

Spirit of Sandhurst



Issue 3
Tribute - Bishop Joseph Grech DD
Catholic Education Week May 2011

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Editor: Jenni Kennedy
jkennedy@ceosand.catholic.edu.au

Layout: Catherine Barianos

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Printed by Espresso Printers Epsom

Contributors

Phil Billington Brenda Keenan
Frances Browne Jenni Kennedy
Paul Dullard Tim Lougoon
Prue Gurnick Cecilia Merrigan
Jenni Greblo
Sandhurst Innovation and Development
Team (SIDT)

Images provided by:

Jenni Kennedy Daniel Giles

Reflections from the Director



Welcome to the Catholic Education Week edition of Spirit of Sandhurst! The theme for 2011 – *One Body, One Spirit in Christ: Called to Action* is both challenging and inspiring. It embodies the call of Eucharist to come together in worship as one body, one spirit in Christ and to go forth nourished, encouraged and called to action to serve the common good in God's name!

Catholic Education Sandhurst pays tribute to Bishop Joseph Grech in this edition – a man who was both inspiring and challenging in the way in which he lived his life, led our Diocese and the way in which he continually

encouraged and implored us to be enthusiastic and passionate about the mission of Jesus. Bishop Joe was very proud of Catholic education and of our endeavours to Be More! We pray that his inspiration and legacy to us live on in each of our lives and in our communal commitment to the students and families we serve.

Catholic Education Week is a time in which to celebrate our identity and contribution to both the Catholic community and the broader Australian community. The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium (1997) document reminds us that we are called to be schools for all, with special attention to those who are weakest (n.15) – we are missioned to address poverty and disadvantage with the same passion and commitment as St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. This is the key priority for Catholic Education Sandhurst in 2011 – it requires ongoing commitment and advocacy at all levels – the response must be individual as well as communal.

Authentic education is liberating, it enables each person to realise their potential, to be awakened to the best of human expression and achievement – the mission of education in a Catholic school is described as a work of love (ibid; n. 4) with Christ as the foundation. Those who are alienated, marginalised and struggling deserve our love, commitment and advocacy.

We continue to aspire to be more as staff, students, families, parishes and Catholic education working together, inspired by those in whose footsteps we walk and whom we will remember and honour in liturgies and at the Jubilarian Celebration which commences Catholic Education Week 2011.

Blessings

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Phil Billington". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Director
Catholic Education Sandhurst

In Memory of Bishop Joe

The Most Reverend Joseph Angelo Grech was a Bishop of the people, loved by young and old. This generous, warm and passionate man of God is remembered as a great leader of the Catholic community of Sandhurst, of the Catholic Church in Australia and of the Church internationally. He was a great champion of young people and was so proud of Catholic education Sandhurst!

Bishop Joe was born in Malta on December 10 1948. He was the eldest of three children – his brother Carmel, his sister Rosette, Aunty Tess, Uncle Jimmy and Aunty Mary survive him. After completing the first four years of studies for the priesthood in Malta, he arrived in Australia in 1971. He completed his last four years of studies at Corpus Christi College in Melbourne and was ordained a priest in 1974. In 1999 Bishop Joseph was appointed as Auxiliary Bishop of Melbourne prior to his appointment as the sixth Bishop of the Sandhurst Diocese on April 27 2001.

Bishop Joe was tireless in bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to all. His episcopal motto - Come Lord Jesus! - inspired his every action! He was a member of the Bishops' Commission for Pastoral Life with special oversight for the pastoral care of Migrants and Refugees and he was responsible on behalf of the Bishops of Australia for Youth Ministry. He was also a member of the Bishops' Commission for Mission and Adult Faith Formation with particular responsibilities for Catholic Missions. Bishop Joe was also a member of the International Catholic Charismatic Council representing Oceania. He was a much sought after international speaker and preacher with particular commitment to the Charismatic Renewal Movements, International Priests' Retreats and to Young People. He was a much loved champion of young people and was enthusiastic in his commitment and leadership of many World Youth Day celebrations across the world.



Bishop Joe was always available to young people in particular. He led the Stronger Retreat for Young People in Sandhurst – he always had such faith in young people across the world. Bishop Joe was very committed to our Sandhurst Catholic schools – he loved the students, knew so many by name and was always interested in the staff and their families – he had an enormous capacity for love and was always available for school community celebrations. The students of the schools across Sandhurst celebrated his 60th birthday in 2008 with countless handmade cards which were funny, loving and spontaneous – he loved them!

Bishop Joe was well known not only in the Catholic community, he was a prominent leader in the broader community in Bendigo and beyond. He was also well known and respected in Australian diplomatic circles. He was respected by all with whom he came into contact. Bishop Joe was proud of his Maltese heritage and equally proud to be an Australian, the wonderful blend of these cultures manifested in the character of this truly great man.

Catholic Education Sandhurst was privileged to have Joseph Angelo Grech as our Bishop. His legacy of love for Jesus and passion for humanity will live on in our hearts and in our lives. In the words of the Scripture (Acts 1:8) which inspired World Youth Day Sydney in 2008 during which Bishop Joe inspired thousands through his words and his witness and ultimately his life - 'You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses'. We commit to being Living Witnesses!

MAY JOSEPH ANGELO GRECH REST IN PEACE
December 10 1948 – December 28 2010

Wednesday 5th January 2011

The Reception of the Body and Funeral Vigil for Bishop Joseph Grech took place at Sacred Heart Cathedral on Wednesday January 5 at 7pm.

More than a thousand people came together to pray for the eternal life of Bishop Joe in what was an emotional outpouring of grief and celebration of Bishop Joe's life and ministry.

The Cathedral organ played "fanfare for a Bishop" as the congregation gathered for the opening prayer. Bishop Joe's family took their seats at the front of the church as an emotional Monsignor Marriott welcomed everyone to the Cathedral for the vigil.

Death, whether expected or unexpected, brings grief and immense sadness, the vigil, as the name suggests, is a time for keeping watch. The funeral vigil for Bishop Joseph Angelo Grech was an opportunity for friends, colleagues and members of the parish and Sandhurst community to gather with Bishop Joe's family to keep watch with them in prayer.

Symbols of Bishop Joe's life were carried to the front of the Cathedral and placed tenderly beside the coffin as the congregation prayed for the life of their much loved Bishop. A bible, a photo of Bishop Joe at the recent pilgrimage to Rome and a Maltese flag were some of the symbols of this wonderful life.

As Monsignor Marriott invited all present to come forward to place a stone in the water he spoke of the power of water to refresh us and soften those things too hard to bear. "Come forward and place a stone in the water and ask God to soften the grief in our hearts and refresh our spirits," he said.

The funeral vigil and reception of the body of Bishop Joseph Angelo Grech, 6th Bishop of the Diocese of Sandhurst was an opportunity for a private expression of grief for those who had taken Bishop Joe into their hearts, a chance to touch his hands and to say one last goodbye.



Thursday 6th January 2011

He was a man of the people and on Thursday, January 6 the people came in their thousands to farewell their much loved Bishop of Sandhurst, Joseph Angelo Grech.

Thousands of mourners filled the Cathedral and overflowed into marquees in the Cathedral grounds, an estimated 4,500 people in all.

The sombre atmosphere of the congregation bore testimony to the deep feeling for this warm hearted Bishop. Disbelief and sorrow lingered, along with the grateful acknowledgement that Sandhurst was blessed to have had Bishop Joe at the helm for almost 10 years.

Remembered for his warmth, passion and the ability to make each person feel special, his legacy will be his enormous capacity for pastoral care and his love of young people.

The Apostolic Nuncio, His Excellency Most Reverend Giuseppe Lazzarotto joined Sandhurst Diocesan Administrator Monsignor Frank Marriott, Cardinal Pell, Archbishop of Melbourne Denis Hart and the Bishop of Darwin Eugene Hurley as the Principal Celebrants. 33 Archbishops and Bishops from across Australia and Australasia, and 200 hundred Priests from Sandhurst and beyond, concelebrated the funeral mass.

The Sacred Heart Cathedral Choir sang for their Bishop, the congregation united in their grief and desire to pay their respects to such a great and humble man.

Members of Bishop Joe's family travelled from Malta, including his brother Carmel and sister Rosette, together with Bishop Joe's Aunt Tess and Uncle Jim from Melbourne who were by his side when he died. A large Maltese contingent was also in attendance.

His Excellency, Mr Frank Tabone, High Commissioner for Malta, delivered the tribute to Bishop Joe. He said that although people were saddened they could also be comforted by the work Bishop Joe had done to help people during his life.

The Requiem Mass was celebrated 40 years to the day that Bishop Joe arrived in Australia to continue his studies for the Priesthood. His close friend and fellow Seminarian Archbishop Coleridge preached the homily recalling the many gifts and achievements of Bishop Joe, whom he described as a servant of the universal Church.

"At times people forget that all Bishops are involved on three levels – local, national and international. Most people see only the local. But some bishops are involved more than others at the national and international level – and Joe Grech was one of those," said Archbishop Coleridge.

At the conclusion of the Mass, and as the coffin of Bishop Joseph Angelo Grech DD, Bishop of Sandhurst was lowered into the crypt beneath the Sacred Heart Cathedral, people clapped in spontaneous appreciation of the man of the people.

Perhaps Archbishop Coleridge said it best with his words, "We gather in Sacred Heart Cathedral to say, "Good-bye, Joe". But we also say, "Thank you, Joe: grazzi hafna! Thanks for so many beautiful and surprising things through your beautiful and surprising life, cut short in a way neither you nor we expected."

Funeral



Youth of Sandhurst



Bishop Joe was a rare man, in that he actually had the ability to engage us, the youth of today, and in doing so, made us feel at home in a place where most of us feel intimidated, uncomfortable or bored.

When Bishop Joe talked about Jesus his excitement and passion was contagious. He used language that we could understand which made it simple and easy to relate back to our lives and who we are. He continually spoke about how important each of us is, reminding us that God loves us for who we are because he made us and as we know... "God doesn't make rubbish". Even though Bishop Joe could be talking to a crowd of over a hundred people, it could seem that he was speaking only to you. No matter who or how many people he was talking to, he was always genuine.

A memory that I am very fond of was our final diocesan rally at the end of the World Youth Day week in Sydney. The week was so powerful and overwhelming that by the time it came to this night I was exhausted, but also never wanted it to end. It was here, after our rally that I went to give Bishop Joe a hug and ended up crying into him. Of course he just embraced me and could not have cared any less for the tears that soaked his robes. This is the type of love that he had for all of us, regardless of anything it was just unconditional.

Prue Gurnick
Student, St Joseph's College,
Echuca

Last week I was asked to help write a funeral notice for Bishop Joe to put in the local paper on behalf of the Bendigo Life Teen group, a team of young people who worked closely with him to plan and run youth masses and catechesis once a month here in Bendigo. I found myself struggling to succinctly describe the impact that Bishop Joe has had on the young people of our Diocese of Sandhurst, let alone the young people of Australia and the world.

Bishop Joe firmly believed that young people are not the church of tomorrow, but the church of today and his warm, gentle and welcoming nature made the young people of our church feel wanted and loved by God. He always made time for the young people of the Diocese, be it leading scripture reflections, celebrating youth masses, answering the young people's wish for more regular catechesis following World Youth Day in Sydney in 2008, or working with the newly ordained Father Robert Galea to deliver the "Stronger" youth retreats, the most recent of which took place less than 4 weeks ago in Echuca.

However, Bishop Joe was not only interested in the young people of his diocese; he was also the Australian Catholic Bishops' Delegate for Youth and Young Adults as well as being Chair of the Australian Catholic Youth Council. In these roles he was a driving force behind the two national gatherings of those working in youth ministry in Australia, the first at Rosehill Racecourse in Sydney in November 2008 and the second at the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne in October of last year. I was fortunate enough to be at both of these and it was evident that Bishop Joe's passion for young people extended far beyond our diocese, although at the same time he had a soft spot for the people of Sandhurst, rarely missing an opportunity to remind those from other parts of Australia how proud he was of his own diocese and that at WYD in Sydney Sandhurst had the 4th highest number of pilgrims behind the Archdioceses of Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane!

On the 10th of December last year I was appointed the Youth Ministry Worker for the Sandhurst Diocese and it was to be my job to help Bishop Joe reach his goal of having 100 young people from the diocese attend WYD in Madrid in August this year. I know that my job to help Bishop Joe reach his goal has now been made much more difficult but I promise you Bishop Joe I will not lose sight of your goal, I will go for the lot!

Tim Lougoon Youth Ministry Coordinator



Bishop Joe with the youth of Sandhurst

Bishop Joe loved young people, he had an incredible relationship with the youth of Sandhurst and young people he encountered around the globe. He believed in their goodness, their energy and their ability to form strong relationships with God and church.

Bishop Joe embraced the technology that is such a large part of young people's lives; he had his own facebook page and regularly conversed online with young people across the Diocese.

When Bishop Joe spoke in schools and youth groups he spoke from the heart and with the contagious enthusiasm which inspired young people to a stronger faith and a greater sense of self worth. His most famous sermon, "God doesn't make rubbish" was well known by the youth of Sandhurst, the words inspiring them to be the best they can be.

World Youth Day Toronto 2002

World Youth Day was a favourite with Bishop Joe and he was determined for the young people of Sandhurst to have the opportunity to experience this global event. After becoming Bishop of Sandhurst in 2001 he began to make preparations for WYD 2002 in Toronto. What an incredible event this was as he accompanied 25 young people to Canada. Who could forget the image of Bishop Joe on a skateboard in Toronto?



World Youth Day Cologne 2005

Cologne played host to World Youth Day 2005 and with much excitement Bishop Joe set about inspiring young people to take part. It was a great disappointment to him when he fell ill with a blood disorder weeks before and was unable to attend. It was at the Cologne WYD that Sydney, Australia was announced as host of the next World Youth Day event to be held in 2008, 35 Sandhurst pilgrims were present to hear the much anticipated announcement.

World Youth Day Sydney 2008

In 2008 World Youth Day and the Journey of the Cross and Icon came to Australia and young pilgrims from all over the world descended on Australia to take part in this spiritual event. Much preparation went into ensuring that a large number of young people from Sandhurst could attend World Youth Day in Sydney and young pilgrims from all continents were welcomed into homes in Catholic Dioceses throughout Australia and New Zealand. Days in the Diocese took place in Sandhurst and across Australia as a prelude to World Youth Day. Pilgrims came together with local Catholic communities to worship and to immerse themselves in the culture of the region. The World Youth Day Cross and Icon travelled to schools and parishes around the continent before making its way to Sydney for the main event. Bishop Joe was the keynote speaker at the "Receive the Power Live Youth Festival" at Barangaroo; his words were dynamic and passionate enlivening the youth of the world. Bishop Joe was immensely proud of the fact that behind the Archdioceses of Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, Sandhurst had the highest number of pilgrims at WYD in Sydney. This was no mean feat but Bishop Joe was determined for it to happen; he wanted the youth of Sandhurst to be able to experience this extraordinary event and knew they would be forever changed by the encounter. Over 600 pilgrims from Sandhurst made the journey to Sydney for World Youth Day 2008.



Stronger

From the WYD experience in Australia Bishop Joe forged an even closer bond with young people and in his belief that youth were looking for more ways to encounter Jesus Christ and he set about making this happen. Father Rob Galea who was a young Maltese Seminarian at the time was a driving force behind the initiative which became known as the Stronger Rallies and Retreats. Youth from across the Sandhurst Diocese and other parts of Australia were invited to take part in the first retreat which was held in December 2008. Over the past three years the Stronger retreats have grown giving the youth of Sandhurst an opportunity to take part in praise, worship and adoration. The most recent Stronger Retreat took place in Echuca in December 2010, just weeks before Bishop Joe died. The experience will be cherished by those who took part.

World Youth Day Madrid 2011

World Youth Day will take place in Madrid this year and over 70 youth from the Sandhurst Diocese are expected to attend. It was Bishop Joe's wish that Sandhurst continue to be excited by World Youth Day and inspired to find ways to allow as many young people as possible to attend. Although he will not be there in person he will be there in Spirit as the youth of Sandhurst remember Bishop Joe who had such a great love for them all.

Bishop Joe, you will be sorely missed, you touched so many people's hearts, directly and indirectly. The new Bishop will have very big shoes to fill. May you rest in peace.

Anna

What a lovely tribute Mass tonight at Sacred Heart Wodonga for an inspirational man of God. A loss to the Diocese, a loss to the Catholic Church and a loss to us all. I don't think I'll ever think of him again without being in a baseball cap and boardies riding a skateboard...

Tracey

... People were drawn by your faith, enthusiasm, passion, vision, energy and humour. You will be missed greatly but always here in our hearts and our church...

Gillian

May God bless you my dear Bishop for you have touched my soul and many others who loved you so much. You were a saint that lived amongst us. Pray for us all. In Jesus with love.

Lily





Pastoral Wellbeing

One of the most used, motivating and known sayings of Mary MacKillop is “never see a need without doing something about it.” (1871) Welfare, wellbeing, taking care of and looking out for others is not a new concept, we’ve been doing it for years.

In previous generations welfare in a school was focused on the individual person or family responding to their needs, helping them out.

In recent years there has been a change in the language used to describe the ‘doing something about it’ Mary MacKillop spoke of. Welfare traditionally refers to action taken in response to a need; it is about intervening when something has gone wrong. The move in language to wellbeing has signaled a change in focus to what is known as an ecological approach.

Ecological approaches focus on the development of healthy or well settings, in our case schools, by the use of positive approaches and practices. The well setting in turn supports the health and wellness of the individual. This approach now informs federal government strategies in the health-promoting field.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) in 1946 defined health as ‘a complete state of physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity’. This definition has stood for well over half a century and signals an approach that is more than intervening when an individual is experiencing poor mental, social or emotional health. In the school context it becomes more than just preventing or reacting to unhappiness, bullying and violence it calls us to act to ensure we are encouraging all

learners to achieve their goals, to feel free, to love, to be energetic, to be full of life and care for others.

Diocesan schools are continually exploring initiatives to support Pastoral Wellbeing. School coordinators in the area of Pastoral Wellbeing support and lead the initiatives. The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria continues to offer scholarships to teaching staff to complete their Masters of Education (Wellbeing) at the University of Melbourne.

More than twenty schools are working with the Positive Behaviour Intervention and Support (PBIS) a preventative, research-based approach that helps educators teach school and classroom behaviour skills the same way they teach academic skills. Thirty-two Sandhurst schools were successful in accessing the National School Chaplaincy Program funding and have chaplains in their schools supporting Pastoral Wellbeing. The spiritual dimension of Pastoral Wellbeing is further enhanced through the practice of Christian Meditation.

More than 30 schools have taken part in Critical Incident Management training over the last 4 years to develop and enhance processes to assist schools towards healing and stability after distressing events. Our schools are continually working to address current and emerging issues such as digital citizenship and safety.

As we continue to develop our understanding and practice in this area we will further strengthen our provision of Pastoral Wellbeing. Our graduating students, their parents and school staff will continue to talk of Sandhurst schools not just as places of learning but also places of mental, social, emotional and spiritual wellness.

Called to Action

Flood relief

For the flood ravaged communities of Victoria and Queensland the devastation of the January 2011 floods have taken their toll. However, the people have emerged stronger and have joined together to rebuild their lives and the communities they call home.

Australians watched on helplessly as images of the Queensland and Victorian floods bombarded our television screens, we prayed for the lives lost and the towns devastated by the force of the flood waters. As families were left homeless, businesses destroyed and lives shattered, the human spirit prevailed restoring hope to those who had lost so much.

The Victorian town of Rochester experienced the worst floods on record in January this year as the banks of the Campaspe River rose to record heights. The tight knit community watched on helplessly as the flood waters inundated the township, engulfing over eighty percent of the town despite the best efforts of the community.

Along with the homes and businesses devastated by the floods in Rochester was St Joseph's Primary school. The entire school building was flooded along with the school hall which was built in the 1890's. The Church and Presbytery survived the deluge, but only marginally as the flood waters lapped at the top step of the historic buildings.

With an estimated 1200 properties affected in Victoria and many more in Queensland the nation rallied to show their support and the clean up efforts began. People of all ages, friends, neighbours and complete strangers arrived with brooms, shovels and an assortment of cleaning products with one goal in mind, to lend a helping hand.

From the Sandhurst community, support for St Joseph's staff and families was swift and heartfelt, a coordinated clean up effort took place as soon as the water began to subside and the hard work began. From right across the Diocese people came to help, some travelled from as far away as Wodonga to offer support to the hard hit community.

Families, staff, students and Catholic Education Office staff joined businesses and the local community in the massive clean up effort. Principal Peter Teggelove said the community was buoyed by the generous support of those who came to help.

"We had fifty people from across the Diocese turn up to help after the water subsided; colleagues from across Sandhurst came to lend a helping hand along with the Knights of the Southern Cross and emergency services."

"A mini bus full of workers from Bunnings Hardware in Bendigo travelled up to help out and Wards Earth Moving, a local family business, used their machinery to clear mud and debris - it was extraordinary," said Peter.

The Sandhurst communities of Kerang, Echuca, Shepparton, Pyramid Hill and Cohuna have also endured great hardship from the Victorian floods, some homes and properties remain under water months after the January flood waters peaked. In total, four major rivers were in full flood, with 43 towns, 3,500 people and 1,200 properties affected across Victoria. For those Victorians who didn't have insurance, the struggle to get back on their feet is insurmountable.

For St Joseph's the beginning of the school year was challenging with years four, five and six being taught in make shift classrooms at the Parish Hall, while the younger classes were bussed to Sacred Heart Elmore each day as they awaited the refurbishment of their school facilities. The school is now repaired and students are back in their refurbished rooms.

Through it all we have heard stories of great tragedy, of extreme hardship and of human bravery; we have experienced the amazing strength of spirit shown by the flood affected communities of Australia and the kinship and support shown by those who extended the hand of friendship to those who were suffering. The recovery effort will continue for some time and the families and businesses that were affected will need continued support long into the future. But despite it all, amongst the tragedy and loss, the Australian spirit continues to shine, brighter than ever.



Snapshot

St Joseph's Echuca celebrates 125 years

On the weekend of April 1st-3rd St Joseph's School, Echuca celebrated its 125th Anniversary, creating an opportunity for the hundreds of men and women who have been educated at St Joseph's to return, to re-connect and to celebrate this significant milestone. The Anniversary honoured 125 years of education at St Joseph's and recognised the extraordinary contribution of the Brigidine Sisters to education in the Echuca region.



The first four Brigidine Sisters to come to Victoria arrived in Echuca on Feb 27th 1886 from Tullow in Ireland. On March 8th two Sisters joined Mr Larkins who was already conducting classes at St Mary's Primary School and taught the girls while Mr Larkins continued to teach the boys until all were placed in the care of the Sisters.

The Sisters advertised in the local Riverine Herald for parlour boarders and day pupils who would be offered English, use of Globes, Astronomy, History, Arithmetic, Foreign Languages, vocal and instrumental music, painting and drawing and plain and fancy needlework at the Convent School. The students were guaranteed a first class education from the very beginning and students of other faiths were welcomed into the school.

On March 22nd 1886 the first 8 pupils arrived and were taught in the Convent parlour whilst awaiting the transformation of the stable which later became the first classrooms. What a vastly different school from the present College with 700 students and a wealth of buildings and resources never imagined by those first teachers and students.

Sandhurst goes green on 17!

When staff and students from Catholic schools in the Sandhurst Diocese dressed in green on Thursday March 17, it wasn't for St Patrick's Day, but as a fundraiser for those families across the diocese affected by the recent Victorian floods.



By donating a gold coin and dressing in green on March 17, school communities from right across the diocese united to show their support for other families in Sandhurst school communities who have endured the devastating floods.

Director of Catholic Education Ms Phil Billington said the initiative was a novel way for Sandhurst school communities to support other families in need. "Once the tragedy of the floods leaves the front pages and the screens of the media it is easy to forget the hardship being endured by families whose homes have been inundated and farmers who have lost their livelihoods – these families are part of our community and we will continue to support them," said Ms Billington.

Raised funds provided practical support by contributing to school fees, uniforms and other costs as well as showing affected families that they have the support of the entire Diocesan community.

of Sandhurst

Prince William at home in Kerang

As the flood waters surrounded Kerang in January this year the people rallied together to save their town. The mighty effort which saved the township but left Kerang completely isolated for days took its toll on the strength and spirit of this remarkable community.

When Prince William announced a visit to the region in his whirlwind Australian trip, the people of Kerang were able to put the hardship of the past months aside to make sure the royal visitor would receive a welcome fit for a Prince!

Staff and students from St Joseph's Primary School lined up outside the Memorial Hall on March 21 for their encounter with Prince William, who arrived in Kerang only weeks before his wedding to Kate Middleton in order to visit flood affected regions of Australia. Principal of St Joseph's, Ms Denise Franz said the children were excited by the visit. "Having Prince William visit Kerang made the children's day, the students who had been flood affected were in the front row and Prince William shook their hands, it meant so much!"

Many families and staff members of St Joseph's were affected by the one-in-200-year flood which inundated Kerang and other Victorian regions. A permanent levy put in place after the devastating floods of 1956 was barely enough to hold back the force of the water. "Many students helped with sandbagging in an effort to keep the flood waters at bay, they saw first hand the force and destruction of the floods, that's why the Prince's visit was such a fantastic event for them."

Prince William arrived in Kerang by helicopter before flying himself to Murrabit to spend time with families who had been affected by the floods. Prince William played games with the children including kicking an AFL football with them, several students from St Joseph's participated in the community event, a day they will remember for a lifetime.

The Prince took the time to speak to locals, play with the children and to show Kerang and district that their efforts in fighting the floods had not gone unnoticed. Prince William's visit to the Kerang area has done much for the morale of its people and the recovery effort which will continue for some time. One thing is certain though; His Royal Highness Prince William will always find a warm welcome in Kerang should he choose to visit the region on his next trip down under!



Environmental Educators Awards

The Victorian Association for Environmental Education (VAEE) has recognised the extraordinary commitment of two Sandhurst educators at their annual awards ceremony held in Melbourne last month.

Catholic Education Sandhurst, Education Officer, Mr Paul Dullard was named joint winner of the Victorian Association for Environmental Education's (VAEE) 2010 Educator of the Year. The prestigious award recognises individuals who have made an exemplary contribution to the field of environmental and sustainability education within Victoria. An acknowledgment was also made of Paul's work to develop new curriculum initiatives in Sandhurst, to create professional networks for Victorian Catholic schools, which in 2010 was able to coordinate and develop better sustainability initiatives throughout Victoria and to make links with Catholic Education Offices in other dioceses across Australia.

Also commended for her contribution to leading practice in environmental education in 2010 was Ms Sharon Darling, a teacher from St Augustine's College, Kyabram. Sharon was acknowledged for her consistent and strong application of the ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic framework in a P-12 rural school. The award recognised Sharon's dedication to making St Augustine's a leading school in resource management in the Sandhurst Diocese.



Poverty and the disadvantaged

Welcome begins and disadvantage readily subsides when we look into the faces and learn the names of those who are different from us.

Why is it that in a modern world where we are more aware of social justice, global issues and the environment than ever before, that the gap between those who have a lot and those who have little or nothing is growing wider every day? Despite a growing level of public awareness there is still a major gap in the understanding and support given to those who live with poverty and disadvantage throughout the world, throughout Australia and throughout Sandhurst.

The inescapable images of desperate poverty from other countries have become very much a part of the daily media menu. We know that there are billions of people in the world who suffer hunger and thirst every day of their lives, who live with disadvantage every second of every minute of every hour of every day. Here in Australia, we are becoming more attuned to the faces of Australian poverty and disadvantage. Many of us can afford to give financial support to organisations which offer services to those who live in poverty and social isolation. This is vitally important, but as Jesus demonstrated, there are many ways to live in solidarity with those who are vulnerable – sharing meals, making friends, looking into the faces and learning the names of those who are different, challenging attitudes and structures that breed and perpetuate poverty.

When an individual or a group of people are described as 'poor', we might talk about their appearance, their

physical and mental health, what they wear, where they live and perhaps their emotional and social skills. This is one way to 'see' the face of poverty, but perhaps not a very helpful one, because it stereotypes people and fails to recognise that much poverty and hardship in Australia is hidden from view.

In the 1996 Social Justice Sunday Statement, A New Beginning, the experience of poverty was defined in the following ways. To be poor means -

- To have inadequate access to resources and services
- To be unable to do certain tasks that are essential for fulfilling one's human potential and carrying out one's social responsibilities
- To be shunned, denigrated, blamed, patronised and ostracised by others
- To have little opportunity to participate in decisions affecting one's life
- To be, and to feel powerless, excluded and marginalised, effectively, to live 'in exile' in one's own society. This is at least as damaging to human dignity as the actual inability to purchase certain goods and services

(Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (1996) A New Beginning: Eradicating Poverty in our World, Dove, Victoria, p.14)

Many people understand poverty in absolute 'concrete' terms – the utter deprivation seen in many parts of Africa, in war-torn countries and in many Indigenous communities in Australia. Others see poverty in relative terms: as the disadvantaged conditions some people have to live in compared with those who are far better off. There is also a prevailing school of thought that poverty does not really exist in Australia because, unlike other countries, we have a social security system that provides an income safety net. I would argue that we do not need to leave our suburban streets or country roads to find many in need, to find many poor and disadvantaged.



Research undertaken by Catholic Social Services Australia and Jesuit Social Services has confirmed that there are a number of communities across Australia where social disadvantage has become entrenched. My guess is that we are all well aware of these communities and areas within our own towns and cities. In these areas, there is far less prospect of growing up with the reasonable expectation of a decent education, of finding a job or of access to proper health care. In environments like these, it is more likely that disadvantage will be passed from one generation to the next. The research found that 1.7 per cent of postcodes and communities across Australia accounted for more than seven times their share of the major factors that caused intergenerational poverty. A few of these factors are low income, limited education and employment and childhood deprivation. Further, the research shows that education – particularly early childhood education – is a vital part of efforts to reduce this entrenched disadvantage.

Poverty means so much more than not being able to afford what is needed. In essence, poverty is an assault on the very relationship between humans – the interconnectedness – that is the heart of Jesus' teaching. It is for this reason that the Church has worked over so many years to improve health, education and material welfare of families and entire communities.

'One Body, One Spirit in Christ – Called to Action', the theme for Catholic Education Sandhurst in 2011 inspires us to reduce the impact of poverty and disadvantage in our communities and to respond to our baptismal call - the call to action. 'We are all one people, each created in the image and likeness of God. The justice we render one person is the justice we render to every human being – and to Christ himself.' Catholic Education Sandhurst continues to respond to the call, with a long and proud history of practical social justice founded on Catholic social teaching.

As individual citizens, as families, parishes, communities and organisations we can take the initiative to reach out, to look into the faces and learn the names of those who are different from us. For in welcoming the poor, the outcast and the stranger in need, we welcome the living Christ, our God and our Creator into our hearts and our lives. Jesus is the good news to the poor. As his followers, we are called to be the same.

Catholic Education Sandhurst - commitment to poverty and the disadvantaged

- *Sandhurst Flood Appeal*
- *Flexible Learning Settings (DOXA - Bendigo, McAuley Champagnat Program – Notre Dame College Shepparton, Borinya Community Partnership - Wangaratta)*
- *Project Compassion*
- *Justice Matters & Social Justice Leadership Camp*
- *Street Retreats*
- *Alternative Schoolies*
- *The FIRE Carrier Project*
- *'Be More' Sleep outs*
- *Pakistan Floods*
- *Refugees and Asylum Seekers*
- *Outreach Activities to Aboriginal Communities*
- *'Adopt a School' type programs in many Sandhurst secondary schools*
- *'Sandhurst Switches Off'*
- *Justice LEAP*
- *Reconciliation Week*
- *Autism Spectrum Disorder Project*
- *Harrierville Family Weekends*
- *Early Career Teacher – Social Justice Immersion Experience to Cebu in the Philippines*
- *Fund raising and intentional social justice activities within our schools*

Feathertop Chalet

the jewel in the crown

If there is a jewel in the crown of the Sandhurst Diocese, then picturesque Feathertop Chalet in Harrietville must surely be it.

A branch of the mighty Ovens River meanders through the chalet's grounds which are situated at the foot of Mount Feathertop. From every aspect the views and mountain surrounding provide a superb backdrop to exceptional facilities which can be enjoyed all year round, but Harrietville is more than just a magnificent destination, it is a place to gather, for spiritual retreats, for conferences and to recharge the batteries. Feathertop Chalet meets the mission of the Diocese in a way that is both meaningful and extraordinary.

When Feathertop Chalet was purchased by the Sandhurst Diocese in 1990 it was with a specific purpose in mind. The purchase was driven by a need to provide a suitable venue for school camps, retreats and as a base for the professional, personal and faith development of teachers and parish groups; in essence, Feathertop Chalet is a place dedicated to enhancing the mission of the Church.

Bishop Noel Daly who was the fifth Bishop of Sandhurst strongly supported the initiative, together with then Director of Catholic Education Adrian Sexton. After much consultation with Parish and Catholic Education communities the Chalet was purchased and the vision for Feathertop Chalet was established.

An important aspect of the vision for Feathertop from the beginning was to provide low or cost free holidays for families in need and particular for children with a disability, their parents and siblings. Bishop Daly told parishioners at a Diocesan Meeting held at Harrietville in 1990 that Feathertop Chalet should be seen like parishes, churches and schools; as an agent of the mission and evangelizing role within the Catholic Community.

"I make this promise to you: Feathertop will play a pivotal role in our care for families in need, in crisis and for those children with disabilities. This will be a key plank in the Mission Statement of Feathertop," said Bishop Daly.

In addition to the chalet's original mission it continues to operate as a tourist facility for the general public including family holidays and as a home base for skiers. With extensive grounds and excellent facilities the venue appeals to a wide range of people and is a venue for all seasons.

Feathertop Chalet can accommodate large school groups and includes a 210 seat conference centre with state of the art facilities. Feathertop also features a 12.5m heated pool, tennis and squash courts, sauna, recreational hall and restaurant all set on picturesque grounds. Feathertop Chalet also welcomes groups back each year to experience the snowfields of Mt Hotham. The Chalet offers on-site ski hire, which includes skis, snow boards, clothing and accessories.

Central to the success of Feathertop as a Diocesan venue is the Bourke family who manage the facility. Kevin and Trish Bourke have been overseeing the running of Feathertop Chalet for the past three years. "Our vision is to continue to provide excellent value in service, accommodation, facilities and meals, while maintaining the philosophy of Sandhurst Diocese," said Kevin.

Over the past 20 years Feathertop has continued to honour the vision of Bishop Noel Daly and Adrian Sexton, who is the current Chairperson of the Feathertop Board of Management. This facility is unique, not only because of the magnificent setting but because of the intention of Feathertop to provide a spiritual place for the people of Sandhurst. Feathertop Chalet is truly a jewel in the crown of the Sandhurst Diocese.



Harrieville Family Weekends

The 20th anniversary of the Harrieville Family Weekends was celebrated at Feathertop Chalet in October last year. The Family Weekends were established soon after the chalet was purchased in 1990 to provide support and friendship for families who have a child with a disability. Volunteers from the Sandhurst community facilitate the weekends coordinated by members of the Catholic Education Office allowing the parents to have time together to talk, attend workshops and enjoy each other's company. The children spend the day with the volunteers enjoying Feathertop's many activities whilst parents enjoy a well earned respite. For the many families who have taken part in the program over the years the Harrieville family weekends have been invaluable and the friendships made are priceless.



School Camps

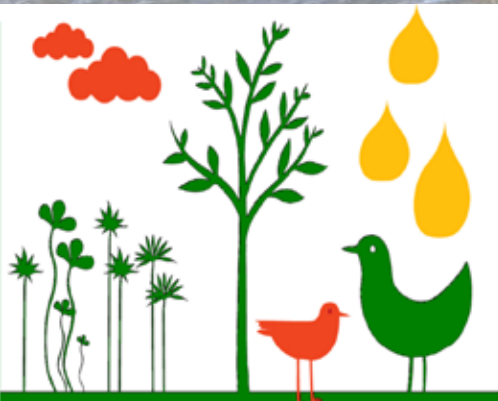
With room to accommodate up to 200 students, Feathertop Chalet has been providing a memorable camping experience for schools for over two decades.

Facilities include indoor heated swimming pool, sports hall, squash and tennis courts as well as a 9 hole mini golf course. Off-site recreational activities include some sensational bush walks, mountain biking and of course, snow skiing throughout the winter months. The Chalet offers extensive on-site ski hire, which includes skis, snow boards and all clothing and accessories. School camps can be centred around a particular theme or focus, so the learning continues outside of the classroom in the beautiful surrounds of the Chalet grounds.

Retreats and Spiritual Formation

Feathertop Chalet provides a tranquil setting for spiritual retreats and gatherings. Since Feathertop Chalet was purchased by the Sandhurst Diocese in 1990 it has been a destination for professional, personal and faith development of teachers, parish groups and for religious conferences and retreats. Over the years Feathertop has been the venue for various gatherings including Faith and Light weekends for people with disabilities and their families and friends, as well as religious forums and spiritual formation. The chalet's proximity to some of the region's most beautiful scenery is the perfect setting for personal reflection as well as group activities.

* Accreditation Programs such as Ministry in Catholic Education and Staff Spirituality Sabbaticals are offered annually.



**GATHERING ON THE MOUNT
SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE**

Gathering on the Mount - Sustainability Conferences

Feathertop Chalet hosts Gathering on the Mount, the Sandhurst Sustainability Education Conference every second year. This conference is well attended by delegates from all dioceses of Victoria and is an opportunity for schools to present their story, hear from keynote speakers and to network with like minded educators. It is a chance for Feathertop chalet to demonstrate some of the resource management initiatives and strategies they have implemented as well as receiving feedback from the sustainability educators.

Feathertop Chalet in partnership with Catholic Education Sandhurst is committed to providing educational, informative and applied programs for school groups that attend the facility. These programs have been enhanced due to better resources, upgraded programs and innovative facilitation which enables school groups to embrace the unique outdoors of Feathertop as well as learn more about the alpine environment and how it can be cared for.

Feathertop Chalet Harrieville
Great Alpine Road, Harrieville 3741
Ph: 03 5759 2688 Fax: 03 5759 2690 Mob: 0438 592 688
Email: reservations.feathertop@westnet.com.au
Website: www.feathertopchalet.com.au
Management: Mr Kevin Bourke and Mrs Trish Bourke





Flexible Learning in flexible spaces

The Building Education Revolution has enabled new learning spaces to optimise new approaches to learning in Sandhurst schools.

An Authentic Year 9 Learning Community

In 2010 St Mary of the Angels' College in Nathalia completed the construction of a new building with the potential to enable open plan learning for year 9. The building has a large open area which accommodates two classes, two more class-sized work areas with operable walls and a staff team office.

The building was originally designed using open learning principles as modelled in a number of other schools. At present the open learning space is used infrequently with most classes taught in the three separate spaces, but the recent development of an integrated curriculum approach will soon see the special features of this building being used more effectively.

John Nihill, year 9 coordinator, commented that students are able to move into the dedicated year 9 space before school and the teacher team is there to support them. This has created a special atmosphere for the cohort and John estimates that there have been only a third of the behavioural issues he previously dealt with as a year 9 coordinator. He attributes this to the strong relationships developed between staff and students in the combined learning and social environment.

As further testament to strong relationships which have been developed, the current year 10 students (who used the space in 2010) regularly drop in to the year 9 area for a chat with the staff.

While student engagement, improved staff/student relationships and a feeling of working together have been established in the open learning area, the staff aim to develop further an integrated curriculum with self directed learning as a feature. They are conscious of using the full potential of this unique space to enhance student learning and to build on the foundations already established by the community.

A Saint's Vision Inspires Learning

A visitor walking into St. Joseph's School, Numurkah is quickly drawn to an identity statement on the wall of the entrance of the school that reads, "St. Joseph's Numurkah is passionate about education inspired by the vision and ideals of Mary MacKillop". Drawn further into this school, a visitor is compelled to ask the question, "What would Mary MacKillop see of her vision for Catholic Education within the walls of St. Joseph's?" The school has used their Building Education Revolution money to bring to life Mary MacKillop's vision for the education of the whole child through the construction of flexible learning spaces which provide opportunities for personalized, independent learning and focused group teaching. Paul Arnel, the Principal of St. Joseph's, explains that the school's 250 students are grouped in three multi-aged homerooms – Junior, Middle and Senior.

The emphasis on the multi age in the middle and senior school and the recent development of more flexible spaces meet the needs of children growing up in a technologically rich, open and questioning environment. Yet if Mary MacKillop visited tomorrow, she would still see a place where God is named and recognized in the daily business of school life.



The Reggio Emilia Influence

St Mel's kindergarten and school are located on one campus in South Shepparton. Both establishments had been at the same site, but with foresight in 2002, the kindergarten was relocated and developed in three disused rooms at the school. This was done with the thought that transition should be a natural progression from kindergarten to school.

The school was witnessing the wonderful things happening at kinder inspired by Reggio Emilia principles and operated by teacher Mandy Christoe, who is now teaching at St Mel's School.

In 2009 some of the staff attended a Reggio Emilia conference in Adelaide which they believe further added support to what they were trying to do. Curriculum Coordinator Lorraine Spies said that the staff present were impressed by seeing other schools during the conference and saw what was possible.

A very important part of education in 'Reggio Emilia' inspired settings is the environment. It needs to be welcoming and inviting. The spaces are designed to welcome all the community and communicate that all are valued.

The future is looking very promising at St Mel's! Dom Poppa, principal, believes that this approach ensures 'happy,

engaged and productive' individuals. The staff believe that they are on a journey which they acknowledge takes time, encouragement and ongoing support.

It truly looks like they are well on their way!

Principles of Reggio Emilia

- Emergent Curriculum
- Project Work
- Representational Development
- Collaboration
- Teachers as Researchers
- Documentation
- Environment



Contact Details:

Library Learning Centre
120 Hargreaves Street (PO Box 477)
BENDIGO CENTRAL VIC 3552
Ph: 03 5442 6108
Fax: 03 5442 9463
Email: library@ceosand.catholic.edu.au

Library Learning Centre

There are tones reminiscent of "Shadow of the Wind" by Carlos Ruiz Zafón about the Library Learning Centre... it is a secret, quiet place of hidden treasure only discovered by a few. Once discovered there are many journeys and quests of heart, soul and mind.

In literary terms it has the golden address of 120 Hargreaves Street, but one has to gaze into the distance to find it is tucked away between Doxa and the Chancery. It is accessed by either a dimly lit internal stairway with a rest for the weary along the way, or, by an autumn leaf clad external flight of stairs soaring to the heavens. In real terms it is hard to find and many are unaware of its existence. The inscription above the doorway to the library in Thebes states: "The medicine chest of the soul." The Library Learning Centre is exactly that.

The collection encompasses spirituality, celebration of life and faith, theology, meditation, parenting, prayer, grief and loss, self-awareness, emotional intelligence, liturgy and scripture.

Resources include; books, journals, music, CDs and DVDs and even some cassettes and videos reminiscent from the past. There is a growing Picture Book collection of wisdom and soul food stories for children, many of these have a deep message for adult readers as well. There is the most beautiful depth of human experience enveloped in this collection, a testament to those who have scoured the bookshops and internet for just the right mix to feed the soul.

The Learning Centre caters for many varied groups; Tertiary Students who are enrolled in many religious and faith development courses throughout Australia. Teachers, particularly providing resources to support the implementation of the

"Source of Life" Religious Education Curriculum encompassing recommended resources for teachers and for students. There is a growing range of picture books and "Learning and Teaching" resources to support curriculum needs. Parish workers have access to a range of support material to assist with Sacramental Preparation, Children's Liturgy, Prayer Groups and Liturgy.

The collection has been enriched by bequests from Monsignor Duffus and Bishop Joseph Grech. To browse through their private libraries is an honour and a privilege deeply respected by those who hold them in such high esteem.

It is hoped to further involve primary age students at the Library Learning Centre in the near future through participation in National Simultaneous Story time on May 25th. Classes from St Kilian's Primary school will be involved in a reading of "Feathers for Phoebe" by Rod Clements. This will be used this as a test run for developing a package for Schools and Playgroups in the area.

The collection of materials to support quality learning and teaching is growing and with it resources for students with special needs and abilities. The Library Learning Centre

plans to further develop the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collection for teachers and students seeking truth, knowledge, reconciliation and peace. A strong online presence is being developed to promote the wonderful resources available to all in the Sandhurst Diocese.

The Library Learning Centre is open from 8.30am – 5.00pm Monday to Friday during school terms and on the second week of school holidays at select times. The catalogue can be searched electronically and items reserved and posted out to all members in the Sandhurst diocese. Membership is free and open to all.

"The most beautiful thing in the world is, Precisely, the conjunction of learning and inspiration. Oh, the passion for research and the joy of discovery!"

- Wanda Landowska



Bishop Joseph Grech



CED Staff Days 2010



Journey of the Cross and Icon 2008



Bishop Joe at the Stronger Retreat
December 2010



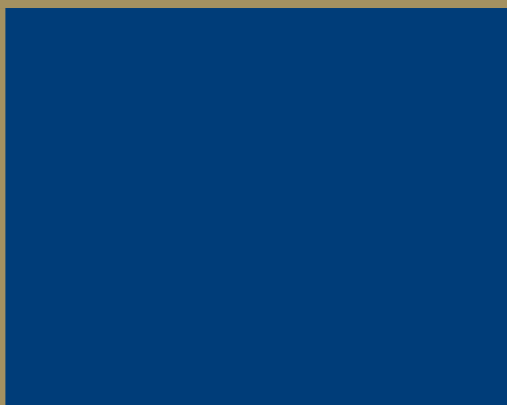
DEXA Opening 2010



Leadership Gathering
2010



Some of the tributes from the Catholic
Education Office Staff Days
January 2011



This Spirit of Sandhurst magazine captures the spirit of Catholic Education in the Sandhurst Diocese - its uniqueness, vibrancy, innovation and commitment to enhancing the lives of its students, families and teachers.