Labor on education funding policy.

'Our parents and school communities made their voices heard loud and clear during the funding debate. They want affordable choice in education and a fair go for Catholic schools.'

'No doubt they will also make their voices clear at the ballot box come the next election.'

'The Turnbull Government, however, has the opportunity to demonstrate the goodwill it has failed to show Catholic education and respond to our funding concerns if it undertakes a genuine and far-reaching review of SES scores.'

Capacity to contribute is the most important component of the funding model for non-government schools. If the Turnbull Government makes appropriate changes as part of its review of the operation of SES scores, then many of the concerns Catholic education has with Gonski 2.0 will be allayed.

'We need "capacity to contribute" calculations that reflect the fees Catholic schools can charge and that will keep Catholic education affordable and accessible,' said Mr Elder. †

“
The Turnbull Government has agreed to keep system-weighted average measures in place for the 2018 school year ... This means there will not be significant fee increases in the short term.”

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Reading still matters

In the age of the emoji, not only do reading skills remain as fundamental as ever, they have gained greater significance as the ever-connected world makes clear communication essential.



Reading regularly helps children to develop accuracy and fluency in reading and language.

‘Literacy provides students with the capacity to realise their place in the world,’ Mrs Marg Vingerhoets, Senior Literacy Officer from Catholic Education Melbourne said. ‘Literacy empowers students with the skills to access new learning and provides the means of contributing to local and global communities, even in the early years.’

From birth, the wordplay that makes up the beginning of language and literacy learning comes almost naturally, along with the talking and listening that allow children to develop these skills.

But after the first years and once school begins, as parents you still have an important part to play in helping with reading development; important – and relatively easy. It centres around three key activities: reading to and shared reading; making sure your children have books at the appropriate level; and following their progress with interest and positive encouragement.

Sensationalised reporting of literacy issues and debate over teaching techniques and theory have left some parents confused and daunted, but in the end you can support your child by reading to them, reading with them and – when your child is ready – listening as they read.

A key word that often features in these discussions is *phonics*.

‘Phonics refers to the relationship between the sounds of our language and the patterns of letters used to represent those sounds when reading and writing,’ Mrs Vingerhoets said, ‘The purpose of phonics is to enable students to become efficient and effective readers and writers.’

Phonics involves ‘decoding’ (word recognition in reading) and ‘encoding’ (forming words and spelling). If that sounds complicated, it isn’t.

Many students get enjoyment out of reading novels, but Year 8 Presentation College Windsor student Isobel Stuart has taken it further by writing her own young adult novel. *Fat Boy* is a story about bullying, with a strong message. ‘There are people who can help you in the toughest situations,’ said the young novelist.

After months of writing and editing, Presentation College Windsor celebrated with their own launch of the novel, written when Isobel was just 13 years old. Together with principal Filina Virgato and students and staff from the college, Isobel read an excerpt from *Fat Boy* before giving some advice to other budding writers, ‘Write

for yourself and then for others. Write what you’d want to read and you make sure the readers would enjoy it also.’

For information about purchasing a copy of *Fat Boy* contact Presentation College Windsor on **8517 2777**.

Presentation College Windsor principal Filina Virgato with author (and Year 8 student) Isobel Stuart.





Christian (right) dressed as a character from his book, *The Blobs*.

Christian der Kinderen came up with an idea for his story, *The Blobs*, when taking a year off from teaching at Holy Family School, Mount Waverley, to travel throughout South America and parts of Europe. Returning to school, Christian spent a year writing his story with a mind to teach his students to respect and care for one another and to accept each other for who they are.

The book was picked up by Empowering Resources, a specialist publisher with a mission to promote books that nurture, educate and empower children and adults.

With a strong narrative about refugees and acceptance, the release of *The Blobs* was celebrated by Holy Family with an *Anyone can be an Author* day, where Christian went around to all the classes, reading his story to the

students and working with them to develop some characters that they can use during their next writing session.

'I love to share my love of writing and hopefully inspire children who are a little bit reluctant to write,' Christian said.

For information about purchasing a copy of *The Blobs*, see the Empowering Resources website www.empoweringresources.com.au/purchase-1.

'When students are reading, they work out unknown words by using a range of information,' Ms Vingerhoets explains, 'They might use some background knowledge and some pictorial clues to make predictions, and letter-sound knowledge to understand the meaning of the author when reading. In writing, they follow a mirror process.'

Decoding, in other words, is the old-fashioned 'sounding out' – and regular reading of appropriate books helps children develop accuracy and fluency in reading and language.

Parents have an important role to play here with younger children. Making time to read together every day helps boost literacy development and talking about books when they are finished is just as important.

The longer you can spare for reading activities the better, but even a quarter of an hour together helps.

Find somewhere in the house without distractions – away from televisions, computers and other screens – and start reading.

For the very young readers, it is good to explain books before you start; that they all have titles and authors, that we turn the pages from front to back and read the words down the page as we go. What might seem obvious to us is a handy reminder for beginners.

With more established readers it is still good to talk about the book before beginning a new title; have a look through and discuss what it might be about.

Including classics from other cultures, like fables and fairy tales, will boost cultural literacy while expanding children's reading skills.

Parents still have a simple but significant role to play in enhancing the abilities of established readers.

Choosing books for shared reading that are more challenging than children are capable of reading on their own will expose them to words and ideas

that will boost their literacy skills, vocabularies, imaginations and general knowledge.

And with older, 'solo' readers, you still can help expand their skills and their horizons.

Encourage your children to establish library habits. Take an interest in their choices and encourage them to be adventurous with what they pick off the shelves. Steering them towards classics as well as contemporary stories will again increase their cultural literacy and help develop broader reading habits in later life.

There's trial and error involved here. Children may not enjoy the titles that once were your favourites. Don't force books on them. Put them aside and find something they enjoy, which will engage them with reading.

'Learning involves the heart as well as the head,' Mrs Vingerhoets says.

And with these simple steps you can help your children engage both head and heart to become a strong and confident reader and learner. ✦

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Encourage your children to establish library habits. Take an interest in their choices and encourage them to be adventurous with what they pick off the shelves.

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Book Week fun and fundraising

To celebrate Book Week this year, the CBC St Kilda library had a new look for the week. Students were transported into other worlds as part of the *Escape to Everywhere* theme.

CBC students also raised money and collected books for Indigenous Literacy, donating their pre-



loved books, some of which were sold for \$1 and others which were donated directly to Indigenous communities.

Some of the money raised went towards the

publishing of Indigenous books in the languages native to the communities. The project is important as it encourages as much exposure as possible for all children to good teenage fiction.

Open new horizons for spreading joy!



The inaugural Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF) was held in Melbourne in 2013, borne out of the experiences and youthful energy celebrated at World Youth Day (WYD) Sydney 2008. It brought together Catholic youth aged between 15 (currently in Year 9) and 30 years old.

The three-day festival this year, hosted by the Archdiocese of Sydney on behalf of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, will be held at Sydney Olympic Park and other key locations in and around the city. Catholic Education Melbourne, with the Archdiocesan Office for Youth, is taking a delegation including youth from Catholic secondary schools and parish communities. The ACYF 2017 will provide an opportunity for young people to gather together to deepen their relationship with Jesus. They are called to be disciples in the world today and encounter and celebrate the vitality of the Church in Australia. It is expected that 15,000 participants will attend the festival.

The festival will run 6-9 December and include daily activities such as plenary sessions, workshops, dialogue spaces, prayer experiences, live music, justice activities, an expo and much more. The workshops will provide young people with the opportunity to discuss and voice their opinions with

leaders of Church communities, to learn more about their own faith journey and help them reflect on the question *where to from here?* and how they might live out their lives as disciples of Jesus. The festival will culminate in a pilgrimage reminiscent of WYD, where all participants and fellow Catholics will gather for Mass in the Domain.

With Matt Maher (arguably the biggest Catholic name in global contemporary Christian music) performing, Australia's youth will witness and celebrate the power of music to bring Christ alive in their hearts.

'His strong faith and courageous witness right in the heart of contemporary culture is an encouragement to all young people to use their youthful energy in the service of the Gospel,' said Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP, Archbishop of Sydney.

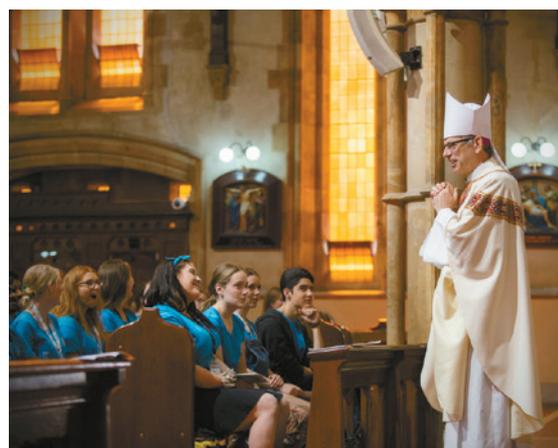
This year's ACYF will springboard the launch of the National Year of Youth. This event in the Church calendar is inspired by the 10-year anniversary of WYD Sydney. The Year of Youth reminds us that young people must be the centre of any renewal strategy for the Church. By working in partnership with the drive, passion and energy of our youth we become more fully alive as the body of Christ.

Embracing the Year of Youth theme, which comes from Pope Francis' homily at WYD 2016 Krakow Poland, the ACYF asks attendees to *Open new horizons for spreading joy!* Many schools have registered already from all around the Archdiocese, from Sacred Heart College in Geelong to Nazareth College in Noble Park North and as far north as St Monica's College in Epping, and the numbers keep growing!

If your child is in Year 9 or above, or you have a young adult in your life and/or parish community that you feel might like to take up the call from Pope Francis and enjoy the opportunity to come together with other young Catholics from around Australia, tell them about the Australian Catholic Youth Festival Sydney 2017.

You can also visit the website youthfestival.catholic.org.au to see how you may be able to support the festival and the youth of today. ✝

“This year's ACYF will springboard the launch of the National Year of Youth [which] reminds us that young people must be the centre of any renewal strategy for the Church.”



Developing Virtuous Children: Justice

In Pope Francis' recent apostolic exhortation, *The Joy of Love*, he wrote about the role that parents play in developing and nurturing faith and virtues in their children. The third virtue to consider here is that of justice.

Justice means giving to others – God and our neighbour – what is rightly theirs. For Christians, it flows from Christ's summation of the two great commandments of love:

You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind [and] you must love your neighbour as yourself. (Matthew 22: 37)

With this in mind, justice is the virtue that underpins every relationship. It is the habit of always taking others into account, and considering the impact that actions have on them. It is love for others that must underpin every virtuous act. Put another way, every act, if it is to be virtuous, must have the best interests of others as its motivation. Tied in with this is the virtue of responsibility, which governs our duties to care for and dedicate ourselves to those we love, and to educate those in our care.

While self-centeredness is a tendency every person struggles with, children's sense of fairness, while needing to be formed, is often one of the first virtues they can understand and begin to develop. You can encourage and foster this virtue early on by encouraging your children to feel empathy for those who suffer. Putting themselves in the other person's shoes is a helpful way to approach nurturing their sense of justice. Ask them: 'What would you hope someone would do for you in that situation?'

You can also show your children the joy that comes from serving and helping others. Together with your



This is the third in a series of four articles from the Life, Marriage & Family Office, which explores the virtues of temperance (self-control), fortitude (courage), justice (giving to others what is rightly theirs) and prudence (good judgment), and how to foster these virtues in our children.

children, you might visit an elderly neighbour to check on their wellbeing, visit grandparents more often or get involved in voluntary work that clearly shows how to think of and care for others. At home, encourage children to pack up a game they've been playing so that it's ready for the next person to use, help children to think of people in need during their evening or bedtime prayers, or when saying grace encourage each family member around the table to share what they're grateful for.

Ultimately, justice – respect and responsibility – starts at home. The virtue of justice comes down to treating others well habitually. It is best learned in a family where love is the overriding motivation and joyful acts of service demonstrating care and concern for others become part of family life.

Pope Francis writes:

Education ... involves forming persons who readily understand that their own lives, and the life of the community, are in their hands, and that freedom itself is a great gift. †

“

[Justice] is best learned in a family where love is the overriding motivation and joyful acts of service demonstrating care and concern for others become part of family life.

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Victorian Young Leaders to China

Victorian Young Leaders to China – where do I start! I will cherish this experience forever. Before I started at Marcellin I said to my mum that I wanted to be a part of it. I applied for the trip and was sceptical about getting in, but I did, and I was so happy!

We had lots of meetings which prepared us for the trip. One weekend we had a pre-departure camp, when we met the other 10 schools. My school was with St Joseph's College, Ferntree Gully, and Whitefriars College, Donvale.

On the day we left I had mixed emotions about what was going to happen when I left my family. We arrived in Beijing and WOW – was it different to Australia!



Marcellin students Alexander Peano and Benjamin Galea

“
I will cherish this
experience forever.
”



By Alexander Peano,
Year 9, Marcellin College,
Bulleen

We studied for two weeks at the Beijing Language and Culture University. Our classes were three hours every weekday, and then we went to different sightseeing places. I loved the Great Wall of China and the Summer Palace, and experiencing the culture, food and people.

Shanghai was the highlight – the culture, the people and the food. We stayed at Shanghai I and C Foreign Language School for four weeks. We were very busy with school work and culture activities (tai chi, dragon dancing, tea ceremony, calligraphy, painting and other activities) and visits to famous places in Shanghai. We became good friends with our buddies. They helped with our Chinese and we also did classes with them. Some weekends we went out with our buddy. That was fun and a good way to learn more about Shanghai and how families lived.

At the end we sat a test for HSK 2 (Chinese proficiency test, level 2), and 9 of our 15 were successful. HSK 2 is the level you reach at the end of Year 10, so we had made excellent progress in our language. As well, we learned to be independent from our families and look after ourselves, making sure our clothes were washed and we were on time to class. ✦

Students from Marcellin,
St Joseph's and Whitefriars
at the Temple of Heaven

Committed to Leading Catholic Schools

Michael Hanney (Principal at St Peter's School, Bentleigh East) and his wife, Elizabeth Hanney (Principal at Ave Maria College, Aberfeldie) met at university. Their personal and professional journey has led them to Catholic education and ultimately to both being principals in Catholic schools. Here they share with us their reflections on teaching and leading in a Catholic school.

What do you like about working in a Catholic school?

MICHAEL: Very few people in the workforce have the opportunity to start their day sitting with young people sharing meditation and prayer. I can do this every day. I also have the opportunity to be with families during times of great joy and great sadness and we do this knowing that our faith and our God are there to support us.

ELIZABETH: Catholic schools are sacred ground. I love working in a place with the buzz of community, of young people and the sense that what we do matters. I love that Catholic schools put people in touch with truth, beauty and love every day. I also love that in the messiness of life, Catholic schools are places of hope and generosity, of forgiveness and newness, places of excellence and inspiration; they are kingdom places.

A Catholic educator requires ...

MICHAEL: ... a commitment to faith and a commitment to education. The vision for my school is to be a Catholic community where our love of God, self and others is central to our learning and all that we do. Bringing this vision to fruition requires the work and support of a community who realise that the opportunity to enrich the lives of young people is a great gift, and that no stone should be left unturned as we strive to deliver on our commitments.

ELIZABETH: ... body, mind and soul. Catholic educators know that students are at the heart of all our endeavours. They are willing to give of themselves physically, intellectually and spiritually in service to young people. A Catholic educator recognises the importance of being a person of hope and an agent of growth, of connecting our story to God's story, of working together to achieve so much more than we could individually. A Catholic educator has an acute ability to see the good in every person and to recognise that goodness as God's grace at work.

The greatest challenge for parents today ...

MICHAEL: ... is coming to terms with the speed of change in the lives of their children and its impact on children's resilience. Children are facing challenges that parents have not experienced,



so they cannot draw on their own experiences to help them. This can create great uncertainty. The challenge is to be able to walk with their child, allowing them to learn from mistakes and challenges rather than cocooning them and protecting them from everything.

ELIZABETH: Balance. There are many demands on parents, with much to juggle. How do we balance dependence and independence? How do we balance being their parent and being their friend, or wanting to protect them but also encourage them to step outside their comfort zone? How do we balance *them* time, *us* time and *me* time? And how do we all balance screen time and tech-free time!

By the time I retire ...

MICHAEL: I would like a balance for teachers and leaders between ensuring compliance and ensuring that passionate people build relationships with students and, through these relationships and great teaching, truly make a difference to their lives. I would like to be remembered across my educational career as being passionate about providing the best to the children in my class or my school. I became a teacher wanting to make a difference. This still drives me and I hope to retire having made a difference.

ELIZABETH: I hope that Catholic schools will continue to thrive and be places of first choice for parents. I hope that teachers continue to grow in their professional capacity to be great teachers and so continue to transform the lives of young people. I hope that teachers are appreciated and recognised for the incredible energy, commitment and expertise they bring to their students. Personally, I hope by the time I retire that I will still recognise that I have much to learn and that I'm still loving what I do. †

Supporting children

through subject selection

By Rachel Saliba,
Executive Officer,
Catholic School
Parents Victoria
(formerly Victorian
Catholic Schools
Parent Body)

Each year, parents and their children face the business end of the school journey, with students in Years 9, 10 and 11 making choices about subjects for VCE, VCAL and VET. It can be a confusing and uncertain time for students as they begin to realise it is time to make some serious decisions about their future.

For many of us who are parents, it is also a time of uncertainty when the language and terminology once again changes. There are many paths our children can take and we want to feel assured our children are making well-informed choices.

To assist our children in choosing subjects, we need to have intimate knowledge of them as they are at home, what their passions are and the strengths they possess that could lead to a future career path.

Choosing subjects should involve understanding the options. If students understand what opportunities are available first, they are then able to make informed choices and give themselves a broad range of options when it comes time to apply for a course or seek employment.

Tips on supporting your child during this time:

- The first conversation to have with your child is about what their interests and passions are and what they could see themselves doing in the future. What do they intend to pursue?
- Setting goals together also helps in understanding which direction to take by discussing and visualising the future and the steps needed to reach their goals. It's important for young people to know they are not 'locking themselves in' when they choose their subjects, but exploring opportunities.
- It is a great opportunity to engage with your child in researching online together to explore the pathways that match your child's interests. Once your child is aware of the courses or career opportunities available, it then becomes easier to choose subjects based on course requirements and your child's interests.
- Attend school careers expos and information sessions together with your child and encourage them to ask questions – it is, after all, about their future, so they need to be in control of their decisions with your guidance and support.



”

If students understand what opportunities are available first, they are then able to make informed choices and give themselves a broad range of options when it comes time to apply for a course or seek employment.

“

The Good Education Group *Good Careers Guide* suggests the following for students:



- **Learn about yourself** – what are you good at, what are your aspirations, what would you like to study or train in, what are your preferred working conditions, where would you like to work, what are your work values?
- **Explore types of work** – are you analytical or scientific, creative or artistic, practical or mechanical, enjoy nature or recreation, do you enjoy being organised or organising others, are you interested in selling and negotiation or service-based work?
- **Research occupations** – Understand the skills and knowledge required for different occupations, what qualifications and/or skills are required, are there opportunities for career progression or future movement, what personal qualities do you require? Who is the employer, what are the potential locations for employment?
- **What education and training would you need for certain occupations**, how long are the courses, and what is the cost?
- **What industries do you want to work in**, what other opportunities are available for improvement in the occupation?
- **Explore opportunities for volunteer work or work experience** in the industry you are interested in. This doesn't have to be organised by the school but you can approach organisations in your own time to gain further knowledge and experience in a certain area of interest. This way you can be sure of your decision when it comes to choosing a future career path.
- **Collect position descriptions and job advertisements** to see what skills are needed in certain occupations. Contact industry bodies or associations and ask questions related to your area of interest.
- **Reflect, plan and decide** – use a process of elimination so that you are not too overwhelmed by choice if your list is now quite long.

- Attend university and TAFE Open Days together. Prior to attending the open days, have a list of courses to explore and questions to ask. Open Days are also an opportunity to provide your child with a feel for university or TAFE and learn more about what is involved in life beyond secondary school.
- Request information from the school careers advisor on how you can support your child through the process of subject selection. It can be a challenging time for young people, particularly if they are unsure of what they want to do after school. Parents need to be informed by the school of what subjects are available and how they can support and guide their children through this process.

While choosing subjects can be a challenge for students, making decisions for themselves is a huge part of growing up and becoming a mature, responsible and capable adult. Taking control of their own future can be very empowering and as parents, our guidance and support are needed during this time so that they know we are there for them.

For further information and to download an information booklet *Where to Now 2018?* to aid understanding subject selection, visit www.vcaa.vic.edu.au.



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

Catholic School Parents Victoria, (formerly Victorian Catholic Schools Parent Body) are a team of passionate advocates for education, representing parents of children in primary and secondary Catholic schools across Victoria.

CSPV are seeking current Catholic school parents or carers to join our team.

The CSPV five key areas of advocacy are:



As a CSPV council member you will be advocating for these five areas. This is your opportunity to provide parent perspective on education issues and policy in Victoria through engagement with State and Catholic education.

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

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

Website for Catholic School Parents Victoria coming soon!



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St Mary Magdalen's 'secret garden'

Hidden behind the school fence, on the perimeter of St Mary Magdalen's School, Chadstone, is a secret food garden. In partnership with Cultivating Community, a hidden strip of grass was transformed into a productive garden over eight years ago and is now an ongoing educational resource for the school. There are 12 raised planter boxes growing vegetables and herbs, 14 fruit trees at various stages of maturity, a composting area and worm farm for organic recycling, and water tanks that collect rainwater from the roof to water the garden. ✦



Launch of chess club at Ss Peter and Paul's School

Current Vice President of the Australian Chess Federation, International Chess Master Leonid Sandler led the students at Ss Peter and Paul's School, East Doncaster, through a journey of the game of chess. All students were taught the basics of chess in a 45-minute incursion.

Leonid spoke with the children about how chess is an equaliser, where culture, race and age play no part; anybody can sit down and enjoy a game. It was a great message to give to the students. ✦



Giving a helping hand this winter

Inspired by the work of the St Vincent de Paul Society, the community at St Kevin's School, Templestowe Lower, came together to do something practical to help those experiencing homelessness during the cold winter months. Social Justice Captains Ned and Alexander advertised for blankets and socks around the school and the parish and have collected over 70 blankets and over 300 pairs of socks to support people in need. ✦



The Long Walk

Aquinas College, Ringwood, hosted one of Melbourne's largest events to promote Aboriginal reconciliation at their Long Walk. With 3,000 students representing 42 Catholic, government and independent schools, the walk is a powerful symbol of the college's commitment to supporting reconciliation.

Patron of the Long Walk, Michael Long, and former senator and Olympian Nova Peris walked with the students while Great Ryrie Street in Ringwood was closed to traffic to cater to the thousands of enthusiastic walkers. Michael Long spoke at the assembly of the importance of schools coming together to promote reconciliation, 'One day you young men and women are going to change the future and what it looks like for everyone.' ✦

Where there's a Will, there's a day made better

Will Kent, a graduate teacher at St Francis of Assisi School, Mill Park, has been nominated for the *A Day Made Better* teaching award. Will, a Year 4 teacher and former Marcellin College student, has received many messages of support from the community since his nomination. The 10 winners of the *A Day Made Better* award will each receive \$6000 of prizes for their school including office products and an iPad. Good luck, Will. ✦



Principal's sixth Vinnies CEO sleep out



Margaret O'Donnell, Principal at St Gregory the Great School, Doncaster, took part in the Vinnies (St Vincent De Paul) Sleep Out for the homeless at Melbourne University. It was her sixth sleep out, aimed at raising awareness of the plight of the homeless. Margaret said, 'Over the past five years many other school principals have joined me, and together we have tried to help our students and our communities to raise money for those less fortunate than ourselves. As Catholic schools we put our Catholic faith into action as we engage in social justice initiatives to help others.' This year, Margaret raised almost \$12,000 to help the homeless. †

Celebrating 50 years

The community at St Timothy's School, Vermont South, have marked their 50th anniversary by unveiling their latest art installation, two large mosaics created by the school's students. Working with the Artists in Schools project through a grant from the City of Whitehorse, the mosaics were unveiled by Mayor Denise Massoud along with fellow councillors Raylene Carr and Bill Bennett. †



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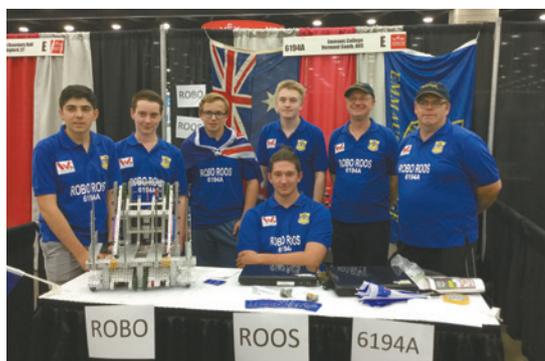
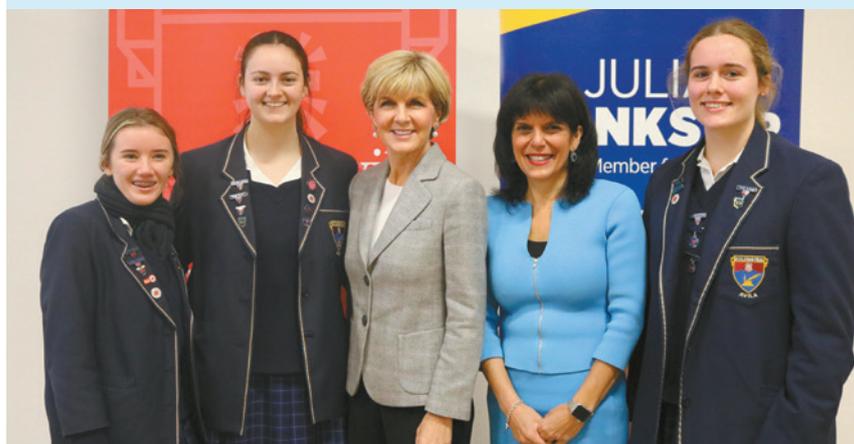
Julie Bishop and Julia Banks visit to Avila

Students at Avila College, Mount Waverley, were delighted when Minister for Foreign Affairs the Hon. Julie Bishop and Ms Julia Banks MP, Federal Member for Chisholm, visited for a 'Women in Leadership' Special Assembly. The Foreign Minister and Ms Banks addressed the assembly, sharing their experiences in various leadership roles in business and politics. They also engaged in a question-and-answer session with senior students.

Ms Banks said, 'It was a great honour to be joined by the Foreign Minister and have such a wonderful opportunity to speak with students from Avila College who are the future female leaders of our nation.'

St John's at the UN Youth Conference

Seven young ambassadors from St John's Regional College, Dandenong, attended the 2017 UN Youth State Conference, held during the Labour Day long weekend at Lord Somers Camp. The Conference included many activities including workshops, debates and expert panels. Ambassador Brooklyn Ludowyk said, 'I was able to learn so much about global issues and just how integral young people are in shaping the world for the better.'



VEX Robotics World Championships 2017

Emmaus College, Vermont South, was thrilled to be one of only two schools from Australia invited to participate in the 2017 VEX Robotics World Championships – the pinnacle event on the VEX robotics calendar, which brings together over 500 of the leading high school robotics teams from around the globe.

The Emmaus College team, RoboRoos, competed in the Engineering division of the High School section, winning four of its ten matches, ranking them in 60th place overall.

VCAL Student Achievement Award

The senior Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) students at Mount Lilydale Mercy College, Lilydale, have received the award for Senior Team Achievement at the 2016 VCAL Student Achievement Awards for their ongoing work with the Mount Evelyn Toy Library. This win for the Senior VCAL students marks the third consecutive VCAL Student Achievement Award for Mount Lilydale Mercy College, previously receiving the Senior Team Achievement at the 2015 awards, and the Intermediate Team Achievement at the 2014 awards.



CBC and St Mary's shared storytime

Nine students from Christian Brothers College (CBC), St Kilda East, in Years 7 and 8 volunteered to participate in National Simultaneous Storytime at St Mary's School across the road. The CBC students read this year's book, *The Cow Tripped over the Moon*, to groups of St Mary's classes. CBC Principal, Gerald Bain-King, attended the session and reported back to the school community. 'Watching two of our students read the story was a really enjoyable experience. They were animated, warm and teacher-ly - very professional, I thought! +



Ministerial visit to Sacred Heart, Croydon

Sacred Heart School, Croydon, received a visit from the Victorian Minister for Education, the Hon. James Merlino MP, and Member for Eastern Metropolitan Region, Shaun Leane, to review the designs for a \$2.7 million upgrade to the school. The school community has contributed \$1.5 million, including supplementary funding from Catholic Education Melbourne, and the Victorian Government has promised \$1.2 million. The upgrades will ensure local families can access a great local school equipped to deliver the best possible education. +



Refugee Week 2017

Students from St Matthew's School, Fawkner North, and Mount St Joseph Girls' College, Altona, welcomed the 'Inflatable Refugee' to Melbourne to begin Refugee Week. Performing *Welcome*, a musical piece written by Stephen Falk and played on the Federation Handbells, the students provided the perfect setting for the arrival of the five-metre tall art installation. The students, some of them from refugee backgrounds, performed the avant-garde piece as the Inflatable Refugee glided down the Yarra River. +



St Bede's Mission Action Day reaching those in need

St Bede's College, Mentone, raised over \$93,000 in funds at their Mission Action Day earlier this year, for Lasallian overseas projects, including the Bamboo School in Thailand, the 'Lost and the Least' in India and the unemployed in Papua New Guinea. +



Lighting a FIRE

Co-principal Teresa Lincoln welcomed over 80 students representing five colleges to Kilbreda College, Mentone, to discuss the issues that Indigenous communities have faced in the past and still do today. In a student-led initiative carried out by Kilbreda's recently commissioned Friends Igniting Reconciliation through Education (FIRE) Carriers, the thought-provoking forum demonstrated the Kilbreda FIRE Carriers' commitment to reconciliation and justice for all Australians and featured three highly regarded speakers: Arweet Carolyn Briggs, a Boon Wurrung senior elder; Brother Rick Gaffney, a former principal from Luurpna Catholic School in Balgo; and Brian Walker from Monash University. +



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