

Today



Talk to the hand,
we're serious on safety

TERM 2, 2016

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Simple Prayer for Mercy

Lord, I am a sinner;
come with your mercy.

Prayer of Pope Francis, to be prayed daily.



**CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
MELBOURNE**

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Cover Image Presentation College Windsor students Emily, Estelle and Stephanie make their message clear. Full-story page 4.



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From the Executive Director

The 2016 Federal Election is one of the most critical campaigns for Catholic education in recent history.

While your family contributions make up 22% of Victorian Catholic school budgets, you should be aware that Australian Government funding accounts for a whopping 68% of that same sum.

We've been very fortunate that Australian Government support for our schools has increased at a consistent pace over the past decade. And the introduction of the *Australian Education Act 2013* funding model promises to continue this generous federal government support for your children's Catholic education.

Both Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Opposition Leader Bill Shorten have recognised the quality of Catholic education by making substantial commitments to our sector during the current election campaign. The Coalition included an increase of 6.9% in Commonwealth funding for non-government schools over the coming year, followed by an additional \$1.2 billion in 2018-20. And for its part the ALP has vowed to fund the final two years of the Gonski model as part of a total education commitment of \$37.3 billion over the coming decade.

There are some strings attached to the funding that both parties are offering. While you might not think that this will affect the education of your children, any dollar schools need to spend on having to meet red-tape reporting requirements is a dollar not spent in the classroom.

We are fortunate to have open lines of communication and positive relations with both major parties. So regardless of how things turn out on 2 July, you can rest assured that we will not be shy about advocating on behalf of your interests

However, at this election, there are very real concerns about the Australian Greens, whose 2016 election platform explicitly calls for a shift of federal funding away from non-government schools. Such a policy would lead to significant challenges and changes to how our schools operate. Any cuts to funding would either impact on the programs run in schools, or lead to increased school fee pressure on the families that make up our community. And in turn, those fee increases would inhibit the ability of many families to choose a Catholic education for their children.

That's not a situation any of us want to see.

This is all serious food for thought as election day approaches. I hope you keep these issues in the front of your mind as you make your decision how to cast your ballot.

We will come to you with a communicate closer to the election if anything changes. ✝

Stephen Elder with Victorian Education Minister James Merlino at the St Patrick's Day Mass for Schools.



Brooklyn Nets NBA star turned teacher's-aid, Stephen Dennis.

Quality teaching gains global attention

'We had kids trying to jump the fence to get to school an hour early because they wanted to be part of our maths project. That's the way we try to do things ... make school as fun as possible.'

When Christian Williams says primary students are desperate to begin the school day he speaks the truth, and for a host of other Catholic schools in Victoria at the same time.

Admittedly the student engagement work of the Year 1-2 teacher at St Michael's School in Ashburton goes beyond the norm – evident by his top 40 finish in the World's Best Teacher prize this year – but the notion of making school fun is a constant within Catholic education.

While in Dubai for the top teaching award ceremony – broadcast live into many other parts of the globe – Christian realised the quality reputation of Catholic schooling in Australia is recognised internationally.

'In talking to other teachers and explaining what we do it was clear that the importance we place on the individualisation of every student, and parent partnerships, is widely regarded elsewhere,' he said.

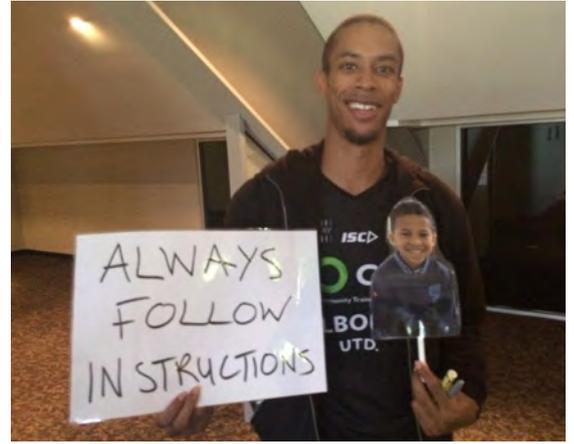


“

Some other systems around the world are so focused on testing, assessment and standardisation that they forget about the individual and celebrating the whole person. That's one of the things that Catholic education does really well.

”

CHRISTIAN WILLIAMS



'Some other systems around the world are so focused on testing, assessment and standardisation that they forget about the individual and celebrating the whole person. That's one of the things that Catholic education does really well.'

The parents of St Michael's not only nominated 'Mr Williams' as one of 8000 entries for what's described as the Nobel Prize of teaching, they raised \$4000 to send him overseas in recognition of the great lengths he goes to routinely to help his students learn.

Projects include an in-class coffee shop: 'I was looking for a way to make maths more interesting, told the kids we were going to start a business and we decided to open a coffee shop because "all our mums and dads get coffee on the way to school". We put the phone on speaker and negotiated contracts with a coffee company, got a free machine and started selling coffee and hot chocolate on Friday mornings.'

Hunting down and then persuading a visiting American basketballer to become a personal mentor for a NBA-obsessed student struggling with behavioural issues: 'You could call it stalking ... if that's what it takes to get through, each voice matters.'

And international Skype sessions with motivational influences like the astrophysics professor who provided advice on the student's desire to build a time machine: 'You've got to do the best you can to make their dreams come true, that's why we're here.'

Christian says the potentially fatal, genetic heart defect that curtailed a decorated, elite-level sporting career drives the passion, energy and emotion he brings to his 'new life' every day, along with the fact he was alienated at school as a child.

'I did not believe in myself as a kid and don't want that to happen to anyone else. But that's all in the past, my job now is to help shape my students future.'

A job he does (officially) as well as (almost) anyone, anywhere in the world. +

International top 40 teacher, Christian Williams, busy making each day more fun than the last.



Anti-bullying a core business

Maintaining a safe and secure environment for students to learn and grow is the #1 priority of every school in the country. Within Catholic education, student and parent voice is a critical contributor to this goal, both inside the school gate and beyond.

It's one of life's well-worn clichés: Prevention is better than cure! When it comes to the equally age-old problem of bullying, early intervention is definitely one of the best ways to tackle the problem.

But what is the source? Is there a 'particular type' of child from a 'particular type' of family that can be educated in a 'particular type' of way? The answer, of course, is no, and that's why Catholic education is constantly updating and developing holistic programs that include students and parents in both the research and delivery process.

Experts in the field universally accept that the way schools and their communities respond to bullying – both face-to-face and online – and other forms of conflict are directly influenced by personal understandings of the issue. Recent school-based studies have also highlighted the fact that children and young people can hold very different ideas from adults about what bullying is, and why it happens.

With that in mind Catholic Education Melbourne has funded a student-voice trial of three schools that includes Presentation College Windsor as part of the Victorian Child Safe Standards framework.

NATIONAL DEFINITION OF BULLYING FOR AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS:

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. Bullying can happen in person or online, and can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Antonella Rosati leads a student-voice safety-session at PCW.

'We asked our students what made them feel safe and what didn't and the answers were not always what you think,' Deputy Principal Antonella Rosati says.

'For example, they like lock-downs. It's fair to assume that practicing for a serious security breach that would require students to lock doors and even shelter under their desks would be extremely confronting. But the Year 7 and 8 group said it made them feel confident that they would be safe in the case of emergency,' Ms Rosati explained.

'Ensuring students feel safe is a classic area where, with all the right intentions, we as leaders, teachers and staff do what we think is best and what we think includes the students' feelings; however there is nothing like going straight to the source.

'It makes for a liberating experience and definitely produces a great end result.'

The link between individual respect and overall safety was also strong amid the Presentation College Windsor student responses.

- ***We should all be treated with equality.***
- ***Feeling safe has a lot to do with the people you are surrounded by.***
- ***People feel vulnerable and unsafe when alone.***
- ***It doesn't matter what shape, size or colour we are, we should all be treated with the same amount of respect.***
- ***Cleaning the environment can change the way you see it.***

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation plays an important wellbeing role in Catholic schools. Under the motto 'keeping children safe from violence', the foundation's position on the role of parents is threefold: Educating, Protecting, Empowering.

At St Leo the Great School in Altona North, a biannual program aims to ensure parents are up-to-date with the latest cybersafety developments.



66
Our schools use the latest information and techniques to teach the benefits of family values, respect for self and others to promote school safety.

99
STEPHEN ELDER

'The parents love it,' says ICT leader, Cathy Green, 'We are an e-Smart school and that means we work in partnership with the children and with the parents for open communication because it's all our responsibility to keep everyone safe and happy and in an environment where they want to learn.'

'Parents have to buy in and I think you get a bigger buy-in when you get genuine experts in as well to talk to them and listen to what they have to say.'

The Executive Director of Catholic Education, Stephen Elder, says Catholic schools have long led the way in the student wellbeing space and cites these student and parent-voice activities as a perfect example.

'Our schools use the latest information and techniques to teach the benefits of family values, respect for self and others to promote school safety,' he explained.

'That's why Catholic school principals get so frustrated at media commentary questioning why we do not support the *Safe Schools Framework*. For the record, when given the choice, out of 1,728 Catholic schools in Australia only two chose to include *Safe Schools* material in their curriculum because our already entrenched wellbeing programs are outstanding,' Mr Elder explained. +



IF YOUR CHILD IS BULLIED

- Listen calmly and get the full story
- Reassure your child that they are not to blame
- Ask what they want to do about it and how you can help
- Visit www.bullyingnoway.gov.au for possible strategies
- Contact the school
- Check in regularly with your child.

CYBER-SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Set up safe search and security controls
- Ensure devices are kept outside the bedroom
- Lights out = WiFi off
- Take an interest in kids online activities
- Communicate with school/teacher
- Don't threaten to take away devices
- Teach children not to respond to cyberbullying.



Amelia, Joseph and Frank with great mate Joseph – the way they will always remember him.

When nine-year-old Joseph Henna lost his six-year battle with leukaemia this year, his school focused on the qualities that made him an unforgettable friend. Raising funds to assist others helped everyone to smile again, and to say goodbye.

Friends forever

By Amelia Capasso, Joseph Markas and Frank Gallo, Year 4, St Matthew's School, Fawkner North.



Joseph Henna is our great friend who we care about very much. Even though he is no longer here, Joseph would still be running around up in heaven with a big smile on his face. Joseph always had a smile no matter what happened.

We did the World's Greatest Shave because we wanted to raise money for people, like Joseph, who have cancer. Some children and teachers shaved their heads because they wanted to know how Joseph felt when he had no hair.



Some people dyed their hair different colours. Joseph loved all the colours of the rainbow because of the bible story where God put a rainbow in the sky to remind people of the everlasting promise he made to all living things.

In the canteen we sold lots of rainbow food. We also sold cookies and macaroons so we could raise more money for the World's Greatest Shave. We raised over \$3000 and people are still donating money!



We remember that no matter what game we were playing, Joseph always wanted to join in. Joseph always tried his best in soccer and he had a great personality.

When we were playing Snakes and Ladders inside because Joseph was too sick to go out it was really funny because each one of us was getting close to 100 but kept sliding down the snake. Joseph really loved playing this game – and he won a lot.

He loved spending time with his friends and teachers. He wanted to come to school even when he was really sick. We remember his birthday parties and how fun the games were.

Joseph knew that we were going to do a crazy hair day and he wanted to see it. He was saving money to donate to the World's Greatest Shave. Although Joseph was not there his mum donated \$100 on his behalf.

We will miss our dear friend Joseph forever. We hope everyone keeps him in their hearts and remembers the lovely smile he always had on his face. ✦



St Matthew's students, teachers and even principal, Bob Brown (above), got into the spirit of the World's Greatest Shave.

Eat, Pray, Work, Play

One Mum shares how she discovered prayer can prevent and cure common family problems.

If those days sound familiar when the dreaded witching hour comes around and your kids seem to be out of control, you are not alone.

Catholic Family Life coach Lisa Popcak remembers one of those days especially vividly. It was one such day that saw her family life changed for the better.

'I was definitely having one of "those days"; she said, speaking at the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia in September last year. 'Trying to wash the dishes, I've got two of them fighting, one of them crying and the stuff is boiling over on the stove.'

Lisa remembers sending a 'Blessed Mother give me strength' request heavenward in her frustration.

In a moment which Lisa attributes to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, she sensed that she should ask her children to pray for her.

'I put the sponge in the sink, turned off the water and said, "kids, come over to the couch." Boy did they look scared. They were like "uh-oh she's being calm, something must be really about to go down"; she said recounting the scene.

As she sat down with her children Lisa remembers bracing herself as she shifted her mindset from *I'm going to kill them*, to *I am going to ask them to do something I have never asked them to do before*.

'I'm losing it,' she said to them. 'I don't want to lose it because you don't deserve that, and I don't want Dad coming home to that. Will you guys just pray for me right now that I can hold this together?'

To her surprise her three children each reached out a hand. One on her head, one on her shoulder and one on her knee and started praying.

'Dear Lord, please help Mummy to be peaceful. Please help us be good so that she isn't mad any more. Please help us love one another,' she recalled tearing up with emotion.



'It gave them power. It changed the way I wanted to treat them. It changed the way they were treating each other. We at that time became a team under the Holy Trinity and it changed our lives.'

From her experience with her own children Lisa has found that teaching children to pray simple prayers can be the best all-round solution for the whole family.

'Pray about and with the actual lives of the people in your family,' she said.

'The next time you want to come up with an array of amazing ways to give consequences to your kids and they keep getting more colourful and weird, and you know you are never going to be able to hold them accountable ... Ask them to pray for you first.'

Short prayers before meals or at bedtime are some simple ways of incorporating prayer into otherwise hectic schedules. Making the effort to say short prayers daily will teach children that prayers for help, in gratitude, and of apology can be said in silence anytime and that when voiced out loud are a great way of communicating love for family members. +

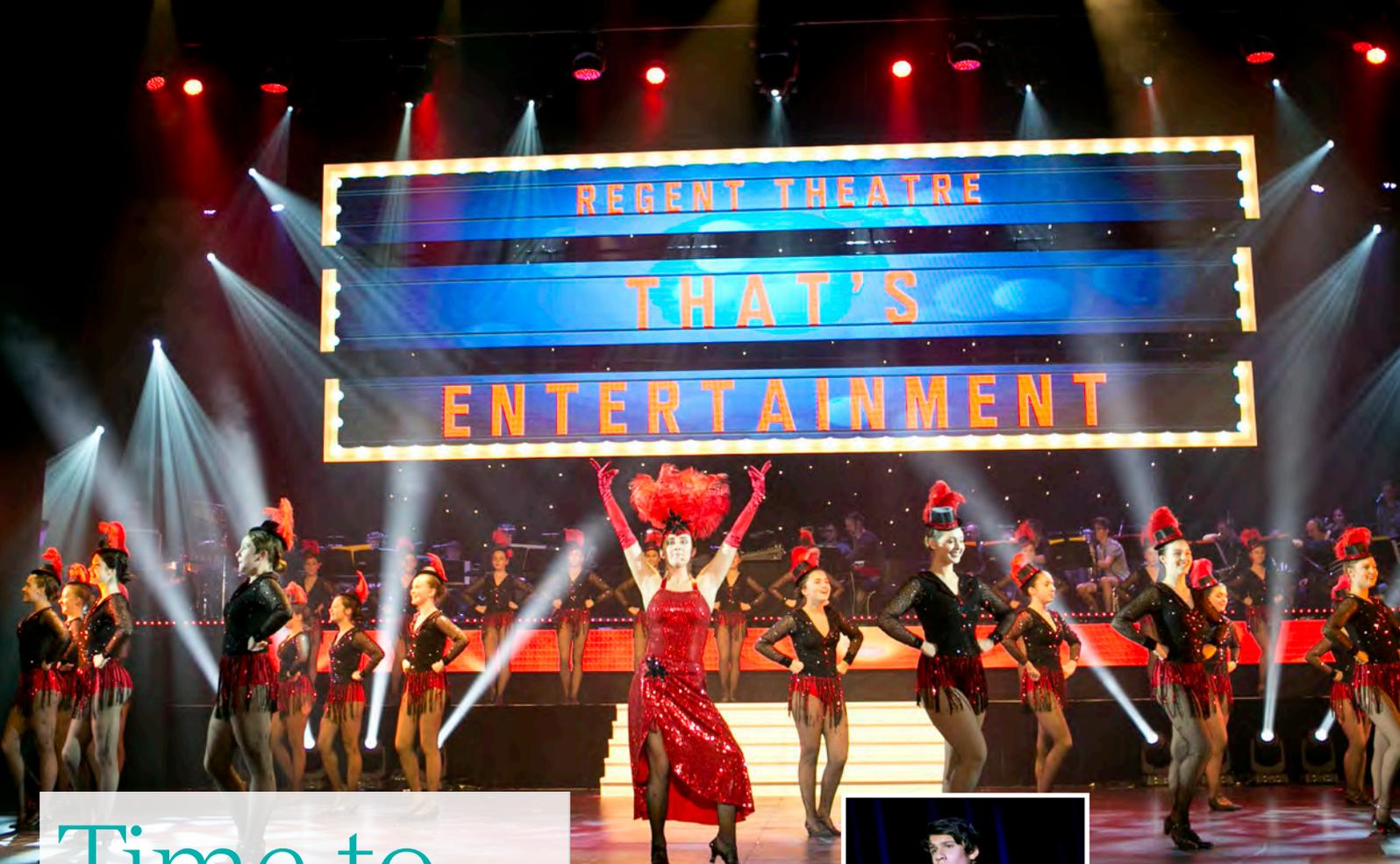
This is the second article in a four-part series from the Life, Marriage & Family Office in the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne www.cam.org.au/lifemarriagefamily.

“In a moment which Lisa attributes to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, she sensed that she should ask her children to pray for her.”

SIMPLE WAYS TO PRAY

- The Sign of the Cross.
- Blowing a kiss when passing a church, an image of Our Lady, or a crucifix.
- Grace before meals.
- Prayer before bed.

For more resources for learning and teaching children to pray visit: catholicmom.com fathersforgood.org



Time to Shine

After months of tireless preparation *Time to Shine* lit up Melbourne's iconic Regent Theatre in April.

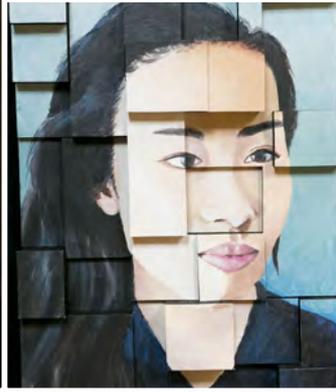
From the dazzling opening number to the spectacular finale featuring over 300 students on stage, *Time to Shine* lived up to its name as performers from almost 50 of Melbourne's Catholic secondary schools shone in a diverse range of outstanding performances.



Thanks go to our major sponsor **Catholic Super** and our bronze sponsors **Australian Catholic University** and **Catholic Development Fund** for their generous support. *Time to Shine* has also received generous support from schools and supporters from across the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

A copy of the souvenir program is available on the Catholic Education Melbourne website and a DVD of the entire show is available by contacting Eliane Pinheiro at epinheiro@cem.edu.au.





Catholic Education Week 2016

Catholic Education Week in 2016 was a wonderful celebration of our schools, their beautiful students and the jubilee Year of Mercy.

Thousands of students took up this year's theme, *to Be the Face of Mercy*, in what was a truly outstanding example of what makes the Catholic education system great. The week was an opportunity for students to understand and witness up close the fact that their school is part of a giant Catholic education community.

Events for the week included the ever-popular Mass of St Patrick for Schools and Concert, a Young Speakers Colloquium, and the annual Visual Arts Exhibition and Visual Arts Awards Ceremony. From the talented Concert musicians to former Catholic students speaking about their experiences working for the United Nations, the week was uplifting for all involved. ✕



Parental

GUIDANCE
RECOMMENDED



Take the stress out of Schoolies

Schoolies Week can be a time of great celebration for young people at the completion of a 13-year school-education journey. It can also be a week of concern for their parents.

Victorian beachside resorts are growing in popularity as venues for the annual school-leavers pilgrimage, so three coastal councils have teamed up with Victoria Police and volunteer agencies to ensure Schoolies 2016 is as fun and safe as possible.

Surf Coast, Mornington Peninsula and Bass Coast Shires have created the 'good time, great breaks' website and are encouraging students to register as school leavers and learn about the best way to stay happy and healthy.

“Parents – support your children to attend Schoolies activities where support services are available. School leavers – celebrate safely and look after your mates.”

'Safety response teams' will be in place from 26 November to 3 December however organisers say it is vitally important that parents of school leavers visiting these coastal communities are aware of information and actions required that will help.

The safety response teams rely heavily on registrations to best allocate resources and be ready to react when and where help may be needed.

After previous Schoolies Week events, young people identified a number of concerns that had hampered their celebrations and impacted their wellbeing. These included the increase of mental health issues brought on by the likelihood of violence, drinking too much, losing money and relationship stress through friends falling out.

So the messages are simple. Parents – support your children to attend Schoolies activities where support services are available. School leavers – celebrate safely and look after your mates. +

SIGN UP NOW

Plan safe and secure Schoolies Week celebrations on the Surf Coast, Mornington Peninsula or Bass Coast Shires between 26 November and 3 December and register at www.goodtimesgreatbreaks.com.

For information and tips on school leavers events outside these areas visit smartraveller.gov.au.

Your Say

Catholic Education Today is a dynamic way for us to share the wonderful work of Catholic schools throughout the Archdiocese of Melbourne with you, the parents and families that help make our system so successful.

We are also keen to know if there are any specific areas of teaching or wellbeing you would like us to cover and, as always, your opinions as partners in education are welcome.

Tell us what you want to read about in *Catholic Education Today*.

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Tweet of the Term



Marcellin College @Marcellin · 5h

Our Year 7s are learning about having a growth mindset with their learning. Effort and persistence is integral!



Anthony Banks

PRINCIPAL – PADUA COLLEGE, MORNINGTON

I started teaching at Emmaus College, Vermont South, 26 years ago; became deputy principal of St Peter's College, Cranbourne; and was then principal of St Joseph's College, Mildura, for two years before joining Padua, a three-campus college of some 2500 students.

I'm a principal because ... I place an incredibly high value on the ability of educators to have a positive (and in many cases life-changing) influence on young people. As principal you also have the scope to broaden this circle of influence to staff as well.

My favourite teaching moments are ... seeing young people realise that they have God-given gifts unique to them, make mistakes,



learn, improve and grow. Recently we invited a group of students to participate in our decision-making. Completely impromptu, one thanked the 200+ teaching staff present for what we do every day and said we really *do* make a difference to student's lives.

A Catholic education means ... helping young people and families to realise that there is hope for the world in which they live in, both now and in the future. Helping to make the story of Jesus and the Gospels relevant and helping to nurture citizens to have a positive influence in their local and broader communities.

The greatest challenge for parents today is ... the balance between protection and freedom/space. Young people are exposed to an exponential amount of offerings/opportunities both educationally and socially/emotionally. It is a fine line between allowing these experiences to take place and doing so in a protective manner. They are still children who need our guidance and life experience.

In the future ... I believe that our ways of educating will continue to evolve to become more flexible in terms of structure, time and space. We will continue to place a greater emphasis on skills such as analysing, creating and evaluating. Our challenge is to continue to do this in a way that places the emphasis on our core beliefs and values.

I also want to say ... working in education is a delight and indeed a privilege. We have the opportunity to help shape lives and I am so glad every day that I changed career paths from accounting to teaching. Our young people have so much to offer to this world and give me hope that our future is in wonderful hands. ✦

Robyn Thomson

YEAR 5/6 TEACHER, ST BRIDGET'S SCHOOL, GREYTHORN

After studying psychology, I worked for the Commonwealth Bank for 16 years, eventually becoming a sales manager. I then completed a Master's degree in primary teaching and find the role completely fulfilling and rewarding.

I'm a teacher because ... I'm passionate about education and I want to have an impact on the education of others. I reflect on my own primary school years and vividly remember my Year 5 teacher who engaged me through strategies that helped me to connect with the content she was teaching. Mrs McKay had a positive impact on my education, my self-esteem and my attitude towards learning.

My favourite teaching moment was ... when a student made a breakthrough with a concept they had been struggling with. This breakthrough was reflected in a whole class discussion as well as through their test results. At this moment I felt I had really contributed and made a positive impact on this student's education.

A Catholic education means ... being immersed in the teachings of God through every aspect of education not just when religious education is taught as a subject. Being Catholic is part of who we are and our education should complement this. Having a Catholic education means having opportunities to learn to become more like Jesus.

The greatest challenge for parents today is ... keeping up-to-date with technology. Technology is constantly evolving and parents need to know what their child is accessing and what educational opportunities are available for their children through the use



of technology. Parents also need to know what social media their children are using and set rules to ensure it is being used appropriately to keep their children and others safe.

In the future ... I would like to see the profile of teachers as a profession receive greater recognition and respect in terms of the significant impact we can have on a student's academic, social and emotional education.

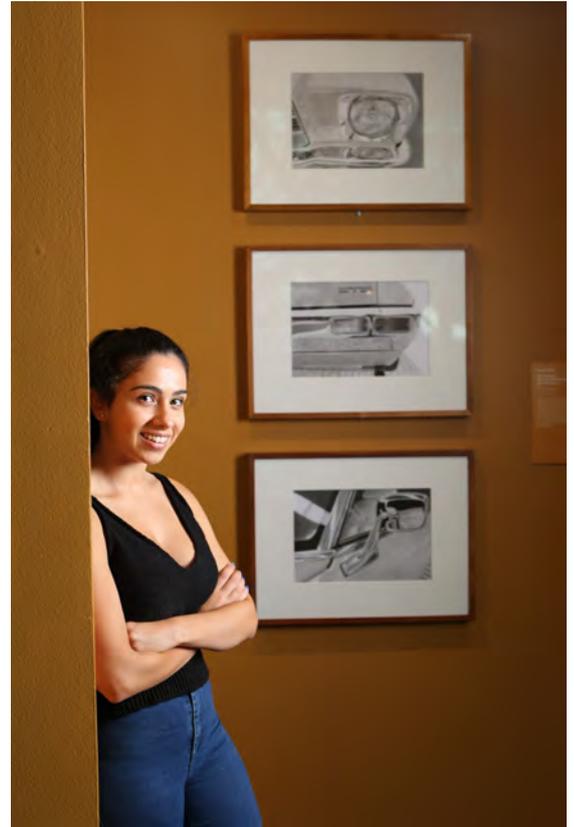
I also want to say ... that I feel blessed to be part of the St Bridget's community. I have felt welcome from the moment I came to St Bridget's as a student teacher six years ago. I am committed to supporting our new principal, Michelle Verna, in achieving success by continuing to employ best teaching practices and achieving excellent results. ✦

Top notch artistic talent

There were 46 students across 22 Catholic secondary colleges selected to exhibit their talents and creations throughout this year's VCE Season of Excellence, in fields of screen, dance, music, drama, theatre, art or design. Many of the exhibits can be viewed at different venues until mid-year. †



Three Catholic school filmmakers made the *Top Screen* final 12. L-R Bharatha Gangasani, Parade College, Bundoora; Elle Richards, Sacred Heart College, Newtown; and James Nolan, Xavier College, Kew.



Elisha Ciano from St Monica's College, Epping, used her father's 1972 Monaro as inspiration for *Top Arts*.



Katarino Kristo (right) from Emmaus College, Vermont South, with her colourful *Top Designs* exhibit.

Uneasy: the striking *Top Arts* exhibit of Kirraley Hardiman from Sacred Heart College, Newtown.

Pledge against Bullying and Violence

As part of the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence, students at Thomas Carr College in Tarneit pledged their support for a zero-bullying future with a hand-painted mural.

Students across all year levels stamped their painted handprints on to the mural as a commitment to stand together against bullying. Other Catholic school NDA activities promoted pastoral care initiatives, social and emotional awareness, cross-age peer buddying, and teacher development in responding to bullying incidents. ✚



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Australian Catholic Youth Festival

More than 130 students from ten Catholic secondary schools across the Archdiocese of Melbourne made the journey to Adelaide for the Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF) in December 2015.

Joining together in prayer, praise and worship, the festival is a chance for young people from Year 9 up to 25 years of age to come together in fellowship of their faith journey. The next festival will take place in Sydney in December 2017. ✦



New building dedicated to Mother Mary

Ave Maria College, Aberfeldie recently played host to Archbishop Denis Hart to celebrate the hard work of many teachers and students for the blessing and official opening of the college's new building, the Mary Centre. ✦



Learning more, creating change

Senior students at St Bede's College in Mentone raised over \$300 for Project Compassion through their second Pancake Tuesday fundraiser, promoting the theme 'Learning more, creating change'.

Project Compassion is Caritas Australia's annual fundraising and awareness campaign aimed at ending world poverty. ✦





Pray to let them stay

The School and House Captains from St Paul's School, Coburg, attended the Asylum Seekers Prayer Service at St Patrick's Cathedral in Term 1, 2016. At this service, which used the theme 'Pray to Let Them Stay', they reflected on the asylum seekers that were to be sent back to Nauru. The service consisted of praying about anonymous people that were suffering physical, mental and psychological trauma after being kept in detention centres in the middle of nowhere. ✦

International Women's Day 2016

Salesian College, Sunbury, raised \$492.10 for Caritas Australia at the school's inaugural TALK & WALK event, organised by Year 9 student Michaela Frantz and held in honour of International Women's Day. Michaela now wants to organise next year's International Women's Day event. ✦



From Sacred Heart to the United Nations

A former Sacred Heart College, Newtown, alumna and College Captain who completed an internship at the United Nations was welcomed as one of the speakers at the Young Speakers Colloquium on Thursday 17 March as part of Catholic Education Week.

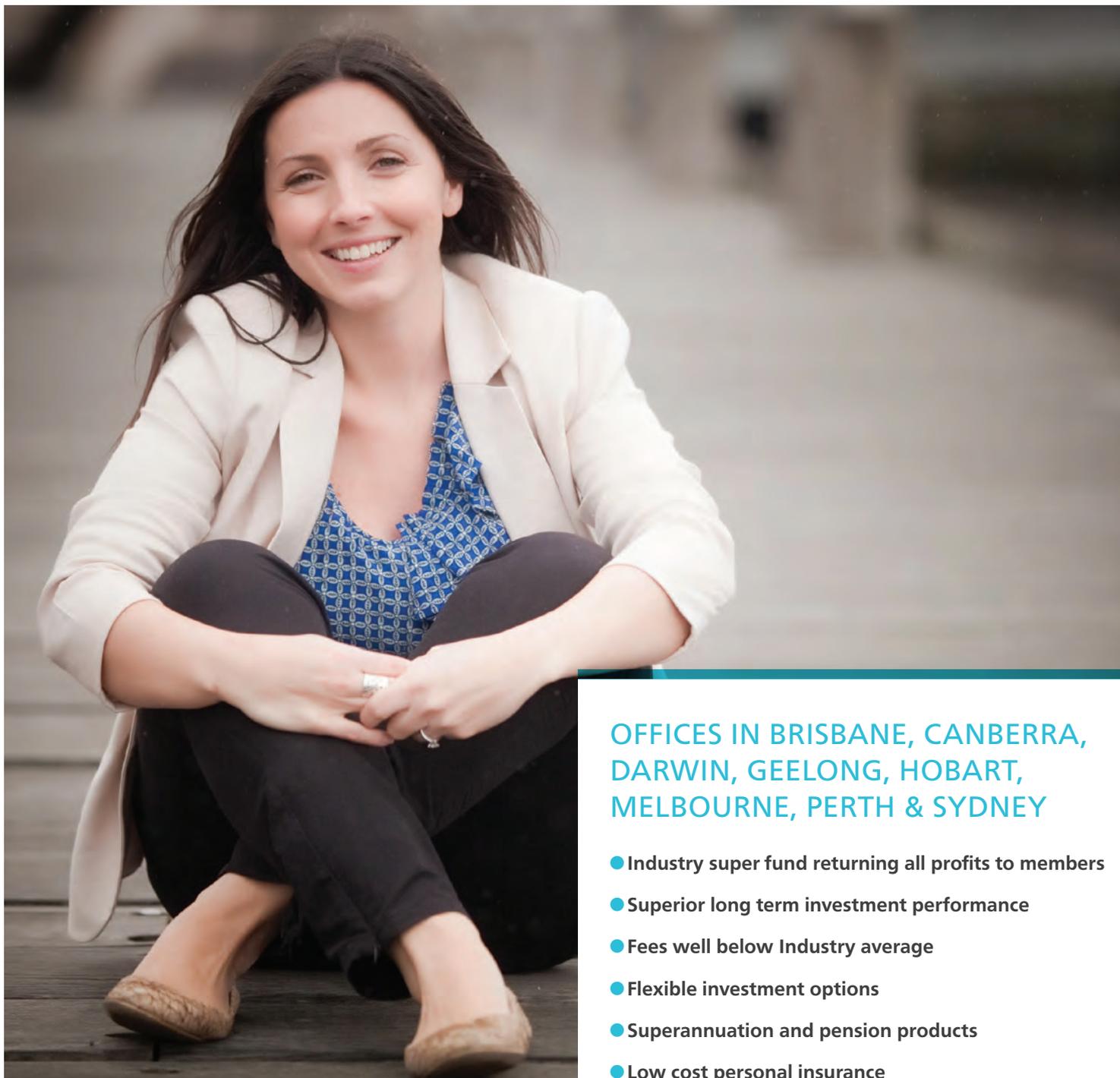
Prue Kenny, who graduated Sacred Heart College in 2004, has seen her career since studying Law and Commerce at Deakin University take her all across the world; from Tanzania to New York and the Dutch city of The Hague. Prue is currently the Legal Counsel for World Vision Australia and studying her Master of Laws part-time. ✦



Making the News

Channel Ten's *Eyewitness News* Weatherman, Mike Larkin, paid a visit to St Mary Magdalene's School in Chadstone for a spot on *Mike's Schools* segment. Mike was welcomed by the Year 3 choir who entertained with a Happy New Year song, which they performed in Mandarin. ✦

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