

# MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World



Melbourne Archdiocese  
Catholic Schools



## Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that Catholic schools and offices in the Archdiocese of Melbourne are situated on the lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Bunurong, Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung peoples of the Kulin Nations, who have walked upon and cared for this land since time immemorial.

We acknowledge their continued deep spiritual connection and relationship to Country.

We pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and commit to the ongoing journey of reconciliation, of truth-telling and deep listening, working together for justice.

Artwork: Chelsea, Year 4, St Anne's School, Sunbury

**Child safety statement:** Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as central and fundamental to all that we do. This commitment is inherent in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel.

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# Introduction

In August 2021, MACS embarked on researching, designing and developing its 2030 strategy.

The aim was to develop a compelling and cohesive strategy that would define who we are, what we stand for and how we intend to achieve success across the entire organisation.

The challenges before us were: 'How do we paint a vision as big as we can?', 'How can we make our schools evangelising lighthouses?', 'How can we empower a sense of solidarity?' and 'How can we foster the right conditions for deep systemic improvement in all that we do?'

This strategic plan aims to answer those challenges while ensuring that, as an organisation, we are creating positive outcomes together.

More importantly, this plan is not just words on a page. It is a powerful and dynamic strategy to bring staff together in common purpose and vision, set ambitious objectives and prioritise activities to achieve them.

# Forewords

From Archbishop Peter A Comensoli

## **'Every student is inspired and enabled ...'**

With these words, the vision of Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) is crystal clear.

In each of our parish families, Catholic schools will be places that contribute to the local mission with a sense of purpose and integrity. They will cultivate the unique life of each student, sharing in their joys and hopes, as well as their struggles and challenges.

I am grateful for the partnership in each parish between parish priest and school principals, who are called to initiate an open and trustful relationship for the good of Catholic education.

Along with the leadership of MACS, a huge responsibility is being shared – of sharing the light of Christ in wisdom and truth, mercy and love.

I am personally encouraged by the tremendous witness Catholic school teachers give to the person of Christ Jesus every day, and their creativity and commitment to excellence in a complex time like the present.



St John Paul II said: 'As teachers, you kindle in your students a thirst for truth and wisdom. You spark off in them a desire for beauty. You introduce them to their cultural heritage.'

In no small measure, Catholic teachers pass along the building blocks of culture and civilisation from one generation to the next.

The MACS 2030 strategic plan is a 'living' thing. Formed through strong and deliberate consultation and discernment, it offers a clear horizon towards which our Catholic schools and leaders may orientate themselves. The four strategic themes – 'Inspired by Faith', 'Flourishing Learners', 'Enabled Leaders' and 'Enriched Communities' – then combine to act as a compass, pointing the way.

For MACS schools, the work ahead is a shared project of clarity and deliberation, and the strategic plan shows our intended steps over the next decade. I am pleased that we aspire to great achievements for our students and schools.

A vision is important. And a plan for reaching our goals is crucial. In both of these will be a need for the energy and conviction of Catholic school leaders, who I have always found to be committed and endlessly hardworking.

Especially to our teachers and principals, I want to entrust our common work for the strategy ahead, my prayer and trust in your faithfulness, and the conviction that faith, hope and love are available to every student in your care, in partnership with their parents, families and faith communities.

With my sincere prayers in Christ Jesus.

**Most Rev Peter A Comensoli**  
Archbishop of Melbourne

**Catholic schooling seeks to provide the young with the best kind of education possible, one that fosters a formation of the whole person that is deeply and enduringly humanising.** *Pope Francis, Christus Vivit, 2019, n. 223.*

## From Board Chair Gerard Dalbosco



I am delighted to present *MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World*.

MACS has inherited a rich legacy thanks to those who have come before us. We have an incredible network of schools, achieve strong educational outcomes and are well known for our pastoral care of students.

However, Catholic education faces considerable headwinds. The proportion of people identifying as Catholic is in decline and the 'natural alignment' of Catholic families with Catholic education has reduced. In addition, independent schools have strengthened, and government schools are better organised and funded than they once were.

MACS 2030 lays the foundations to meet these challenges and sustain Catholic education well into the future.

Parents are increasingly looking for a more holistic approach to education – one that is focused on development of the 'whole person', and will help their child succeed and be happy and confident in the world, no matter what path their future may follow.

This aligns strongly with the distinctive promise of Catholic schools to provide an education that is focused on the whole person and tailored to each student's individual needs and, in doing so, presents us with a significant opportunity.

Ultimately, this is about staying faithful to our purpose: 'Forming lives of faith, hope and love in the light of Jesus Christ', so that we may make our vision: 'Every student is inspired and enabled to flourish and enrich the world' a reality.

At its heart, MACS 2030 lays down strategies and initiatives for us to do this. But they are only words on a page without the people who will put them into practice. So I hope you will join me and the broader MACS community to come together and seize this opportunity.

**Gerard Dalbosco**  
Chair

## From Executive Director Dr Edward Simons



It is a great privilege to introduce the MACS 2030 strategy.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone involved in its development, including school leaders and staff, students and parents, parish priests, the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, and our MACS board and office staff. We value your contribution and commitment to the design and development of this work, and look forward to partnering with you in its delivery.

Our MACS 2030 purpose: 'Forming lives of faith, hope and love in the light of Jesus Christ' and vision: 'Every student is inspired and enabled to flourish and enrich the world' motivate us to work collaboratively to provide the very best Catholic education to each and every student within our schools.

MACS 2030 will harness and build on the collective passion and commitment of our staff, schools, offices and faith communities – and I am excited to work together to make our purpose and vision a lived reality.

**Dr Edward Simons**  
Executive Director



As it is, these remain: faith, hope and love, the three of them; and the greatest of them is love.

1 Corinthians 13: 13

# MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World

**Purpose** Forming lives of faith, hope and love in the light of Jesus Christ

**Vision** Every student is inspired and enabled to flourish and enrich the world

Strategic themes	 <b>1. Inspired by Faith</b>			 <b>2. Flourishing Learners</b>			 <b>3. Enabled Leaders</b>			 <b>4. Enriched Communities</b>		
Programs	1.1 Compelling faith formation experiences	1.2 Enhanced faith formation pedagogy – best practice faith and leadership formation	1.3 Excellence in religious education – curriculum, resources and teaching practices	2.1 A pedagogical learning framework for excellence	2.2 High-quality curriculum and teaching resources	2.3 Performance-oriented teacher support focused on excellent student outcomes	3.1 Effective leadership selection and evaluation processes	3.2 Enhanced professional learning and development for all staff	3.3 Reimagined Catholic leadership framework	4.1 Office: transformed services supporting our schools	4.2 Schools: positioned at the heart of the MACS system and their communities	4.3 Parishes: working together in mission with our parishes

**Initiatives** Strategic initiatives support the delivery of our strategic programs. Work has already commenced on a number of early ‘no regret’ initiatives. Over the coming years, through deep engagement with all key stakeholders, MACS will design, develop and deploy a catalogue of initiatives that align work towards our purpose and vision. Programs and initiatives will be designed with explicit performance measures.



# Purpose

**Forming lives of faith, hope and love in the light of Jesus Christ.**

## **What we mean by this:**

**Forming lives** – Catholic education seeks to provide the young with the best kind of education possible, one that fosters a formation of the whole person that is deeply and enduringly humanising.

**Faith, hope and love** – Catholic education forms individuals with more than just skills, but with the virtues to live life as transformative agents in our communities. By cultivating a maturing of faith and the intellectual life through the modelling of good relationships, Catholic students are prepared for living fruitfully in the world.

**In the light of Jesus Christ** – Christ is our inspiration, the very life of our purpose as Catholic educators. Everything we do is illuminated by this.

# Vision

Every student is inspired and enabled to flourish and enrich the world.

## What we mean by this:

**Every student** – This places the individual student at the heart of what MACS does. The dignity and worth of every student is the central element of what parents value about a Catholic education.

**Inspired and enabled** – ‘Inspire’ comes from the Latin *inspīrāre*, to blow into, breathe upon, excite, inflame. We aim not only to motivate our students to act, but to enable them to act effectively.

**Flourish and enrich the world** – The word ‘flourish’ is another form of ‘living life to the full’ (John 10: 10). ‘Enrich the world’ takes our impact beyond the student, beyond the school gate, to the positive impact our students will have on the world around them.



# Strategic themes

Our strategy includes four strategic themes around which we will organise and structure our programs.



## 1. Inspired by Faith

### What we mean by this:

Everything we do is guided by our Catholic faith, recognising that our beliefs and traditions are central to who we are, what we do and how we do it. We actively embrace the understanding that our Catholic faith is not only central to our purpose, but is also foundational to the distinctive educational experiences we offer those who seek to be educated through our schools.

### By 2030, we aim:

To become a system of schools where students and staff grow in virtue, supported by an outstanding Religious Education curriculum that is executed with impact, in an environment that enables faith to flourish.



## 2. Flourishing Learners

### What we mean by this:

We will provide an outstanding education, focused on formation of the whole person, that has the intellectual, practical and moral excellence of learners at its heart. We will aim to deliver the best educational outcome for every student.

### By 2030, we aim:

To become the benchmark for excellence in teaching and learning, through a coherently integrated, academically competitive and distinctively Catholic educational offering.





### 3. Enabled Leaders

**What we mean by this:**

We are committed to empowering great staff to lead great schools. In solidarity with parish priests, our principals will be leaders in their Catholic communities. We will therefore carefully select, invest in and empower our employees in order to deliver excellence across our system.

**By 2030, we aim:**

To become the employer of choice in the Victorian education sector, and to have Australia's pre-eminent Catholic teacher and leadership formation and training infrastructure, developed in collaboration with others.



### 4. Enriched Communities

**What we mean by this:**

We believe we can achieve more within a school as part of a system than we can alone, and we can achieve more as a Catholic system because we are an integral part of a broad, vibrant faith community. Recognising this, we are transforming the MACS office to become a 'system architect' and a provider of outstanding support to schools, drawing on the collective strengths of schools and our parish communities.

**By 2030, we aim:**

To provide best-in-class support services for principals and their schools, working closely with parish priests.



# About MACS

MACS officially began its governance responsibilities on 1 January 2021.

Several factors led to the change in governance arrangements, including recommendations from a Royal Commission and a Parliamentary Inquiry, and increased legislative and compliance complexity making unincorporated schools unviable.

The establishment of MACS eases the administrative burden on schools and parishes, and allows the parish priest to focus on the mission of education.

*Working Together in Mission: Charter for parishes and schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne* can be found on the MACS website.

## MACS by numbers

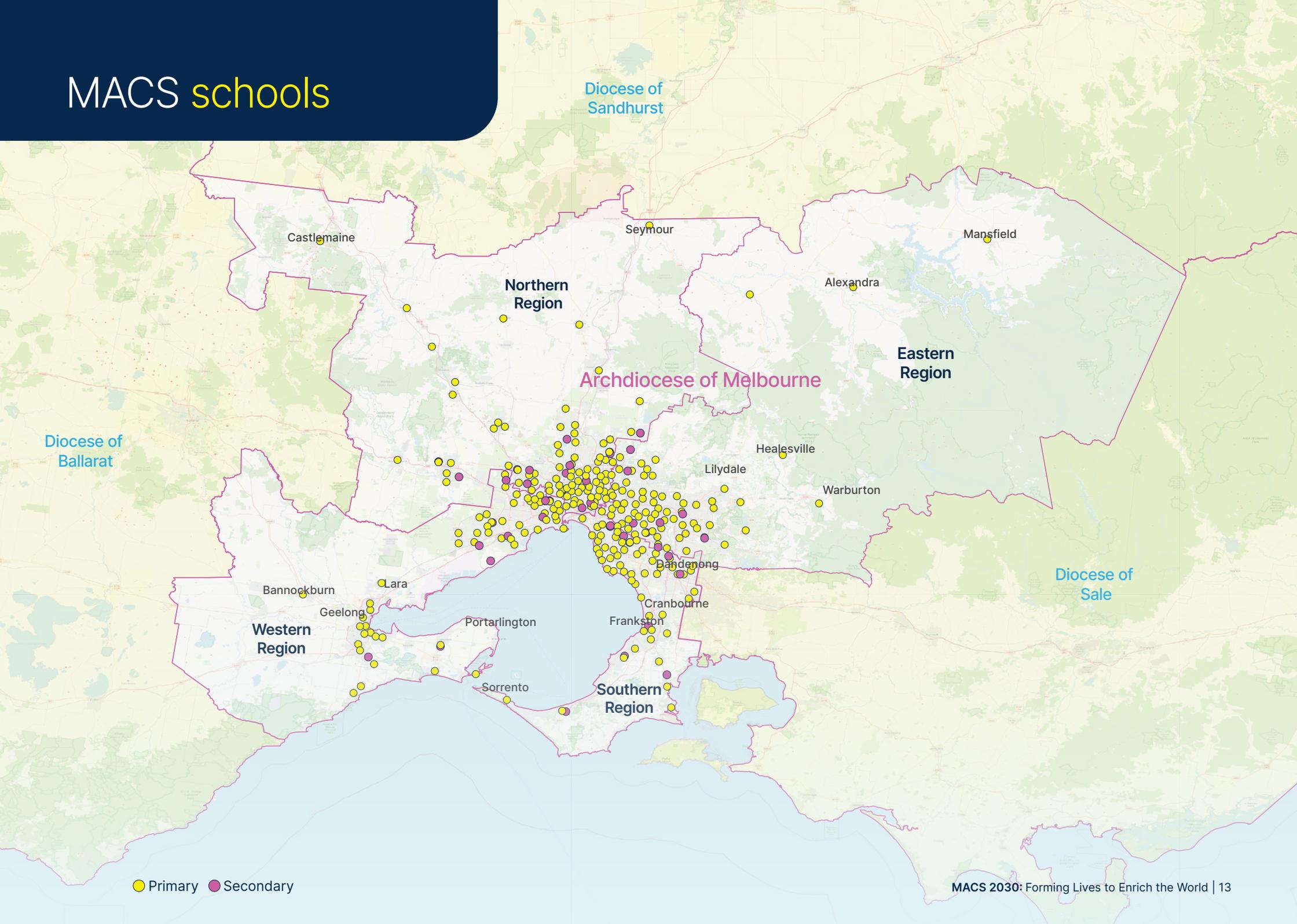
 **114,000** students

 **16,000** staff

 **296** parish primary schools, and regional and archdiocesan secondary colleges

 **39** congregational and ministerial public juridic person schools supported within the Archdiocese

# MACS schools



Diocese of Sandhurst

Castlemaine

Seymour

Mansfield

Northern Region

Alexandra

Eastern Region

Diocese of Ballarat

Archdiocese of Melbourne

Healesville

Lilydale

Warburton

Diocese of Sale

Bannockburn

Lara

Western Region

Geelong

Portarlington

Dandenong

Cranbourne

Frankston

Southern Region

Sorrento

● Primary ● Secondary

# Appendix: How the strategy was developed

With encouragement from Archbishop Peter A Comensoli to be 'bold and ambitious' and guidance from our *Statement of Mission*, we undertook a rigorous process that involved comprehensive research and substantial development work.

Importantly, the process included numerous consultations with students, parents, principals, parish priests, MACS office staff, and esteemed philosophers and theologians.

Almost 10 per cent of our principals and more than 20 per cent of office staff participated through in-person workshops.

## Development timeline:

- **August 2020:** School Governance Steering Committee Position Paper containing the *Statement of Mission* published
- **Early 2021:** Engagement of strategic advisers, and deep dive into international research and data on best practice management of Catholic education systems
- **Early 2021:** Archbishop Peter instructs the board to be 'bold and ambitious'
- **June 2021:** Appointment of Director, Governance and Strategy, and establishment of MACS Governance and Strategy directorate
- **July 2021:** *Working Together in Mission* charter published
- **July and August 2021:** Board and executive leadership team strategy workshops with EY Port Jackson Partners
- **October 2021:** Virtual MACS staff seminar with recorded 'fireside chat' between Board Chair Gerard Dalbosco and Acting Executive Director Paul Sharkey. Edited content shared with principals with positive feedback
- **October 2021:** Draft Strategy v1.0 presented to board for approval to proceed to stakeholder consultation and scoping of early priority initiatives
- **November 2021:** Six priority initiatives proposed and approved for definition and kick-off. Proposed process and schedule of cycles of stakeholder consultation approved
- **November 2021:** *Strategy News* staff updates commence via email
- **December 2021:** Stakeholder Consultation Cycle 1 – involves principals, MACS staff, clergy, subject matter experts and external advisers
- **February 2022:** Consultation with the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne and Professor John Haldane
- **March 2022:** Stakeholder Consultation Cycle 2 – involves parents, students, principals, MACS staff, clergy, subject matter experts and external advisers
- **April 2022:** Strategy briefing with MACS principals
- **April 2022:** Strategy briefing with MACS office staff
- **June 2022:** Driving Academic Excellence and Numeracy Improvement projects approved
- **July 2022:** MACS board sign-off on *MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World* and initial 'no regret' initiatives for 2023

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When I was a child, I used to talk like a child, and see things as a child does, and think like a child; but now that I have become an adult, I have finished with all childish ways.

Now we see only reflections in a mirror, mere riddles, but then we shall be seeing face to face.

Now I can know only imperfectly; but then I shall know just as fully as I am myself known.

As it is, these remain: faith, hope and love, the three of them; and the greatest of them is love.

*1 Corinthians 13: 11–13*



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