

october 2016

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Keeping connected
during NAIDOC
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Digital media focuses on parent engagement

DIGITAL-SAVVY families will have noted some recent big changes in the way Catholic Education communicates with its parent community.

The website has been revamped, social media engaged, and a number of school communities are rolling out parent portals.

“The changes reflect our ongoing transition from paper-based communication to digital platforms,” said CES Manager Governance and Engagement Andrew McKenzie.

“It has allowed us to engage in more timely communication and to use the many advantages of digital media to spread our messages to a wider audience, utilising more creative techniques such as video and graphic content,” he said.

Andrew said a particular component of the strategy was to use social media postings to direct traffic to new and revamped content on the CES website.

He said the website now had an expanded range of content for families – ‘Our School Communities’ – which included information for school boards and P&Fs, information and readings on parent engagement with schools and student learning, and perspectives on faith.

“We’ve taken the opportunity to do video interviews with leading international educators coming through Cairns – people like Canadian Professor Debbie Pushor on parent engagement, UK educator Maggie Farrar on collaborative school programs, leading theologian Tom Groome on the modern Catholic school and Perth educator Ian Lillico on raising boys. Each of these interviews can now be viewed through our website.”

Andrew said current projects also

included a range of useful content for parents about to enter Catholic schools for the first time as Prep parents.

He said the enhanced digital content was very much “work in progress” that would continue to be enhanced over the next 12 months.

“One of the things we are particularly mindful with our social media postings is to provide information that is relevant, timely and useful, rather than posting just for the sake of it. We want our school communities to see our posts as welcome sources of information.”

He said for Facebook users to ensure they did not miss posts once they had liked the page, to use the drop down arrow beside the ‘Liked’ button to select ‘See First’ rather than ‘Default’ in their news feed. This would ensure the post would appear at the top of their news feed on that day, he said.

Have a look at the new-look website: www.cns.catholic.edu.au and on Facebook, search for ‘Catholic Education Diocese of Cairns’, or use the following QR codes:



Our School Communities



Facebook page



“It has allowed us to engage in more timely communication and to use the many advantages of digital media to spread our messages to a wider audience, utilising more creative techniques such as video and graphic content,”

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This current edition of Spirited Schools, as well as the previous edition (pictured above) and all prior editions are available in an online format. They are also viewable in a flip book and downloadable as a PDF document.

What is a QR Code?

QR codes, or quick response codes, can be read by a camera instead of a much more restrictive laser that is normally used for traditional bar codes. Data is held in the form of a pattern that can be decoded and can be anything from a URL for a website, to contact information, to geolocation data for use on a map.

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FRONT COVER: Year 6 students Cooper Bell and Dallas Williams with NAIDOC artwork at Our Lady Help of Christians School, Earlville.

Parent Portals a plus for all

THE new Parent Portal online service, which is currently being rolled out across Cairns Diocese Catholic schools, is making life a whole lot easier for parents as well as schools.

Part of Cairns Catholic Education's School Information Systems, the Parent Portals are now operational in eight schools – St Andrew's College, St Joseph's Atherton, St Joseph's Cairns, St Therese's Bentley Park, St Thomas' Mareeba, Good Counsel College, Mount St Bernard College, St John's School, – with more on the way.

"Essentially we are providing a secure channel for information and communication between schools and parents," said Campbell Smythe, Catholic Education's Service Management Officer, Collaborative Systems.

The secure online service, where parents only have access to their children's information, makes it easy for parents to view report cards, update contact details, notify the school of their child's absence and keep on top of school excursions and special events among other advantages.

"The introduction of the parent portal has been great," said St Thomas' Mareeba Principal Rita Petersen. "It's easy and secure for parents to access information about what's

happening in the school, forms that need to be returned, names and contact details for staff, policy information and much more.

"It also gives parent access to more direct information about their child, their report cards, NAPLAN results, attendance rates and timetables.

"We will be making increasing use of it to provide a range of information to parents."

Katrina Miller of St Thomas' has twice the reason to welcome the new online system.

"As a parent, I am able to easily access forms and notify the school if my children are going to be absent," she said. "It's like a one-stop-shop for everything I need to know about the school.

"As a teacher, I have found it an invaluable and time-saving tool. For example, when a parent asks for a form that has been misplaced, I am able to send them straight to the Portal to reprint notes."

Alison Forster, CES Manager School Information Systems, said the Portals will allow schools to enhance their service to their community, in many ways



St Thomas' Katrina Miller uses the Parent Portal to access information on her son Cooper, Year 1.

"Parent Portals allow the schools' staff to reduce the time they spend on tasks like producing and circulating forms and documents and to invest that time in supporting learning and supporting teachers. Parents will be able to access school documents and check details wherever and whenever it suits" she said.

"There are huge savings in printing and mailing out report cards. Staff can have the report cards up on the portals in minutes and parents can access them anytime, anywhere.

"The Parent Portals will be available for all schools, and our vision is that all schools will soon be using them."

Speech Pathology changes William's world

AS a first-time mum Lynette McGuffie wasn't 100 percent sure where her son William McArthur should be developmentally, but she knew something wasn't quite right with his speech.

By the time he was two, Lynette started seeking advice and guidance, but it wasn't until he was over three years old that she discovered he had a speech impairment.

"He has what is called Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS), which is a motor speech disorder," she said. "What that means, basically, is that he has difficulty having his tongue and mouth muscles form words. He knows exactly what he wants to say, he just had difficulty saying it."

Lynette sought the help of a Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) at Queensland Health and then a private SLP. But by the time William reached school

age, he was no longer eligible for financial assistance from Queensland Health.

Luckily for seven-year-old William, St Joseph's in Atherton and Cairns Catholic Education Services' (CES) Speech Pathology service were able to step in with support.

"When he started at St Joseph's we were very fortunate that he had a really good Prep Teacher Anne-Maree Henry and a really good Learning Support Teacher Julie Folino-Gallo," Lynette said. "This year, Speech Language Pathologist Channele Chate (from CES) came on board, and she's also been fantastic, as has been his teacher this year, Kristie Henderson, and other teachers at the school."

"It was really important for me that they were on board and helping him to develop his speech because, being in a rural location, we just don't have access to private therapists the way people in the city do."

Catholic Education Services, which recently helped to promote Speech Pathology Week, has five Speech Language Pathologists who work across the Diocese's 29 schools and colleges. The five SLPs on staff are Speech Pathology Australia's FNQ regional representative Rachael Di Bella, as well as Channele, Lauren Hamill, Tenille Bellamy and Amanda Carlone.

They all make a huge difference in students' lives.

"Channele put in programs for William and helped me with speech therapy at home," Lynette said. "And William has come ahead in leaps and bounds. A lot of people who now speak to

him don't actually know that he has a speech impairment – they just think that he has an accent!"

Each year Speech Pathology Australia (SPA) hosts Speech Pathology Week to raise awareness of those who have communication difficulties. According to Speech Pathology Australia, more than 1.1 million Australians have a communication or swallowing difficulty that impacts on their quality of life.

"There is certainly an increasing need for SLP services within the schools in the Cairns Diocese," Rachael said. "We service a range of students including those who are verified with a disability and those who have learning difficulties."

Lynette can't be happier with the support William has received from St Joseph's and from CES.

"They've been fabulous," she said. "We've been very lucky at St Joseph's. They've been amazing."

"It's really important to get help early because children with these sorts of problems can get withdrawn, go into themselves and not try new things. If we didn't have help at St Joseph's and from CES, William wouldn't be able to achieve what he is achieving today. He's keeping up with all the kids, doing really well in school and is involved in Scouts and soccer."

"He has the confidence to go and do these things now. A lot of children who don't get assistance have a lot of behavioral issues out of frustration because they try and try, and they just can't physically say the words, so they end up giving up."

If you suspect your child of having a speech impairment or may be experiencing language difficulties, talk to your child's class teacher, learning support teacher or principal.



Year 1 student William McArthur with St Joseph's, Atherton learning support officer, Barbara Mommsen

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Virtual Reality makes learning 3D

THE introduction of Augmented Reality technology into some Cairns Catholic schools has taken digital learning to a whole new exciting level.

Augmented Reality (AR) is a technology that superimposes a computer-generated image on a user's view of the real world, providing a composite three-dimensional view. It is one example of how computer programs are continually changing the ways students are learning.

Quiver, an AR app used at both St Thomas' School Mareeba and St Francis Xavier's School Manunda, has made an enormous impact on students and teachers.

"Augmented Reality is definitely going to be changing the way we view the world and our classroom teaching and learning," said Christina Jacob, Year 4 Teacher and e-Learning Teacher at St Francis, where the Quiver colouring illustrations app was used during both Book Week and Science Week.

"Once the Quiver colouring-in app is activated and an iPad is held over the colouring, the students' colouring-in comes to life and appears to be coming off the page. Many of the colourings are interactive too, and the kids just loved seeing their work come to life.

"Augmented Reality can make classroom learning more transformational and engaging, especially for visual learners. Students can now interact with 3D models brought to life, and teachers can take their classes on Augmented

Reality interactive excursions."

While AR is still very new in Cairns schools, its use is expected to increase quickly.

"I think that we will start to see virtual reality and augmented reality more and more in the classroom," said St Thomas' Mareeba Year 2 teacher Vi Heath.

"Our Year 1 students have been completing a unit on dinosaurs, so they looked at an app called AR Flashcards which brought dinosaurs to life in a way that has not been previously possible and allowed the students to engage in conversation about the features of dinosaurs and the way in which they moved.

"Year 2 students used Quiver to bring their maps of the world to life. They were then able to identify the different continents and document their learning by taking a photo and sending it to Seesaw which is a digital portfolio app.

"To be honest, we have not yet harnessed all of the potential that Augmented Reality will provide for our students, but they are excited about their learning and enjoy seeing their images come to life.

"Through collaboration, as more teachers become involved, we can discover new ways of using the technology."



ABOVE: Declan Cantamessa, Fred Seccull, Xyabelle Sabuero and Iam Medrano use the Quiver colour-in app.

RIGHT: Hayley Harriman from St Thomas' Mareeba sees her picture come to life.



“Augmented Reality is definitely going to be changing the way we view the world and our classroom teaching and learning

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Educators embrace e-Learning

SHOWING teachers and educators how to embrace the new era of e-Learning was the objective of the recent Design-Led Learning Communities Conference delivered by Catholic Education Services.

“The Design Thinking Conference presented an excellent array of sessions and speakers for participants to embrace learning from both the practitioner and student perspectives,” said St Andrew’s Principal Lee MacMaster. “It ensured that technology was not used as an ‘add-on’, but as an interwoven component of the conference sessions and presentations.”

“Technology was employed seamlessly, and participants were invited and encouraged to take up the opportunities to incorporate technology as part of their professional learning.”

Over 150 teachers from Catholic, independent and state schools attended the August 13 conference hosted at St Augustine’s College, where keynote speaker Associate Professor Dr Michael Henderson, a Monash University education technology expert, shared his expertise in the field of e-learning and the issues and opportunities afforded by educational technologies, both in online and in-class environments.

Among those attending from Cairns Catholic schools were

Lee MacMaster, MacKillop College Teacher Hannah Clark, Good Counsel College Technologies Middle Leader Paul Webb and St Mary’s Catholic College Teacher Erin Purdy.

“The conference was brilliant; educational and exciting,” Ms Clark said. “From the moment the conference began to when I left I felt inspired and more well-equipped to introduce ‘Design Thinking’ tools into my learning space.”

“It was immensely helpful in expanding my knowledge and opening my eyes to the opportunities that technology and on-line development have to offer.”

“Being able to take a hands-on approach in each workshop was helpful in allowing us to really immerse ourselves in the technology tools we can use in our own learning communities, both for us to develop as teachers in a self-reflective tool and for our students as learners.”

Technologies such as drones and robots, which are being used more and more in classrooms, were among the topics discussed in the day-long event.

“There was also lots of ‘Makerspace’ and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) equipment, so teachers could get hands-on experience,” said Danielle Purdy, CES Senior Education Officer, Secondary Curriculum and conference convener.

“People are a bit hesitant about how these work in classrooms so to work together and learn from others already using it was fantastic.”

Delegates were invited to create learning pathways from practical workshops packed with hands-on strategies for bringing Design Thinking into team planning and classroom practices. Additional streams were also offered to delegates wanting strategies for making learning visible, relevant technology upskilling and data-informed means of planning.

“One of the key messages for the conference was to ensure our emphasis is on student-centred learning, meeting students where they are at on their learning journey,” Mr MacMaster added.

“For me, the conference highlighted the need for teachers to think way beyond content and to concentrate on the art and skills of teaching young people in a modern context.”



ABOVE and LEFT: Catholic Education staff got hands-on with technology at the recent Design-Led Learning Communities Conference..

Wellbeing conference coming to Cairns

CAIRNS Diocese Catholic educators and the general public who are interested in learning more about Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) are advised to register early for Wellbeing Australia’s Inaugural Conference on Strengths, Circles and Social and Emotional Learning, which is being held in March 2017 at Rydges Esplanade.

“It’s a very exciting opportunity for the Diocese and for Cairns,” said Toni Foley, CES Senior Education Officer Identity & Mission.

“It’s the first time a conference like this around wellbeing has been held in Cairns - usually they’re held only in capital cities.”

The conference will be valuable for anyone concerned with young people’s wellbeing. Delegates will include teachers,

school leaders, counselors, psychologists, community leaders, parents, and policymakers who will enjoy workshops and presentations including one by Brisbane Catholic Education’s Kerry Bird, who was a driving force behind developing Cairns Diocese’s SEL policy and implementing SEL programs in schools.

“SEL is teaching students to be aware of their own emotions, be aware of others’ emotions, be able to regulate their own emotions and be able to interact respectfully with each other,” Ms Foley added.

“SEL is extremely important. We are trying to teach students to be good citizens and to be active and involved in society”.

Visit wellbeingaustralia.com.au/wba/cairns2017/



ABOVE: Students at MacKillop Catholic College enthusiastically engage in an SEL lesson using Circles pedagogy.



DOCEMUS Awards

DOCEMUS (d'CHAY-muss): we teach
EST. 2002



ABOVE: Tom O'Donnell, Director of Student Services at Holy Spirit College, won a prestigious Queensland Spirit of Catholic Education Award.

LEFT: CES Executive Director Bill Dixon with award recipients Janai Sugars, Gavin Rick, Charlie Agius, Victor Zamprogno, Alison Von Dietze, Sr Roven Duffy and Lynne Powell.

Dedicated service recognised

MAKING a difference in young people's lives and helping them reach their potential is something Tom O'Donnell, Director of Student Services at Holy Spirit College, does daily.

From greeting students with a warm smile every morning and cracking jokes to cooking breakfast for those who haven't eaten and helping students achieve in the community, Tom has been a positive influence on the lives of young people around him. His dedication to disengaged students at Holy Spirit was rewarded recently when he won a distinguished Queensland Spirit of Catholic Education Award.

"To be nominated in the first place was very humbling," said Tom. "All the Holy Spirit College Cairns and Cooktown campus staff are doing exactly what I am doing and are just as passionate about the potential of young people."

"This award is not about me, but is symbolic of the great work all the staff members at Holy Spirit College have done over the past couple of years. It is also recognising the young people who are finding positive pathways to their future."

"It is also symbolic and in recognition of the Diocese's vision in providing educational opportunities to all young people and, in the case of Holy Spirit, to those who would have no other opportunities for learning and personal growth."

While Tom was celebrating his statewide award, so were this year's Cairns Catholic Education's Docemus Award recipients.

St Joseph's Cairns Gavin Rick (Leadership), St Mary's Victor Zamprogno (Secondary Teacher), St Andrew's Alison Von Dietze (Primary Teacher), St Andrew's Charlie Agius (School Officer), St Joseph's Lynne Powell (Volunteer),

Sr Roven Duffy (Lifelong Contribution) and St Stephen's Janai Sugars (Early Career Teacher) were all recognised for their dedication and passion to education.

The Docemus Awards are in their 14th year and acknowledge the dedication and excellence of individuals from within the schools and colleges, education office and wider parish communities in the Cairns Diocese.

This year a seventh category for Early Career Teacher Award was introduced to recognise teachers who demonstrate outstanding performance and instructional skills during the first three years of their teaching.

Read about our Docemus Award recipients here:



Catholic Education celebrated in Year of Mercy

THE focus across all Cairns Catholic schools as they celebrated Catholic Education Week (CEW) 2016 was on opening hearts, helping those in need and spreading the word of Pope Francis.

This year's theme, *Opening Doors in the Year of Mercy*, was inspired by Pope Francis who declared that from December 8, 2015 until November 2016, the Catholic Church will celebrate an "Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy".

"The theme challenged members of the Catholic education community to extend assistance to those in need and to recognise and follow the example of those who in some way opened doors for others," said Cairns Catholic Education Services Executive Director Bill Dixon.

Mr Dixon said during the week, and throughout the year, all schools, students, staff and school communities extended assistance to others and provided examples of how caring people show acts of mercy in a variety of ways and reach out to less-fortunate people.

As acts of mercy, schools fundraised for worthy causes and collected various items for a number of community organisations who help the needy.

Celebratory masses were held across the Diocese. On the Tablelands, seven schools and their communities came together at St Stephen's Catholic College in Mareeba, joined by CES staff and clergy from the Western Deanery.

"CEW provides an opportunity for schools to celebrate our Catholic identity and foster a greater sense of community by encountering Christ in the Eucharist and those around us," said St Stephen's APRE Laura Gilbert.

"St Stephen's was honoured to hold the Western Deanery CEW Mass for the first time and to share our beautiful college chapel and gardens with our broader Catholic education community."

Students across all schools engaged in prayer, liturgy and service to others.

"Pope Francis themed this year to be one of mercy through the act of opening doors of reconciliation and forgiveness to all around us," said Dianne Jakubiszyn Simpson, Acting Leadership Support at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart on Thursday Island, Term 3.

"Mercy is a wellspring of joy, serenity and peace, and this has been highlighted throughout our classrooms during CEW as teachers have provided activities and opportunities for the children to demonstrate their compassion and mercy for those less fortunate than ourselves."

St Monica's Cathedral opened its doors to welcome over 500 students and staff from the Northern (Cairns) Deanery and the wider community.

Workshops were facilitated by 10 members of the National Evangelisation Team at St Monica's College and CES.

Mass was also held at Mother of Good Counsel Church in Innisfail for the six schools in the Southern Deanery and was followed by a combined schools activity day.



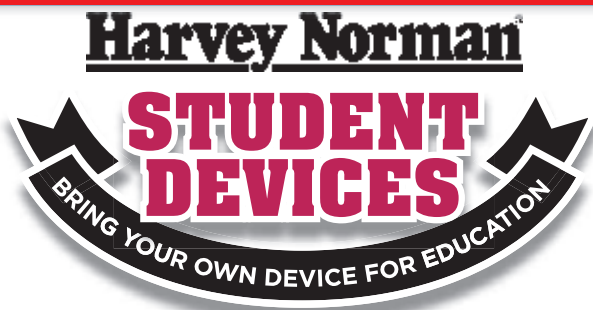
TOP: The accomplished choir from Our Lady Help of Christians' School, Earlville performed a song commissioned to help celebrate CEW and Catholic schools in Queensland. To read more about the choir's impressive achievements, including winning the Aggregate Choral Award at the Cairns Junior Eisteddfod every year since 1989, scan this QR Code (see instructions on page 2).



ABOVE: Tableland Catholic schools joined in the Western Deanery CEW Mass at Mareeba's St Stephen's Catholic College and included, from left, Grace Wilson (St Joseph's), Jasmin Bradford (St Teresa's), Christopher Stack and Rebecca Hermanus (St Stephen's), Nathan Dowling (MSB), Cooper Miller (St Thomas'), Tilly Droop (St Augustine's) and Georgina Serafin (St Anthony's).

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Songlines keep connections to culture



ABOVE: MSB's Zhandalee Nona & Tallis Mairu performing traditional dance.

BELOW: Special visitor to MSB's NAIDOC Week celebrations, Chris Tamwoy.



ABOVE: MSB's Joshua Malachi leads young dancers in story telling

WHILE all Catholic schools in the Cairns Diocese celebrated and learned more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture during NAIDOC Week celebrations, one school's message of keeping culture alive was especially powerful thanks to a special visitor.

Leading the music, dance and celebrations at Mount St Bernard College (MSB) in Herberton was guitarist Chris Tamwoy, who narrowly missed out on being crowned the winner of Australia's Got Talent for 2016 when he made it into the top five grand finalists.

Chris's family are from Darnley, Boigu and Badu Islands, and Chris spent his childhood in the Torres Strait. He spoke from the heart when he addressed the audience and the younger generation of MSB students about staying true to oneself and never forgetting culture.

"Moving away doesn't mean you'll lose your culture, it doesn't mean you'll disconnect," he said. "Build up that connection, stay connected with family and friends and, most importantly, never forget where you come from."

"You must speak from the heart, doing

everything from the heart. Focus on your career first. Even if you move to the big city to further your education, keep that connection and follow your dreams."

Traditional music, dance and fun activities were part of the activities throughout all Catholic schools as they explored the week's theme 'Songlines: The Living Narrative of Our Nation'.

"Throughout school communities, celebrations explored this year's theme, commencing with a liturgy and school-based celebrations," said Antoinette Cole, CES Senior Education Officer, Indigenous Education. "All learned the importance of Songlines as cultural webs of memory and intricate maps of country that carry spiritual, ecological and cultural knowledge between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples."

"Many classes developed the Songlines theme in classroom learning, exploring how the stories, dance and songs connect people to Country and the Country to people," said Richard Ketchell, Indigenous Liaison Officer at Our Lady Help of Christians School, Earlville.

"We had a whole-school prayer assembly, storytelling, singing, damper making, didgeridoo playing, dance troops, art and artefact displays, dot painting, basketball, AFL and weaving. Students and their families performed traditional songs and dances at our whole-school assembly."

Chris Tamwoy won the 2015 National NAIDOC Award for Youth of the Year and was nominated for Young Citizens Australia Day Award. His unique guitar playing style, where he lays the guitar on his lap and uses his fingers to tap, strum and pluck the strings was featured in a documentary unearthing talented young Australian artists on SBS/ NITV.

"I am very privileged to live in a country that is culturally diverse," he said. "I am proud that as an Indigenous man I am able to show Australia that a lot of Indigenous people have talent in a whole range of areas."



LEFT: Painting boomerangs at Mount St Bernard College, Herberton during NAIDOC Week celebrations were Phoebe Nona, Veronica Nona (sitting), Sisilia Ragatu and Saiyan Nona.

Foundation gives Indigenous students a helping hand

THE Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation (QATSIF) has been instrumental in helping students achieve their dreams, and their help was especially meaningful for St Mary's Catholic College student Merinda Walters.

The Year 11 student has achieved countless successes as she excelled throughout her primary and high school years, but recently winning a QATSIF scholarship has stood out among some of her happiest moments.

"This scholarship means a lot to me as my Great Grandfather was part of the Stolen Wages, and it is the interest earned from these wages that the scholarships are based on," she said. "I want to make all my family proud, and this scholarship is helping me to achieve that."

Her family are from the Gomeroi/Kamilaroi/Yorta Yorta tribe in New South Wales, but she was born in Darwin, lived in Karumba a few years before moving to Cairns when she was in Year 3.

She has won many awards throughout her school years including a Citizenship Award in Year 7 and more recently, the St Mary's Spirit Award.

While at St Mary's she has also won academic and principal awards, first and second at the Business Liaison Association Industrial Technology and Design Awards, the St Joseph's, Weipa Art Competition and a competition to have her designs spray-painted on school pillars.

She has also designed the school magazine Unison cover, designed St Mary's NAIDOC shirts two years in a row and completed her Duke of Edinburgh Award, while also representing the college at interschool sports carnivals.

"By receiving the scholarship I have been able to put the money towards my school fees so I can help out my Mum and Dad," she said.

"I am very blessed for the opportunity to have a good education and happy that the QATSIF scholarship has provided some help to my family along the way."

QATSIF scholarships have also helped all five Good Counsel College Indigenous students from the 2015 graduating class to gain employment in the Innisfail area, which is known for its high unemployment rate.

"For all five of our Indigenous students from Year 12 to gain employment by March 2016 is quite an achievement," said Karen Joyce, the college's Indigenous Liaison Officer.

"Cairns Catholic Education also provided much needed support with mentors and transition officers that work with the students before they leave school to make sure they were prepared for life afterwards."



ABOVE: Merinda's painting of St Joseph won St Joseph's Parish School's art competition for the best picture of the school's Patron Saint. The competition was open to all Cairns Catholic school secondary students. Merinda's painting now hangs prominently in the new Weipa school's foyer.



Merinda with her Dad and Great Grandfather



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Faith life in schools lives on

CATHOLIC schools in the Cairns Diocese have come a long way since St Monica's College opened the first Catholic school in the region in 1890 and while there have been colossal changes in the schools since, there are also key elements that have stood the test of time and shaped the success of Catholic schools today.

With passion and determination, St Monica's founding Principal Mother Evangelist trudged through the sandy and muddy streets of Cairns each evening 126 years ago to meet with families and share the good news that a Catholic school had opened. It didn't take long for the community to respond. There were just 19 students enrolled on the first day, but the number swelled to 60 soon after.

It was the beginning of the support shown by the community for Catholic schools and their holistic approach to education. Since those humble beginnings, Catholic Education has continued to thrive and now has 29 schools throughout the region.

While all were founded or adopted by Religious Orders, like the Sisters of Mercy and the Marist Brothers, and had close links with community parishes, the Orders are no longer physically present in the majority of schools today. However, their impact continues to play a vital role in shaping and influencing generations of compassionate, caring and intelligent students.

Janet Zaccour, Assistant Principal Religious Education at St Joseph's, Parramatta Park, the oldest primary school in the Cairns city, saw many changes when she returned to teaching at St Francis Xavier's in 1984, including advancement in curriculum, pedagogy and technology.

"The Sisters had a real presence in the school in earlier times," she said. "They had a great

gentleness to them and yet they were all very strong, dedicated women, and we were fortunate to have them in the school as teachers and principals.

St Joseph's has had an amazing history with the Sisters of Mercy who founded the school in 1927 with enrolments of 40. Their last Sister, Sr Rovenia Duffy, retired at the end of 2015 after a long and distinguished career in many parts of the diocese.

"Our school mascot 'Mercy the Cow' was chosen because of the cow the Sisters had in the very early days. The Sisters milked the cow for their own needs and also made sure that students from poor families had milk every day," Mrs Zaccour said.

St Joseph's School will celebrate its 90th anniversary in 2017.

St Augustine's College, the oldest continuing Marist school in Queensland, was established by the Marist Brothers in 1930. In those days, the College was surrounded by swampland; some days so swampy that catching mud crabs was a popular school activity.

Led by Principal Br Darren Burge, a Marist Brother, St Augustine's today is one of a few schools to have a strong Religious Order presence. It currently has three four other Marist Brothers on staff – Br Joachim, Br Roger, Br Michael and Br Kevin.

"The students and staff really value the presence of the Brothers," Br Darren said. "I think it adds a unique dimension to the school."

Parishes have played a vital role in the history of Cairns Catholic schools.

More than 50 years ago Fr John O'Connor arrived in Dimbulah with plans to build a new Church, but shortly after he changed his mind and built a school instead, which was officially opened in 1966 and used as both. That strong link to parish is still evident today.

St Thomas', Mareeba Principal Rita Petersen attended the school as a student, returned as a teacher and then as Principal, and is still a member of the Parish today.

"The Sisters of St Joseph's who taught us were great teachers," she said. "As I reflect, I now recognise the great works carried out by

this amazing group of young ladies.

"St Anthony's has a proud Catholic tradition as part of the Parish community with its rich tapestry of people from diverse backgrounds contributing to the school that it is today.

"Like all Catholic schools, St Anthony's aims to develop its community spirit based on Gospel values. St Anthony's Parish is very important in the life of the school and vice versa."

The parish and school recently celebrated the school's 50th anniversary.

To enhance the link between schools and parish, **St Gerard Majella** (SGM) and **Our Lady Help of Christians** (OLHOC), have joined forces to hold year level liturgies and masses in the OLHOC Church.

"This is something we have been wanting to do for a number of years now," said Gabrielle Donnelly, St Gerard Majella's APRE.

"The main reasons being we are both primary schools in the same parish and a number of our students probably hadn't set foot in our parish church or any church for that matter. This was an opportunity for our students to attend a liturgy or mass in our parish church with our sister parish school."

OLHOC's APRE, Kathy Fleming said the feedback from students and parents has been terrific.

"Students have very much looked forward to these liturgies where they celebrate with children they might play sport and share social events with, and large numbers of parents have been able to join us for some special occasions," she said.

"With the positive feedback we have received, we hope to make these



St Monica's College in the early days: some things change and some things stay the same.

combined liturgies a regular occurrence and look into the option of OLHOC students visiting SGM so they can see how we do our liturgies and masses without a church," said Gaby Donnelly, APRE at SGM.

While Religious Orders now have different roles in the community, Mrs Zaccour believes the religious and faith life of schools is continually growing in strength due to effective curriculums in this area and committed teachers well equipped to pass on the faith.

"I feel that the Catholic identity of schools is growing in leaps and bounds," she said. "I see many well-educated, faith-based teachers who are good role models for students in learning and living out the teaching of Jesus Christ, to be truly human in the world.

"I believe that our teachers have taken up the mantle given by Religious Orders – they are bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to generations of students in Catholic schools.



ABOVE: Students from SGM and OLHOC, Zane Bennett, Lauren Brown, Jacob Mills, Jimmy Paavola, Alexandra Tyrie and Malia Jadwiszczak enjoy joint school liturgies.



LEFT: The presence of Marist Brothers at St Augustine's College, like Br Kevin Hoare, pictured here with Josh Bramham and Cody Stopford, is valued by students and staff.

LEFT: Past and present principals of St Anthony's School at the recent 50th anniversary celebrations: Front Row: Rita Petersen, Katrina Miller, Kevin Browning and Brad Williams. Back row: former teacher at St Anthony's, Rob Petersen.



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ENROLMENTS

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Prac teachers on scholarships secure jobs



“It’s a win-win situation for the graduate teachers, the Cairns Diocese and the Diocese’s schools and students.”

Three will be returning to the schools where they did their prac. Emily joins St Thomas’ Mareeba, Adam St Joseph’s Cairns and Grace St Michael’s Gordonvale. Lara, who did her prac at St Anthony’s Dimbulah, will be joining the staff at St Francis Xavier’s and Leah, who spent six weeks at St Monica’s, will be teaching at St Stephen’s in Mareeba.

It’s a win-win situation for the graduate teachers, the Cairns Diocese and the Diocese’s schools and students.

“They all went through the normal interview process and were successful,” said Vicki Bell, Director Leadership & Professional Learning at Catholic Education Services. “It’s good because they’ve already been here, they already know what it means to be a teacher in the Diocese of Cairns and all of them have been at least partially through our induction process.”

“So, in the end, what it means is that when they arrive they’re not trying to find their feet. They will be able to walk into the schools and get started teaching immediately.”

The scholarship was a new initiative by CES this year and assisted all five students

with accommodation, transportation, food allowance and ongoing support.

Ms Bell said ACU students were ideal candidates for teaching positions in the Cairns Diocese.

“Not only do ACU graduate teachers have accreditation to teach, they’re also accredited to teach Religious Education,” she said.

Cairns Catholic Education will be offering six scholarships for ACU students next year.

“We will have five scholarships similar to what we had this year, including a mix of primary and secondary schools, although there is no guarantee that everyone who wins the scholarship will be employed here,” she said.

“We have also entered into a partnership with the Cairns Diocese, which has responsibility for the After School Hours Care and Kindy programs, so they’re going to sponsor one student coming out of the Bachelor of Early Childhood program and we will manage that person on their behalf.”

The scholarships are part of CES’ strategy to attract, develop and retain graduate students.

“Graduate teachers bring a whole range of fresh ideas and ways of doing things,” CES Executive Director Bill Dixon said.

“Every school changes with its people, its students and its staff, so having a full range of community profiles from experienced people to new graduates is a healthy mix that we want to have in each one of our schools.”

**Scan the QR code
(instructions on Page 2)
to read their stories.**



WHILE winning a Cairns Catholic Education scholarship to do their practicum teacher training in Far North Queensland during Term 2 made a significant impact on the lives of five students from the Australian Catholic University in Brisbane, the best news was yet to come.

Emily Jinks, Adam Halliday, Grace Stephens, Lara Gill and Leah Bool spent six weeks in Far North Queensland, doing their prac teaching at Catholic schools in the Cairns Diocese after receiving the newly offered

ABOVE: St Monica’s students and teachers include, from left, include Emma O’Callaghan, Ashley Cox, Prac Teacher Leah Bool, Niamh Hall, Teacher Sharon Mann and Rebecca Southon.

scholarships from Catholic Education.

When they left, they all wished they could come back. Now, all five have had their wishes come true.

The five have all recently been offered placements for next year in the Cairns Diocese as they embark on their teaching careers.



EMILY Jinks was in the right place at the right time during her prac teaching at St Thomas’ in Mareeba.

The Brisbane-born teacher was baptised Catholic, but she never did her confirmation although it was something she always wanted to do.

In her first meeting with her mentor teacher Katrina Miller, she learned that the Sacrament of Confirmation in Mareeba would be taking place during her six-week prac teaching. With Mrs Miller’s and Fr John Sullivan’s help, Emily joined about 30 students who were confirmed together.

“Katrina was amazing,” Emily said. “Most of the students had already done

their preparation before I arrived, so Katrina went through it all with me and took me to reconciliation.

“The confirmation was really special. The other teacher in my class, Anni Zazzi, was my stand-in family along with some other members from the school community, and Principal Rita Petersen was there to support myself and the other students.”

Since she wasn’t going to be in Cairns for the first Eucharist with the other students, with Fr John’s approval, she did hers the weekend after confirmation.

“At the end of the mass, Fr John asked me to stand up and told the people in the church that it was my first

Eucharist,” she said. “When standing outside after mass, everyone came up to me and congratulated me, which was really lovely.”

“I am very grateful for the opportunity to have had my confirmation in Mareeba. It brought me closer to both the school community and the church community, and everyone was so supportive and helpful.”

Emily will be back at St Thomas’ next year, where she has accepted a teaching position.

“I’m very excited to be teaching at St Thomas’ next year,” she said. “I can’t wait.”



St Monica’s College Cairns

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Enrolling in a Catholic School

Frequently Asked Questions

How to scan a QR code – see Page 2

Q. Do you have to be Catholic to go to a Catholic school?

A. The demand for places in many Catholic schools, particularly in the Cairns area, has never been higher. You don't have to be a Catholic to enrol. Although preference is given to students of the Catholic faith, particularly those active in their Parishes, our schools are open to all who seek and support our values. For enrolment priority, visit: www.cns.catholic.edu.au/enrolling/who-can-enrol



Q. Is it expensive to go to a Catholic school?

A. Catholic schools remain an affordable option for most families. Many of our families are pleasantly surprised to find that the cost of a Catholic school is much less than that of a private or independent school. In fact if your family can afford kindergarten fees you can afford our fees. And we have options for those in genuine financial difficulty, including automatic fee discounts for holders of means-tested health care cards. Find out more at: www.cns.catholic.edu.au/fees



Q. Do schools have quotas for the number of Catholics or non-Catholics they accept?

A. No, each enrolment is assessed on its merits against the enrolment criteria. Many of our schools have large numbers of students from non-Catholic backgrounds.

Q. Do Catholic schools have catchment areas?

A. No, unlike some state schools, Catholic schools do not give preference to a surrounding geographical area. Naturally though for convenience, many families choose a school that is close to them.

Q. When should I apply?

A. Enrolment procedures are managed individually by schools. It is best to contact the Catholic schools you are interested in to enquire about when to apply for that school. You'll find the contact details for all Catholic schools and colleges here: www.cns.catholic.edu.au/list-of-schools



Primary Schools

School	Location	Offerings	Contact
	Atherton St Joseph's School	Prep – Year 6	Cnr Alice & Jack Sts, PO Box 829 Atherton 4883 Ph 4091 4211 secretary.atherton@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stjoeys.qld.edu.au
	Babinda St Rita's School	Prep – Year 6	7-13 Church St, PO Box 363 Babinda 4861 Ph 4067 1467 secretary.babinda@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stritasbabinda.qld.edu.au
	Bentley Park St Therese's School	Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	135-167 Robert Rd, PO Box 529 Bentley Park 4869 Ph 4055 4514 secretary.bentleypk@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stthereses.qld.edu.au
	Dimbulah St Anthony's School	Prep – Year 6	3 Hyde St, PO Box 128 Dimbulah 4872 Ph 4093 5319 secretary.dimbulah@cns.catholic.edu.au www.sta.qld.edu.au
	Earlville Our Lady Help of Christians School	Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	18 Balaclava Rd Earlville 4870 Ph 4054 2566 secretary.earlville@cns.catholic.edu.au www.olhoc.qld.edu.au
	Gordonvale St Michael's School	Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	58 Mill St, PO Box 64 Gordonvale 4865 Ph 4056 1614 secretary.gordonvale@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stmichael.qld.edu.au
	Innisfail Good Counsel Primary School	Prep – Year 6	96 Rankin St Innisfail 4860 Ph 4061 2994 secretary.innisfail@cns.catholic.edu.au www.gcps.qld.edu.au
	Manunda St Francis Xavier's School	Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	5 Atkinson St, PO Box 565 Manunda 4870 Ph 4037 9900 secretary.manunda@cns.catholic.edu.au www.xaviercairns.qld.edu.au
	Mareeba St Thomas' School	Prep – Year 6	63 Constance St Mareeba 4880 Ph 4092 1570 secretary.mareeba@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stthomasmareeba.qld.edu.au
	Mossman St Augustine's School	Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	24 Grogan St, PO Box 327 Mossman 4873 Ph 4098 1631 secretary.mossman@cns.catholic.edu.au www.staugus.qld.edu.au

School	Location	Offerings	Contact
	North Cairns Mother of Good Counsel School	Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	394 Sheridan St, PO Box 22N North Cairns 4870 Ph 4053 6133 secretary.nthcairns@cns.catholic.edu.au www.mogc.qld.edu.au
	Parramatta Park St Joseph's School	Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	11 Loeven St, Parramatta Park 4870 Ph 4051 4041 secretary.parramatta@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stjosephscairns.qld.edu.au
	Ravenshoe St Teresa's School	Prep – Year 6	6 Moffatt St, PO Box 249 Ravenshoe 4888 Ph 4097 6173 secretary.ravenshoe@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stteresas.qld.edu.au
	Silkwood St John's School	Prep – Year 6	Harold St, PO Box 252 Silkwood 4856 Ph 4065 2193 secretary.silkwood@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stjohnssilkwood.qld.edu.au
	South Johnstone St Rita's School	Prep – Year 6 Homework Club	8 Green St, PO Box 8 South Johnstone 4859 Ph 4064 2153 secretary.johnstone@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stritascps.qld.edu.au
	Thursday Island Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School	(Hammond Is. campus P-3) Prep – Year 6	Normanby St, PO Box 544 Thursday Island 4875 Ph 4069 2203 secretary.ti@cns.catholic.edu.au www.olsh.qld.edu.au
	Trinity Park Holy Cross School	Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	Reed Rd, Trinity Park 4879 PO Box 1026, Smithfield 4878 Ph 4057 6920 secretary.trinitypk@cns.catholic.edu.au www.holycross.qld.edu.au
	Tully St Clare's School	Prep – Year 6	13 Mars St, PO Box 97 Tully 4854 Ph 4068 1527 secretary.tully@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stclares.qld.edu.au
	Weipa St Joseph's Parish School	Prep – Year 6	Boundary Rd PO Box 1409, Weipa 4874 Ph 4069 9500 office.weipa@cns.catholic.edu.au www.stjosephsweipa.qld.edu.au
	Woree St Gerard Majella School	Prep – Year 6 OSHCare	63 Anderson Rd, Woree 4868 PO Box 12131 Cairns DC 4870 Ph 4054 4805 secretary.woree@cns.catholic.edu.au www.sgmcairns.qld.edu.au

Parents place value on cost

WHILE Catholic schools strive to keep fees as low as possible and provide a variety of concessions and discounts, to many of the thousands of parents who send their children to a Catholic school, the fees are worth it in return for the holistic education their child receives.

"We value the community sense that a Catholic school instils in students - the learnings which emphasise compassion, getting along, and respect for self and others," said Our Lady of Help Christians parent Sue Newton.

"We wished for our daughter Bridget to have an academic education based on Gospel values. It was important to know that the school recognised the value of teaching children emotional resilience, confidence, getting along, persistence and organisation.

"The opportunity for our child to develop self-worth, respect for others, a philosophy of empathy, commitment and a sense of belonging to a community will be invaluable in her future."

To provide quality learning environments, Catholic schools have fees to help meet the shortfall in government funding provided for students in state schools and strive to keep fees as low as possible so that genuine financial hardship is not a barrier to receiving a Catholic education.

The term 'school fees' includes tuition fees and school levies, and each school assesses the levies necessary to meet their individual school and community operational requirements.

Cairns Diocese schools have discounts and concessions for multi-student/school families, country area schools, pensioner and health care card holders and families experience genuine financial hardships.

Family discounts are especially welcome by parents like Sharon Chappel who has two children at St Clare's Tully and another one soon to join.

"Sharon is looking forward to her daughter, who is now

in Kindy, coming to Prep next year as her costs will drop by at least \$100," said St Clare's Principal Paul Keenan.

For the majority of parents, however, it's not about the money.

"We value how Catholic schools engage parents/carers, staff and students in so many activities," Mrs Newton added. "We find the fees extremely reasonable at OLHOC for the provision of an academic education based on Catholic values.

"We believe that the cost of sending our daughter to a Catholic school is worth the expense as we know that at OLHOC, Bridget is in a learning environment which fosters academic growth along with valuing community, self-worth and respect for others.

"There are many opportunities for people to search and compare school fees of government, Catholic and other independent/private schools.

"In our research we found that Catholic school costs are a much more affordable option than private independent schools, and whilst they are more costly than public schools, our decision about cost is based on what premium we wished to pay for a school community that provides an academic education in unison with teaching values that, as parents, we choose for our child at home."

St Joseph's Atherton Principal, Michael Lindsay said parents at Prep interviews were often pleasantly surprised by the affordability of enrolling their child at the school.

"Generally, if they can afford to send their child to Kindy to give them the best possible start in life, they can afford to continue that good start by enrolling their child in a Catholic school."

For more information on school fees, visit www.cns.catholic.edu.au/fees



ABOVE: OLHOC mother Sue Newton and daughter Bridget

Secondary Colleges

College	Location	Offerings	Contact
	Cairns City St Monica's College	Year 7 – 12 Girls Only Day Schooling/ Boarding	The Enrolment Officer, Mary Robertson 177 Abbott St, Cairns 4870 Ph 4042 4800 office@stmonicas.qld.edu.au www.stmonicas.qld.edu.au
	Cooktown & Cairns Holy Spirit College	Youth Assistance College. Year 7 – 12 Co-educational Cooktown Weekly Boarding & Day Schooling; Cairns – Day Schooling only	Administration Centre 13 Moignard St, Manoora, PO Box 591, Manunda 4870 Ph: 4053 4550 Cooktown Campus Ph: 4069 6069 secretary.holyspirit@cns.catholic.edu.au www.holyspiritcollege.qld.edu.au
	Herberton Mount St Bernard College	Year 7 – 12 Co-Educational Day Schooling and Boarding	15 Broadway, Herberton 4887 Ph 4096 1444 office@msb.qld.edu.au www.msb.qld.edu.au
	Innisfail Good Counsel College	Year 7 – 12 Co-Educational Day Schooling	The Enrolment Officer, Catherine Mifsud 66 Owen St, PO Box 839 Innisfail 4860 Ph 4063 5300 gcounsel@gcc.qld.edu.au www.gcc.qld.edu.au

College	Location	Offerings	Contact
	Mareeba St Stephen's Catholic College	Year 7 – 12 Co-Educational Day Schooling	The Enrolment Officer, Denise Morrow McIver Rd, PO Box 624 Mareeba 4880 Ph 4086 2500 office@sscc.qld.edu.au www.sscc.qld.edu.au
	Parramatta Park St Augustine's College	Year 7 – 12 Boys Only Day Schooling Boarding	The Enrolment Officer, Julie Storrs 251 Draper St, Cairns 4870 Ph 4051 5555 admin@sac.qld.edu.au www.sac.qld.edu.au
	Woree St Mary's Catholic College	Year 7 – 12 Secondary Co-Educational Day Schooling	53 Anderson Rd, Woree 4868 PO Box 259 Earlville 4870 Ph 4044 4200 office@smcc.qld.edu.au www.smcc.qld.edu.au

P-12 Colleges

College	Location	Offerings	Contact
	Mount Peter MacKillop Catholic College	Prep – Year 12 (Prep to Year 4 in 2017) Co-Educational Day Schooling	1 MacKillop Rd, (Cnr Mount Peter Rd), Mount Peter 4869 PO Box 1027 Edmonton 4869 Ph 4045 5262 office.mountpeter@cns.catholic.edu.au www.mackillopcatholiccollege.qld.edu.au
	Redlynch St Andrew's Catholic College	Prep – Year 12 Co-Educational Day Schooling OSHCare	The Admissions Manager, Kieran Casey 185 -205 Redlynch Intake Rd, PO Box 150 Redlynch 4870 Ph: 4039 5200 enrolments@standrewscc.qld.edu.au www.standrewscc.qld.edu.au



School Effectiveness Framework drives improvement

WHEN planning Cairns Catholic Education's 2016-2017 School Effectiveness Framework, the CES School Improvement Team not only sought the consultation of experts across Catholic education, they went to the heart of the schools for feedback and advice – the school principals.

"Critical to the fulfillment of this important support instrument to drive school improvement is the voice of principals as co-creators of the framework," said Diarmuid O'Riordan, CES Deputy Executive Director, School Improvement.

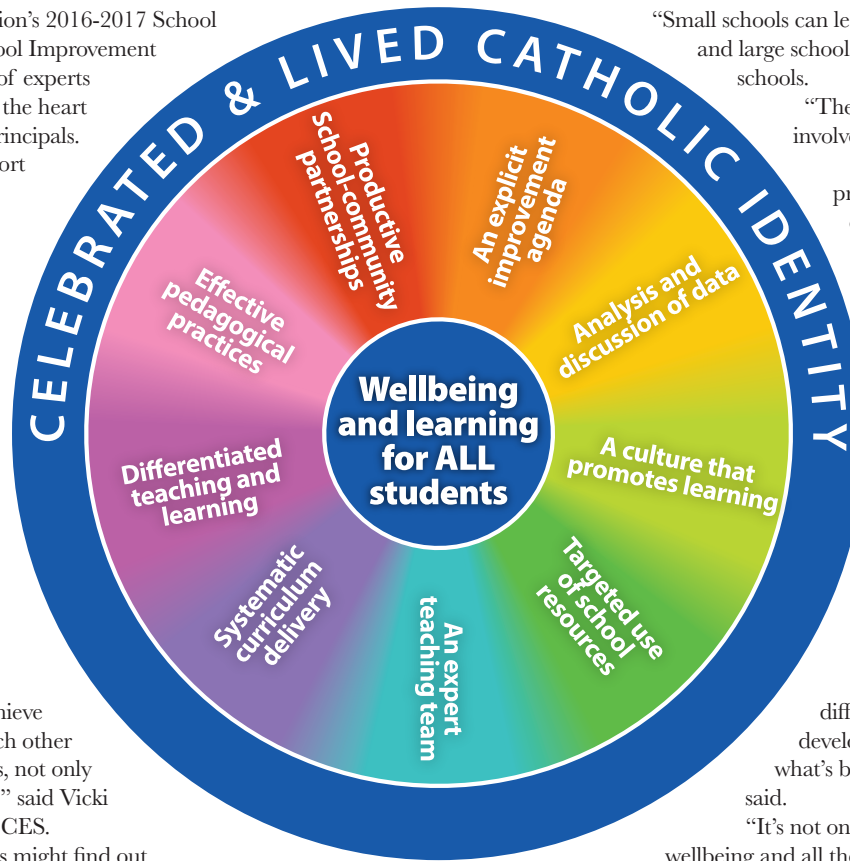
"To this end, principals have been instrumental in the development of the framework and continue to offer guidance and direction via a principal reference group."

Mr O'Riordan also acknowledged the valuable involvement in developing the framework from external agencies including Australian Catholic University, Australian Council for Educational Research, other dioceses across Australia, and external consultant and 'critical friend', Phil Billington.

Principals are now working together to achieve better outcomes to benefit both the students and the schools' communities.

"We want principals collaborating together to achieve great things for students, so schools can work with each other and learn from each other to achieve better outcomes, not only for their schools but all schools in the Cairns Diocese," said Vicki Bell, Director Leadership & Professional Learning at CES.

"Once they've done their school planning, schools might find out what other schools are working on in a similar area, so they can work together."



"Small schools can learn off large schools, and large schools can learn off small schools."

"The more minds that are involved the better."

CES is setting up professional learning communities within schools to work together to meet the needs of every child, in every class, in every school.

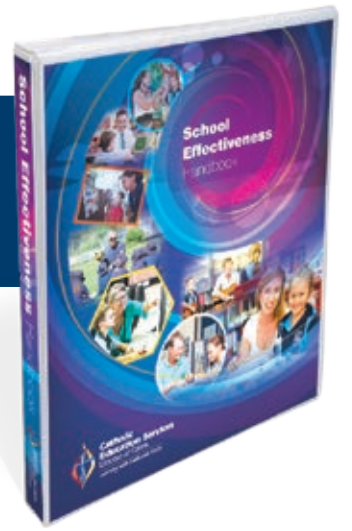
"The School Effective Framework is a very big, all-encompassing document that all schools will be using to drive school improvement," said St Anthony's Dimbulah Principal Brad Williams, whose input has been instrumental in the SEF plan.

"Within that framework schools are identifying what their goals and strategies are, what support may be required to achieve those goals, what capacity or professional learning teachers and staff will need and how to achieve them."

Judy Billiau, Principal of St Rita's Babinda, agrees.

"I think it's great because each of our schools has different needs, so rather than one size fits all we can develop our school's annual improvement plans around what's best for our schools, our families and our students," she said.

"It's not only about learning and teaching. It's also about student wellbeing and all the elements that make schools effective."



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Drones, Droids and Robots gain STEAM

FROM learning more about robotics and drones to speaking with experts, including an internationally renowned specialist on human and technological evolution, students in Cairns Catholic schools celebrated National Science Week by getting an edge in preparing for a future in technological advancement.

"The annual event raises the profile and increases understanding and appreciation of science, innovation, engineering and technology and their roles in maintaining and improving our society, economy and environment," said St Joseph's Parramatta Park Principal Gavin Rick.

"It also aims to encourage an interest in science pursuits among the general public and to encourage younger people to become fascinated by the world we live in."

Students throughout the Diocese embraced the fields of science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics (STEAM) through guest speakers, displays and hands-on activities.

The theme for this year was Drones, Droids and Robots.

Robotic equipment, such as Bee-Bots, Ozobots and Spheros, are being utilised throughout Catholic schools in the Cairns Diocese.

"Our robotic equipment is used to explore the digital technologies learning area of the Australian Curriculum and also integrated into learning and teaching in other learning areas such as maths, science, English writing, history and geography," said St Joseph's Parramatta Park Leader of Teaching and Learning, Emma Ryan.

"They help to encourage students to collaborate, problem solve and be creative."

Every student across all year levels at St Francis Xavier's participated in different robot and droid-themed activities.

"We had Wiggiebot drawings, Bristlebot races, Solar Robot construction and BB8 Paperplate

droids, and students made a robotic hand out of cardboard and straws," said Year 4 and e-Learning teacher Christina Jacob.

"The whole school heard from guest speaker Greg Gilboy about the use of drones in our future. He also brought along a huge \$80,000 drone to show the students, who were very impressed."

The week wasn't all just about robotics, but about all aspects of science. Students at Rita's Babinda learned about how electricity works and experimented with a range of different circuit-building equipment while students at Mother of Good Counsel used the week to boost their school's recycling and environmental projects.

Eleven students from Mount St Bernard College's Years 10-12 and Year 9 Digital Technology class had the opportunity to have a question-and-answer Skype session with Dr Jordan Nguyen, who designs life-changing technologies that transform the lives of people with a disability.

Dr Nguyen was recently featured in an ABC TV documentary called Being Superhuman, in which he and his team developed a biological controlled computer to help a young Cerebral Palsy sufferer drive a car.

MSB Principal David Finch entered and won an online competition to win the 90-minute talk with Dr Nguyen.

"New technologies have a significant benefit in our society," said Ben Smith, MSB Middle Leader Mathematics.

"Students were able to see that through care for each and every individual it is possible to treasure each one of our gifts. Thanks to Dr Nguyen, they were able to understand that through the links between the human senses and biomechanical engineering there is an extensive amount of technology that has not yet been discovered."



ABOVE: St Francis Xavier's Seth Hill and Georgina Devenish explore with a Sphero and the robot's programmable app.



ABOVE: St Joseph's Parramatta Park parent and owner operator of UAView, Terry Curnuck, visited the school during Science Week to demonstrate and educate about drones.



ABOVE: Good Counsel College, Innisfail students, L-R Keely Machin, Braeden Middleton and Victoria Lucas learn robotics and programming with 'Humanoid', Harold.

“Our robotic equipment... helps to encourage students to collaborate, problem solve and be creative...”

LEFT: St Joseph's Leader of Teaching and Learning, Emma Ryan demonstrates exploding Alka-Seltzer volcanos to an enthralled group of students.



Scan code to watch the video of Science Week at St Joseph's, Parramatta Park



Instructions on how to scan a QR Code are on page 2 of this publication.

Friendships established between schools and countries

What is believed to be a first for Cairns Diocese schools, two schools joined together for a cultural trip of a lifetime.

Students from St Joseph's Parramatta Park and St Therese's Bentley Park went to Taiwan during the recent school holidays.

"I believe it is the first time two schools have done this," said St Joseph's Principal Gavin Rick, who instigated the joint school excursion.

"I'm a great believer that our students really need to experience other cultures firsthand to enhance their own 'worldly' learning and wellbeing.

"With the impact the Chinese are having on Australia it seemed a natural progression that we took our students across to Taiwan so they can experience authentic Chinese culture."

The trip was beneficial to students on so many levels.

"This was an opportunity for our students to be immersed in the culture of Taiwan and also practice their Mandarin speaking skills," said St Therese's Assistant Principal Jacqueline Jackson.

"This is the first time St Therese's students have taken part in such an exchange."

A lot of preparation was involved in the trip, including giving students additional lessons to help them with their conversational language, helping them to enhance their

knowledge of Chinese culture and customs and holding parent-information nights.

Students even visited the Cairns International Airport to get a behind-the-scenes look at customs, immigration and how their bags are scanned as well as hearing about the importance of protecting Australia's borders.

"Preparation was a really holistic approach," Gavin said. "It is my expectation that this trip will be planting the seed for future years."

The excursion opened up networks between schools.

"Students get to know students from our other Catholic schools, and it was great to establish friendships not only beyond our own school but beyond our own country as well," Gavin said.

While there the students got to experience Mid-Autumn Festival, making moon cakes and the traditional family BBQ. They travelled on the High Speed Rail, experienced traditional Chinese Tea and attended school. We hope to welcome students from Taiwan in the future.



ABOVE: Students from St Joseph's Parramatta Park and St Therese's Bentley Park who travelled together to Taiwan during the school holidays include, from left, Emma Ryan, Ethan Whatley, Noah Zillman, Sam Peter, Lisa Jones and Gavin Rick. Front, from left, Nick Kilfoy, Isabelle Tia and Layla Stevens.



ABOVE: Principal of Ren Mei Elementary School demonstrating Chinese characters

Transition to Prep purposefully planned

THE importance of a positive transition to school has been emphasised in research around the world and is wholly endorsed by Catholic schools, with four schools participating in a pilot project to develop Transition to School models.

Our Lady Help of Christians School, St Andrew's, St Michael's and Holy Cross schools volunteered to be involved in this very exciting opportunity.

Leading the project at Catholic Education Services, Education Officer Leigh Quirk said a successful transition to school is marked by children's positive approach to school and a sense of belonging and engagement.

"Families have critical roles to play in supporting positive transitions, as do educators, health and other professionals, as well as communities," she said.

"An effective Transition program begins well before the start of the academic year and continues well into the first year fostering a strong sense of belonging to the school."

A Transition to School model encompasses the traditional orientation activities such as school tours, bump up days and class visits, however, within a Transition model these activities are strategically planned, purposeful and relevant to both the students and the community. Activities are geared to the individual needs of children and families and

recognise that starting school is a time of transition for all involved: children, families and educators, Ms Quirk said.

"Within the development of these models the Prep teachers involved have examined their school and community data which was gathered in the 2015 AEDC collection.

"The AEDC is a national measure of children's development, as they enter their first year of full-time school. It highlights what is working well and helps schools, communities and policy makers understand how children are developing before they start their first year of full-time school, what is being done well and what can be improved.

"Data from the AEDC can help identify the types of services, resources or support to meet the needs of communities. It is measured across the five domains of Physical Health and Well Being, Social Competence, Emotional

Maturity, Language and cognitive skills, and Communication skills and general knowledge," Ms Quirk said.

"Our schools identified their areas of vulnerability from the data and included these areas as key concepts to be addressed throughout their Transition to School model."

Initial trials are now well under way across the four schools. Major goals of this project are: Building confidence of students starting their first year of school; Providing all stakeholders with the opportunity to become familiar with the school environment; Schools and teachers get to know their students and families; Trusting partnerships are established; Age appropriate pedagogies are applied to early learning; and Collaborative partnerships between schools and Early Learning centres, Kindergartens and Community services are established and purposeful.

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Prep now compulsory

THE importance of Prep as the first year of schooling has been established, with the Queensland Government legislating to make Prep compulsory from 2017. It has been 10 years since prep was introduced with around 98 per cent of children currently attending. Prep is the first year of the Australian Curriculum and provides the foundation for future learning.

Most parents enrol their child in Prep at the Prep-eligible age, which is in the year the

child turns five by June 30. However, parents still retain flexibility to enrol their child in Prep the following year, in the year they turn six by June 30, giving consideration to the child's developmental, behavioural and emotional readiness for schooling.

The new compulsory requirements will not apply to children already enrolled in Year 1 for 2017.

For further information visit www.cns.catholic.edu.au/enrolling/starting-prep

Float continues winning tradition

WINNING one award is reason enough to feel proud. Winning two or even three is extra meaningful, but winning four is thrilling. Such is the case for Our Lady of Help Christians School (OLHOC) and its eco-art Kaleido-float which won an impressive four awards at this year's Cairns Festival Grand Parade competition.

The float impressed the judges with its design-flair, bright colours and icons reflecting the region's natural environment, to top all the categories it was eligible to win - Best Overall, Best School, Best Design and the People's Choice Award. OLHOC follows in the footsteps of its sister school, St Joseph's School Parramatta Park which last year also took out all four awards.

OLHOC Visual Art Teacher Kim Sandford said it was a thrill to feel the 'buzz' around the school as the excitement of the parade grew.

"When it was announced over the school PA system that we had won, every classroom erupted," she said. "It was truly an amazing project to be a part of."

"The parents and kids put in a lot of time and effort to make our float, and we had a lot of community support."

"An important aspect of the float was to show the community how to reduce our impact on the environment and reuse everyday recyclable materials, especially plastic water bottles that are a huge threat to our unique environment."

The float was constructed predominately from recycled materials, including plastic milk crates, plastic bags, bubble wrap and many thousands of disposable plastic bottles which were used to create the local native fauna and flora that adorned the float.

After taking centre stage in the Cairns Festival Grand Parade, the float has now been disassembled and used to decorate the school grounds.

The school won \$10,000 in prize money, which will be used to enhance the resourcing of its Arts program.



OLHOC's prize-winning float entry involved the entire school community and focused on reducing the impact on the environment by reusing everyday materials.

Our Lady Help of Christians School



Address: 18 Balaclava Rd, Earlville
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LEFT & BELOW: During the last school holidays, St Andrew's staff visited Nepal to deliver donations of cash and goods collected from The Gift of Music. Pictured here, Maureen Cameron teaches children at Batase Village School the wonders of music and also visited Batase Children's Hostel to deliver books, socks and warm winter goods for Friends of Himalayan Children Inc.



Gift of Music opens doors of charities

LITTLE did they know then, but when Maureen Cameron and her husband Brian Hurdley sat down for a coffee at a Palm Cove café and brainstormed about Catholic Education Week and how they could help spread the teachings of Pope Francis that the idea they came up with would make such a huge impact within the Cairns community.

That's what happened after the two St Andrew's Catholic College music teachers devised the concept of The Gift of Music, designed to spread Pope Francis' CEW theme of *Opening doors in the Year of Mercy* by bringing people together and helping them support worthwhile causes.

The Gift of Music concert, held over three performances in August at the Tanks Arts Centre, was an enormous success and brought together close to 1000 talented musicians and performers and more than 100 volunteers to raise money for local charities.

"Music is a universal language that connects people across the globe," said Maureen, Head of Music at St Andrew's. "It's something everyone can relate to."

Maureen and Brian who is Head of Instrumental Music at St Andrew's, had no idea how successful their

idea would become.

"We went from a seed that grew then tapped in to something quite special," Maureen said. "It has become a roller coaster!"

"The Gift of Music was a team effort with many people putting their time into it. It was a rewarding experience for everyone involved, from children who participated to the volunteers who worked behind the scenes."

Catholic school students from St Andrew's, St Monica's, St Augustine's, St Mary's and Holy Cross joined the list of talented performers, which also included Cairns Choral Society, Cairns Brass Youth Band, and State schools among hundreds of others.

With enormous support and encouragement from teachers and staff at St Andrew's, The Gift of Music concert came to fruition, accompanied by a fundraising-based website directing people to local charities including Rosies-Friends on the Street, Friends of the Himalayan Children (FHC) and St Vincent de Paul.

"The website www.thegiftofmusic Cairns.com will help to 'Open The Door' of local Cairns charities who have registered to be part of our appeal," Maureen said. "It has links to those charities and information

on how people can help."

"The Gift of Music is not just about the concert – it's about directing everyone in the community on how they can help others, from volunteering their time to donating items and money. It is about building connections, firing the imagination and making opportunities."

St Monica's students jumped on board fundraising for St Vincent de Paul, making over 100 Blessing Bags for its Emergency Relief Program.

"The students put together these bags which contained a collection of personal care items that are easily taken for granted," St Monica's APRE Adrien Innes-Simpson said.

"We were overwhelmed by the level of support from the community and grateful for the initiative from Maureen Cameron and the St Andrew's community. It was wonderful that St Vincent's was featured as a supported charity. We knew that this would be a fantastic opportunity for St Vincent's to get more people involved and also an opportunity for more people to get to know what St Vincent's is all about."

Maureen Cameron added: "I wasn't surprised at all that more than 1000 people came forward to help our community. Cairns is

“Good people know that you can't feel good about yourself unless you're doing good things for others and having a feeling of self worth really comes from helping others.”

an amazing city and the people are so helpful and caring of their neighbours."

Som Tamang said FHC were "very privileged" to be part of the event. "We are hoping that the word of kindness and helpfulness will continue to spread," said Som, who runs FHC. "By joining forces and working together, our work is not only benefitting those in Batase, but our whole community here in Cairns, and The Gift of Music is testament to that."

"We monitor traffic on our website, and it has received a remarkable spike in hits since The Gift of Music."

Cairns 2016 Young Australian of the Year, St Andrew's student Daniel Clayton, as well as Maureen, Justine Goldfinch and three other St Andrew's staff members travelled to Batase, Nepal to bring the donated gifts.

"In just two weeks, 145kg of gifts reached Nepal as a result of the goodwill and open hearts of people in Cairns and the involvement of The Gift of Music," Som added.

Maureen couldn't have been happier with the support received.

"Good people know that you can't feel good about yourself unless you're doing good things for others and having a feeling of self worth really comes from helping others," Maureen said. "The support has been and continues to be overwhelming. You can tell that generous spirit really emanates around Cairns."



ABOVE: The children of Batase Village School.

RIGHT: Brian Hurdley, Katie Swaffer, Leanne Sugden, Oliver Kurukchi and Maureen Cameron prepare for the Gift of Music performance.





Brothers from St Clare's Tully from left, Flynn, Zane and Chace Crema brought their own ribbons to tie on the school fence during Child Protection Week. The ribbons are part of the Loud Fences Movement, which encourages individuals to tie ribbons on the school fences as a symbolic act of solidarity with survivors of sexual abuse, their families and communities.

Language competitors show courage and confidence

OVER three days in August almost 600 students in years 4 to 12, across Cairns schools, participated in the Modern Language Teachers Association of Queensland (MLTAQ) Language competitions.

The Modern Languages competition on the first day attracted 150 participants. Leah MacCallum (St Joseph's, Atherton) kept up the school tradition by taking out the Yr 6 overall winner's trophy for Italian. Tajjana Goleby (St Stephen's Mareeba) came first in the Yr 7 division, Eva Quintieri and Elisa Wheeler (St Mary's, Woree) won Yr 9 and 11 Italian. Zoe Dimarco and Vivian Ballestro (St Monica's, Cairns) won Year 10 and 12 Italian.

Lily Ireland, Yr 7 (St Andrew's, Redlynch) placed third in the French competition.

Chinese was held on the second day with 130 participants. St Andrew's, Redlynch students, Loretta Wolters (Yr 7 beginners), Ella Blandford (Yr 8) and

Jasmine Martin (Yr 9) won first in their divisions.

On the final day, the largest of all the competitions with well over 300 participants was the Japanese speaking competition. Overall winners were Mizuki Kawabata (St Francis Xavier's, Manunda) Yr 4/5, Charlotte Tham (Mother of Good Counsel, Nth Cairns) Yr 6 and Sonia Xiong (St Monica's, Cairns) Yr 11.

Convenors on the day commented on the high standards, great effort and courage shown by all participants who spoke confidently in front of peers and judges.

To read an informative article by Catholic Education Services Education Officer, Janelle Santolin, about 'How Learning a Second Language can benefit your child' scan the QR Code. Instructions are on page 2 of this publication.



Child Protection is everyone's business

PROTECTING children is everyone's business, which is why Cairns Catholic schools don't just focus on the annual Queensland Child Protection Week.

"While there is more media attention during Child Protection week, our schools have a continued focus on child protection all year," said CES' Student Protection Officer Ann Barr. "Every week is Child Protection Week in our schools.

"A focus on student protection and wellbeing is incorporated into all aspects of our school communities – curriculum, Social Emotional Learning, staff training, local and global events such as Day for Daniel and Loud Fences Movement, as well parent information sessions."

Schools facilitated their own events during this year's 30th anniversary of Child Protection Week.

"Each class was asked to have a special focus on child safety throughout the school, and parents were asked to reinforce the messages of child safety at home," said St Michael's Principal Greg Hoare.

"We asked parents to openly communicate with their children. When no subject is seen as being taboo from discussion children will then have less chance of

being manipulated into secrecy and being exploited."

The Loud Fences Movement is a medium to show solidarity for survivors of sexual abuse, their families and communities. In recognition of its International Day for Protection of Children, Catholic schools were encouraged to tie brightly-coloured ribbons on the fences of their schools to show their support for victims and hope for the future.

Students at St Clare's Tully were asked to bring in their own ribbons, and Year 3 student Chace Crema put a lot of thought into choosing his.

Chace and his brothers Zane and Flynn all brought colourful ribbons to the school, but Chace's had extra meaning for him.

"Chace went home one afternoon to find the best ribbon he had, and the next day he excitedly brought in his ribbon with a huge smile as he proudly held it up to show his teacher," Ms Barr said.

"It was a blue first-place ribbon he had worked hard for in a recent sports carnival, and that's the one he wanted to tie to the fence.

"We were all extremely touched by his decision to use a ribbon so valuable to him."

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Inspired to leave a positive mark on the world

LISTENING to and being inspired by Pope Francis was a highlight for five Cairns Catholic school teachers who joined in the World Youth Day Pilgrimage (WYD) in Poland in July.

Cairns Catholic Education sponsored five teachers to attend the event: Jamaal Sugars and Brent Mitchell from Good Counsel College Innisfail, Kate Watson from St Michael's School in Gordonvale, Anna Harris from St Andrew's Catholic College Redlynch and Natalie Jensen from St Therese's School Bentley Park.

They were accompanied by Innisfail Parish Priest Fr Kerry Crowley and Weipa parishioner Teresa Lemaire, who were sponsored by the Cairns Diocese. The seven were part of a group of 60 pilgrims from the Cairns, Armidale, Wollongong and Toowoomba Dioceses.

The worldwide encounter with the Pope, which is typically celebrated every three years in a different country, unites millions of people from across the globe in a celebration of faith.

"The combination of travelling to significant religious and historical places throughout Poland, participating in Christ-centred gatherings to learn from and with people from around the world and sharing all of this with a group of awesome, like-minded young people made this a journey that engaged the heart in a way I didn't expect," said Cairns' group Leader Jamaal Sugars.

"On a larger scale, WYD provided an opportunity for joyful encounters with some of the millions of other young people from all over the world who participated in the event. This huge congregation was a testament to the passion and energy that is present in the young Church."

While not all WYD events are pilgrimages, this one was and took participants to the heartland of St John Paul II and

home of the Divine Mercy devotion, which is based on the writings of Saint Faustina Kowalska, a Polish nun who kept a diary recording the revelations she received about God's mercy during some of Poland's turbulent years.

"Seeing the sights of Warsaw and hearing about the complete destruction and oppression of the Polish people for generations was quite confronting," said Kate Watson. "It astounded me that through this suffering and losing everything they possessed, the people of Poland were still able to rebuild their lives, with their strong faith intact."

"The most humbling part of the journey for me was visiting the concentration camps in Auschwitz and Auschwitz-Birkenau. Through the cruelty and atrocities and deprivation of human livelihood, there arose powerful stories of mercy, like those of St Maximilian Kolbe who gave his life to save another and also the likes of Mr Oskar Schindler who saved the lives of 1100 prisoners in the camp."

"The journey through Czestochowa and Wadowice brought another level of connectivity to Poland and the WYD experience. Walking in the footsteps of St Pope John Paul II through his hometown, visiting places he had worshiped was awesome – what an incredible man who was so dedicated to God and serving people and spreading the message of mercy," Jamaal said.

Anna Harris was also deeply moved and inspired by the faith of the Polish people.

"Having such a turbulent history, I certainly didn't expect the beauty of cities such as Warsaw and Krakow," she said. "The fact that, as a nation, the Polish people were torn apart on so many occasions, but were able to regather and rebuild the country to the wonderful place it is today is the ultimate

testament to their unwavering faith.

"What impressed me most about the WYD pilgrimage was Poland itself and the faith of its people."

Attending the WYD Pilgrimage has both inspired and humbled the Cairns participants.

"How spiritual and life-changing the experience was," said Natalie Jensen. "Everything that we did and saw was just incredible. Pope Francis is just an amazing person, and all of his speeches were inspiring."

"We are very lucky in Australia that war is just an image that we see on our phones, in newspapers and on the news. There are others who face the hardships of war everyday and we need to be aware of these issues and support those who need help."

"We need to experience multiculturalism not as a threat but as an opportunity to have the courage to build a bridge, not a wall, between us."

Since returning, all have been injected with a renewal of faith and a desire to help make a change to inspire people to leave a positive mark on the world.

"The world doesn't need any more couch potatoes," Anna Harris added. "The world and the Catholic Church need people like us to go out and spread our enthusiasm of faith."

"As educators, we are channels that students can be exposed to faith, and it's our responsibility to inspire others, like we have been at WYD."



ABOVE: The Cairns crew included, from left, Natalie Jensen, Teresa Lemaire, Kate Watson, Fr Kerry Crowley, Brent Mitchell, Jamaal Sugars and Anna Harris.

LEFT: The Cairns, Armidale, Wollongong and Toowoomba pilgrimage group visit St Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna.

Helping to fill suitcase of dreams

ST Rita's School, South Johnstone is a small school with a big heart and a family feel. The school has vacancies in most classes for 2017 and is asking parents to "help us help you to fill your child's 'invisible suitcase of dreams'".

"This 'invisible suitcase of dreams' symbolises the dreams, hopes and expectations that the children and their parents come with when they enter our schooling system," says Principal, Vicki Conomo.

"Do we fulfil them, do we enhance

them, do we do our best to help them on their journey? I would like to think we do."

Parents who would like to discuss enrolling their child at St Rita's, South Johnstone are invited to contact Vicki at the school on 4064 2153 or email her on principal.johnstone@cns.catholic.edu.au

Find out more about the school at www.stritascps.qld.edu.au



Catholic schools reduce carbon footprint



CATHOLIC schools are investing heavily to make their contribution to helping save the planet by cutting carbon emissions.

The Cairns Diocese has invested a forecasted cost of \$3.5 million to install solar panels in its schools, protecting the environment as well as saving schools money in the long term. A number of schools are already utilising the panels, while the others are in the process of having them installed.

"We're really excited to have solar panels, not only because it makes sense to use free energy from the sun, but because of the positive environmental effects associated with utilising renewable energy sources," said Ruth Mallon, Principal of Mother of Good Counsel, one of a number of schools that already has them in operation.

"We love being able to do more than just talk about our stewardship of the planet and doing as much as possible to educate future generations about caring for our environment in positive ways."

A total of 26 schools are slated to have solar-power generation systems installed. The program extends the outcomes of the Solar Schools program in 2009 when all diocesan schools installed solar panels.

"It is not possible to install solar at Thursday Island due to local determination and Mount Peter school's solar panels were completed independently of this project," said Paul McArthur,

CES Chief Financial and Operating Officer. "Solar panels were planned for Weipa, however the Weipa Town Authority, as the local government authority and electricity generator, did not approve the installation in their jurisdiction."

To date, solar panels have been installed at St Joseph's Atherton, St Rita's Babinda, St Anthony's Dimbulah, St Michael's Gordonvale, St Augustine's Mossman, Mother of Good Counsel North Cairns, St Joseph's Parramatta Park, St John's Silkwood, St Teresa's Ravenshoe, Holy Cross Trinity Park, St Rita's South Johnstone, St Clare's Tully, St Gerard Majella Woree, Mount St Bernard's Herberton and the Cairns and Cooktown campuses of Holy Spirit College.

The solar panels were operational in July at St Teresa's Ravenshoe and have already made an impact.

"The power bills are now a source of great excitement for us," said Principal Catherine McKechnie. "Last month, we received \$376 of solar credits which represents a significant saving. We are grateful to the Cairns Diocese for this initiative and look forward to the difference these ongoing savings will mean to our budget and our resourcing."

St Clare's Tully only notices the panels when the electricity bill arrives.

"Our Montefalco Centre is now a positive energy producer with a large array of solar panels on the roof," said Principal Paul Keenan. "These panels are now producing electricity for

ABOVE: Solar panels at St Teresa's School, Ravenshoe.

the school and lessening our carbon footprint.

"As they are on the roof we are unaware that they are there. However, when our power bill comes in we know that they are doing their job!"

The Diocese of Cairns has entered into a contract with Eco-Community which is developing a solar power generation strategy for schools and other buildings in the Diocese of Cairns. Eco Community, which has also covered every Catholic school in the Townsville Diocese, has installed systems at more than 300 Catholic schools across Australia.

"The payback period – the time to recover the original investment – varies slightly per site," Mr McArthur added. "The average pay-back period is about five years. This means the initial outlay plus maintenance contract will be recovered in five years."

"The installation of the solar panels scheme throughout our Diocesan schools is a great initiative," said St Michael's Principal Greg Hoare.

"Not only as Catholics but also as global citizens, we have a moral responsibility to care for our planet. Installing solar panels into our schools is one small way we can make a positive impact upon our environment."

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ACHIEVEMENTS

College rides wave of successes

St Andrew's Catholic College has been propelled into the spotlight recently thanks to global, national and regional recognition of three of its educators and a number of students who have been making headlines with their accomplishments.

From innovation and Maths to Language and English successes, the College has been celebrating a number of recent high achievements, including the highly-prestigious invitation for **Mrs Kate Maccoll**, the College e-Learning and Innovation Coordinator, to participate in the worldwide 2016 Berlin Apple Distinguished Educator (ADE) Institute event, an honour bestowed on just 400 educators worldwide, including only 20 from Australia.

ADEs are part of a global community of educational leaders recognised for doing amazing things with Apple technology in and out of the classroom. They meet every year to explore ideas, seek new paths and embrace opportunities to bring the freshest and most innovative ideas to students throughout the world.

Mrs Maccoll has been an ADE since 2011 and her induction into the Visionary Leaders strand recognises her educational leadership within St Andrew's and the wider educational community, said St Andrew's Principal Lee MacMaster.

"An invitation to this significant event recognises the enthusiasm and leadership that Mrs Maccoll brings as an educator," Mr MacMaster said. "She is a passionate advocate of the importance of e-Learning and digital safety amongst not only our students but within the community."

"She has been instrumental in the area of best practice mobile learning at St Andrew's since 2014, and we are immensely proud of her achievements."

Mrs Maccoll's success comes alongside a number of other teacher and student accomplishments.

Teachers **Candice Smee** and **Gisele Signori** recently attended the Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented National Conference at University of New South Wales, thanks to Cairns Diocese school scholarships.

The conference, known to enhance excellent exposure to the latest research into Gifted Education, featured international keynote speakers Dr Paula Olszewski-Kubilius from the Northwestern University, Dr Del Siegle from the University of Connecticut and highly-regarded Australian educator Michele Juratowitch.

Both St Andrew's teachers attended three days of research, best-practice workshops and seminars and will be sharing their learning and collected resources with Cairns Catholic school teachers at the next Diocesan Gifted and Talented Reference Group meeting, which meets each term.

Students have also been excelling above and beyond, including **Ellena Darch's** success at being selected as one of six Queensland students - and the only one in Cairns - to win the Studitalia Prize which is a scholarship for a four-week immersion program to study and live in Italy.

Ellena, who is in Year 12, is the fourth St Andrew's student to win this scholarship, although the College has had students shortlisted every year. She will leave for Italy at the end of November and will be hosted at a boarding school.

In addition, two St Andrew's Year 11 students won coveted places into the QUT Vice-Chancellor's Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) Camp at the Queensland University of Technology, which were held during the September school holidays.

Year 11 students **Rebecca Almond** and **Noa Coox** joined a select group of high-achieving students from Queensland on a five-day camp that provided them with engaging and inspirational research experiences in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

They were also given a taste of first-year university life and worked together with other Year 11 students, QUT students and academics in an intensive and hands-on research project.

"Rebecca and Noa were chosen due to



their outstanding academic achievements and passion in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics," said Principal Lee MacMaster, who credited Senior Years Science Head of Department, Mrs Janet Johnston for her mentoring and guidance skills.

"We are very proud of Rebecca and Noa's involvement in this prestigious camp."

Rebecca has also recently been chosen to attend the University of Queensland Young Scholars Program, a residential camp at the University in January.

Meanwhile, three College teams made great strides in two state-wide English and Maths competitions.

A team of the College's **Maths students** won the regional title of the Australian Mathematical competition, where students from across other Cairns schools were tasked with solving mathematical problems in a short time frame. The regional achievement was a sweet victory for the College, which was eliminated in the regional finals last year. The team travelled to Brisbane to compete in the State Finals and finished in the top 10 in Queensland - an awesome achievement!

To top off the College's celebration of student successes are some Year 5/6 and Year 7/8 students, who will go down in the school's history books following their win in the regional finals of the **Readers Cup**, an inter-school competition organised by the Children's Book Council of Australia to promote and encourage excellence in reading and comprehension. It is believed to be the first time the college has won both year-level competitions.

"We are extremely proud of our teachers

and students," Principal Lee MacMaster added. "It is successes such as these that make all the hard work worthwhile." The students travelled to Brisbane for the State Finals and covered themselves with glory finishing in the top echelon of teams.

ABOVE: Noa Coox and Rebecca Almond won coveted places into the STEM Camp at Queensland University of Technology and Ellena Darch won the Studitalia Prize of an immersion experience in Italy.

BELOW: Teachers Candace Smee and Gisele Signori will share their knowledge with the rest of the diocese from their attendance at the Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented National Conference at University of New South Wales.



ABOVE: Kate Maccoll participated in the worldwide 2016 Berlin Apple Distinguished Educator (ADE) Institute event, one of just 400 educators worldwide and 20 from Australia to do so.

Win promotes cultural harmony

YEAR 8 Mount St Bernard student Rosie Douglas had more reasons than one to celebrate winning the top prize at Oxfam's 2016 Close the Gap Instagram challenge.

Her photo, titled *aUStralia*, shows the Australian continent made from the Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags with students' hands holding the diverse parts of our nation together.

A strong metaphor for our collective role in promoting cultural harmony, her photo was created with the help of five of her friends' hands - Liam Kaspersson, Charlize Frank, Trevor David, Charmaine Hill and Desphina Tomsana.

"I put the hands into this photo to symbolise the different cultures at our school and around Australia," said Rosie, who

is from Hopevale. "It was a painting of Australia with the hands of different cultures in it, and my title meant that no matter what colour you are, you are Australian."

Rosie discovered she won Oxfam's challenge, which saw students from across Australia posting creative photos to promote Indigenous health equality, on a special day for her.

"I was extremely happy to win, and I found out on my birthday," she said. "It certainly made me feel special. My family and friends were really excited for me too."

"This year's Close the Gap event focused on Indigenous health workers, a cause close to Rosie's heart."

"I think we need more Indigenous health workers to help us," she said. "In the future I'd like to do nursing to enable equal rights in health care and also I like to take care

of people. I may consider working in Hopevale as a nurse. We need better services in our communities so we don't have to fly out or go somewhere else."

As well as receiving birthday presents on her special day, Rosie won a new Polaroid camera, a huge basket of chocolates, a bear and a number of other prizes from Oxfam.

"I want to thank my teachers at Mount St Bernard College and family for supporting me in every way," she said. "It was one of my best birthdays."



ACHIEVEMENTS

Disengaged youth on path to accomplishment as college opens doors

DESIGNED to inspire disengaged students to recognise their worth and encourage them to succeed, Holy Spirit College has been kicking goals.

Since the youth assistance college opened in 2015, the focus has been on all young people being able to access learning that enables them to gain the knowledge and skills to realise their potential to build a rewarding future and make informed decisions throughout their lives.

The students, who are aged between 11 and 17, have not only been excelling in music and art, but are being engaged through work experience and traineeships and for some of the young people, this has opened unexpected doors for them.

Businesses and organisations such as the Gungarde Aboriginal Corporation, Cooktown District Community Centre, SeaDog Veterinary Services, MiHaven and the Green Army work with and support Holy Spirit students in developing their work ready skills.

To date the program has produced excellent results with four of the participants either gaining or working towards a school-based traineeship or apprenticeship. At the Cooktown campus, student Shianne is transitioning from a school-based traineeship to a full-time traineeship in Wujal-Wujal with

the Playgroup through the Cooktown District Community Centre.

Fellow student Djuwan is moving into a school-based apprenticeship in small engines and mechanics with Gungarde's Tyrepower business and another two students are working towards a school-based traineeship. Thea has found an opportunity to indulge her love of animals by working with the local veterinarian; being able to attend work experience once a week is one factor that motivates her to attend College.

Casey has found his niche in the construction industry. He has participated in a certificate course with MiHaven constructions and is ready to take the next steps towards work.

"The achievements of these young people are huge milestones in their lives," said Holy Spirit Principal Erica Prosser. "The staff at Holy Spirit College are proud to be part of their journeys from disengagement to accomplishment."

A melody for success

As well as working towards providing opportunities for the Holy Spirit students to access the wider community, the College has been providing a means for the wider



community to collaborate together.

Holy Spirit's Cooktown band was formed this year under the leadership of Music Teacher Daniel Briffa, who saw performances as a way to help students develop self-confidence and esteem.

Drawing on his experience as a professional musician, Daniel has assembled a group of students who have varying degrees of interest in music and has them working together to perform their repertoire of songs when the opportunity arises.

Working with the Hope Vale Choir, students from the Hope Vale Primary school as well as individual performers has not only opened the doors of the College to the broader community, it has given young people another avenue through which to express themselves.

Combining all the performers with College students has resulted in vibrant and energetic

Holy Spirit College students Alfred Gisu, Casey Bounghi and Daniel Andrews onsite at MiHaven doing Certificate 1 in Construction, with Cameron from MiHaven.

performances that have left all involved with smiles on their faces symbolic of their sense of satisfaction.

The band has played at the opening of the Hope Vale Youth Shed and at the Cooktown Discovery Festival weekend - not bad for a group of students who before the establishment of the College weren't energetic participants in education.

Holy Spirit College has played a big part in transforming the lives of these young people, through assisting their self-confidence and skills.

Olympic spirit and science aptitude recognised

ST Stephen's Catholic College Captain, Kate Wilcox and fellow student, Aaron Bryce have done their school proud this year.

Kate was named a Queensland recipient of the 2016 Pierre de Coubertin Award, a national award which recognises senior secondary students who demonstrate the values and attributes consistent with the Olympic spirit, through participation and commendable behaviour in sporting activities.

"Kate is a natural leader who assumes a leadership role in all sporting endeavours and encourages others to work as a team to reach a common goal," said Principal, Ida Pinese. "She inspires and motivates others to achieve their best and always places the team's welfare and achievements before her own."

Aaron was one of a few students selected to attend the National Youth Science Forum's 12-day science camp to be held at the Australian National University in Canberra in January, 2017. Students who are selected to attend this camp must first undergo a rigorous application process through their local Rotary Club.

"After applying, I had to go through two rounds of interviews," Aaron said. "I am honoured by Rotary's decision to send me to this prestigious event."

St Stephen's Kate Wilcox was recipient of the 2016 Pierre de Coubertin Award and Aaron Bryce was selected to attend the National Youth Science Forum.



Eyes opened to opportunities and support

INDIGENOUS students from Mount St Bernard College (MSB), Herberton had their eyes opened to the opportunities and support available to them when they attended the Open Day at the Murrup Barak Institute for Indigenous Development, at the University of Melbourne.

Maree Higginson, Alexis Thompson, Era Daniel-King and Thelma Bani spent a weekend in Melbourne exploring the university as well as the city.

MSB's Senior School Pastoral Co-ordinator and Teacher, Mrs Trudy Bakker, encouraged the students to complete an application for the sponsorship.

"The Murrup Barak student mentors were so incredibly supportive of us during our visit," said Era. "They were able to answer all our questions and were passionate about what the university had to offer, if we were to attend next year."

"The Murrup Barak student mentors offered a weekend of wonderful discovery for our students, all of whom have never been to Melbourne," Mrs Bakker said.

"Our students were met at Melbourne airport by a team of school mentors and chaperoned for the weekend to not only experience the wonders of Melbourne but also to explore what the University of Melbourne had to offer in their chosen tertiary field.

The staff at Murrup Barak also assisted students in completing their VTAC applications for entry next year and gave them information



MSB students in Melbourne

about accommodation options, study assistance and practical advice to make the transition as smooth as possible.

"The whole experience has opened my eyes about the opportunities that lay before us and the support that is available to help us achieve our goals and dreams," said Maree.

"Overall this trip to Melbourne was extraordinary and I recommend this trip for others if an opportunity like this comes up again," said Alexis.

"I fell in love during this visit - with a beautiful city and the amazing energy and opportunity that Melbourne offers. I can't wait to go back."

With Thelma adding "It was awe-inspiring".



ABOVE: MacKilley Byrne, Louisa Howell and Lucy Graham enjoy the playground facilities at MacKillop Catholic College.

RIGHT: Caitlyn Munroe, Isaac Rosser, Rebecca Shepherd and Chyna Connell joined in the cake cutting with the Hon Curtis Pitt MP and Principal Luke Reed



New schools have stellar first year

WHILE teething problems might be expected when new schools open, MacKillop Catholic College at Mount Peter and St Joseph's Parish School in Weipa have experienced better-than-expected outcomes during their first year of operation.

"I couldn't have dreamt that we'd be doing so well, so quickly," said St Joseph's Principal Rosie Harrison. "It's beyond what I was expecting."

"We have had a fabulous start to our first year," MacKillop College Principal Luke Reed said. "Our students have settled quickly into their new learning environment among new friends."

Both schools have recently had their official opening ceremonies, which were attended and blessed by Bishop James Foley.

"We had a great show of support from our local community at our official opening ceremonies," Luke said.

The blessing ritual was led by Bishop Foley and the official opening was performed by local MP Curtis Pitt who is also Queensland Treasurer. The State Government contributed \$4.5 million to the school. Welcome to Country was done by Yidinji elder and college parent Gudju Gudju.

A gift given to the school at the opening event, from the Sisters of St Joseph's, was a print of a painting of Mary MacKillop, which is especially poignant to Luke. The picture depicts Mary and Father Julian Tenison Woods in the foreground with the beginnings of the first school they built in Penola, South Australia, in the background.

"It's interesting that in the 150th anniversary of her first school, we're establishing another school, and in most ways the school's facilities couldn't be any more different," Luke said.

"They had a slab hut, which was a stable converted by Mary's brother into a school house; we have purpose-built, high-end technology learning areas with all of the comforts and facilities that you'd expect in a modern learning environment, so we're very, very different from Mary MacKillop's first school.

"But in other ways we're very much the same. We have the same values of care for the kids and reaching out for children

to have an education which will help them make progress in life and to be given the skills to become the people that God created them to be.

"So in that sense, the love and care for the students is very much the same as that which was displayed by Mary MacKillop and her first colleagues."

The official opening was coincidentally close to the anniversary of Saint Mary MacKillop's feast day.

Design and planning of Stage 2 which will accommodate Years 5-6 in 2018-19 is well advanced. Construction of these facilities will start early in the new year.

"Next year we will offer schooling in Years Prep to 4 and we expect to increase to 170 students."

The \$5.7 million first stage of MacKillop opened this year with 86 students in Prep to Year 3. When completed, the school will be multi-stream and is expected to have enrolments of more than 1500 students. The college will grow by one year level each year, with secondary (Year 7) to commence in 2020. Despite strong demand for an earlier start to secondary, competing funding applications across the state have meant that the introduction of secondary will remain with the timing that was originally envisaged when the college was established.

"While I appreciate a number of families will be disappointed in the short term by this news, I am pleased to report that we are establishing a strong Catholic school here at Mount Peter, offering an excellent education in a supportive, nurturing environment. We look forward to many families joining our community in the years ahead," he said.

St Joseph's is also adding new facilities next year as part of Stage 2 of its \$6.15 million project, including two new classrooms, additional administration workspace and a wet area.

"The number of students in the school has gradually risen throughout the year, which has been a really good response," Principal, Rosie Harrison said. "We're projecting we will have approximately 140 students to start the year next year."

"People in the community have heard about the work we're doing and the way we're doing things, especially our values of humility, justice and compassion. They know the difference in the way that Catholic schools operate, which is around the development of the whole child; not just the academic, but the spiritual and social side as well.

"The school has a happy family vibe about it, and this was something we wanted to achieve from the very beginning. This is something we want to hold on to and maintain throughout the school's development."

St Joseph's has adopted a new positive approach to making students and families feel welcome. Instead of the school bell ringing to signify the start and end of school and recess breaks, the school plays music.

"We started the year with the song *Happy*, which is what the school is," she said. "Everyone loved it. We actually just changed it recently to the Hawaiian singer Israel Kamakawiwo'ole's *Over the Rainbow* song, but the students want *Happy* back!"

Both new schools are also focused on maintaining a "family feel" atmosphere to their schools.

"You couldn't start a brand new school from scratch without wonderful, wonderful support," Ms Harrison added. "We've had that from both the community and Catholic Education Services."



RIGHT: Nate McLellan and Louis Argent enjoy the new playground at St Joseph's, Weipa, added in Term 3.

