

# *Spirit* of Sandhurst



Issue 6  
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Catholic Education Sandhurst

## Contents:

- 3 Reflections from the Director
- 4 Opening Ceremony - 2012 Conference
- 6 Workshops & Seminars
- 8 Conference Art Show
- 9 Closing Ceremony
- 10 Snapshot of Sandhurst
- 12 Cardinal Rodriguez - a Man of Grace
- 14 Bishop Joe Youth Scholarship
- 16 Launch of Charter of Sandhurst School Improvement (CoSSI),  
Strategic Directions 2012 - 2015 and  
Catholic Education Sandhurst Council for  
the Arts (CESCA)
- 18 Boston Tour - an immersion in theological  
study

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# Reflections from the Director



As I put pen to paper we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the convocation of the Second Vatican Council on October 11 – a momentous event in the life of our Church and of the world which called us to an 'aggiornamento' – a 'spring clean' of our approach to the mission of God's love in the world. In May we gathered as a Catholic Education Sandhurst community and we focused on our story. In this edition of Spirit of Sandhurst we capture that event – a celebration of identity as we gathered to 'rekindle' our spirits and understanding of God's call in our lives.

The story of Sandhurst – the story of Dr Henry Backhaus, the bishops, the priests, the religious, the lay women and men who began some of our schools and the Goulburn Strike (July 1962) which was my lived personal story, are part of us all. The Goulburn Strike is a great story because of the vision, commitment courage and imagination of all the parents then. Within the current political context we are once again being challenged to examine who and what we stand for – to hold on to what is the heart of Catholic education. This is not a challenge out there for someone else but a challenge for each of us – it is personal. What do I stand for? For whom do I stand? What do I value? What do I have to offer and to whom?

The root of the word of education is educaré – to bring forth the hidden wholeness. The Conference was an opportunity for each of us to discover further our own hidden wholeness, so that in words of St Paul 'our hidden selves may grow strong'. This can only happen in community – a vibrant faith-filled and joyous community which we treasure in Sandhurst. We are proud to be Sandhurst but we are not complacent – as we continue to re-imagine the mission, as we find the same passion and courage of the parents of the Goulburn Strike, the young sisters who set off on a long voyage to an unknown land, Mary Mackillop who faced many trials within and beyond the Church may we continue the vision of Rev Dr Henry Backhaus whom we celebrated in September working in solidarity with the other Victorian dioceses in particular and Catholic education in Australia as we face our biggest challenges in 50 years!

Let us continue to commit to an imaginative education for our students which is liberating and life-giving! Let us strive to be our best not for glory or kudos or to be on top of a league table but to be our best for the students, for the families, for each other, for our communities as we rekindle the spirit of the Second Vatican Council which called us to an 'aggiornamento' – a renewed spirit which energises our approach to the mission of God's love in the world. Let us do so with imagination and a new spirit - One in Christ Jesus!

Blessings

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

**Ms Phil Billington**  
Director  
Catholic Education Sandhurst

# Opening Ceremony

## Catholic Education Sandhurst Conference 2012

The early morning grey skies and the forecast of rain had anxious organisers gazing skyward as the final preparations got underway for the second Catholic Education Sandhurst Conference.

The coffee and tea stations were well stocked in anticipation of the arrival of over two thousand participants including Sandhurst teachers and staff members, school boards, parents, priests, religious orders & parish teams. Caterers delivered food in preparation for the huge task of providing morning tea and lunch for such a large group, while the secretariat buzzed as last minute details were finalised.

Empty seats in the Marian Centre gymnasium soon became full to overflowing as the opening ceremony got underway. The primary school children's choirs took centre stage and the crowd became quiet as they filled the space with their beautiful voices.

Uncle Brien Nelson welcomed the gatherers to Jaara country, the home of his ancestral people as the Red Ochre Dancers performed the cleansing dance, their distinctive movements depicting their connection to the land and the ancient culture of Australia's first people.

The opening ceremony took participants on a journey of Catholic Education from the first Priest on the Victorian Goldfields, Dr Henry Backhaus, to the remarkable story of the Goulburn Strike of 1962 which documented the courage and solidarity of parents, who together, transformed the funding arrangements of Catholic Education in Australia forever.

Secondary drama students from across the diocese brought each tale to life with their depiction of life on the goldfields, the contribution of the Religious Orders and a dramatic re-creation of the Goulburn Strike, a key element of the conference theme. The conference also marked the 50 year anniversary of the beginning of the Second Vatican Council, highlighting the significant impact this important event has had on the Catholic Church throughout the world.

The Arts played a large part in the opening ceremony which was beautifully co-ordinated by a committee assembled for the purpose; their task was to create a spectacular opening event and a spectacular event they produced! A highlight of the ceremony was the senior choir on centre stage singing the haunting and traditional version of Amazing Grace as the junior choir, positioned at the back of the packed auditorium, joined in with an upbeat version, singing together in rounds. The effect was an incredible surround sound choral experience, the blend of the two versions creating a moving conclusion to the ceremony.

The opening ceremony set the tone for the entire conference, the vision of Director of Catholic Education Sandhurst, Ms Phil Billington and the Opening Ceremony committee was the most talked about event of the conference, the celebration of Sandhurst's history, the talent of the students and teachers who prepared them for the ceremony and the pride in the diocese was palpable. Bishop Tomlinson officially opened and blessed the Conference at the end of the Arts spectacular.

As Catholic education staff left the opening venue to convene for morning tea, the conversation was alight with talk about the opening ceremony and the anticipation of what was to follow. Congratulations to the Opening Ceremony Planning Group who exceeded all expectations and enabled participants to look forward to the exceptional program ahead with confidence and expectation!

The theme, 'Re-Imagining the Future - A Mission of Faith', captured the spirit of two day conference and provided the topic for keynote speaker, Fr Frank Brennan who enlightened and challenged those involved in Catholic Education to be attentive to The Arts, the culture of the world, and open to ecumenical and inter faith dialogue and mutual learning. He also urged participants to celebrate liturgy which he says, "animates us for life and mission."

*The Diocesan Conference Planning Committee was established more than 12 months prior to commence the monumental task of planning and preparing for a conference of this scale. Co-convenors Brenda Keenan and Jim Rolfe from the Catholic Education Office were charged with the responsibility of overseeing and co-ordinating all aspects of the conference. In addition to the planning committee a school liaison person was appointed to help coordinate registration, accommodation and to disseminate information to their local school communities in the lead up to the conference.*

### **Conference Planning Committee:**

**Ms Alannah Darmody** Catholic College Bendigo

**Ms Wendy Darveniza** St Mel's Shepparton

**Mr Noel Dillon** St Joseph's Quarry Hill

**Mr Simon Duffy** St Augustine's Wodonga

**Ms Lynda Harcoan** Parent Representative - St Mel's Shepparton

**Ms Jo Iwanuch** CEO Wangaratta

**Ms Brenda Keenan** CEO Bendigo

**Ms Lara Knight** CEO Bendigo

**Ms Barbara Lomas** Catholic College Bendigo

**Mr Glenn McMahon** CEO Wangaratta

**Fr Jake Mudge** Wodonga Parish

**Mr Lew Nagle** Sacred Heart College Yarrawonga

**Mr Bernard Neal** Galen Catholic College Wangaratta

**Mr Justin Rofe** Parent Representative - St Mel's Shepparton

**Mr Jim Rolfe** CEO Bendigo

**Ms Judy Stewart** St Mary's Echuca

**Ms Margaret White** Notre Dame College Shepparton



Re-imagining  
the  
MISSION

# 2012

A Pilgrimage of Faith

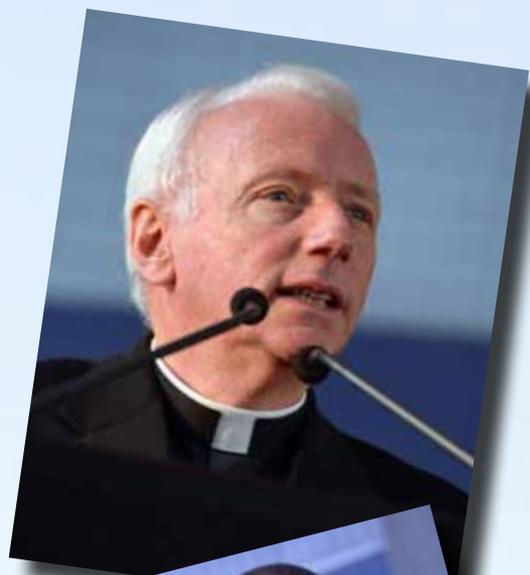
## Conference Theme

The conference theme was inspired by the 50th anniversary of Second Vatican Council which was momentous in the life of the Catholic Church, and the Goulburn Strike, which changed the face of funding for Catholic schools in Australia. The anniversary of these two significant events was an opportune time to give thanks and celebrate those who have gone before, those who continue to support the ministry of Catholic Education and those who will shape the future of Catholic Education across the diocese, the state and the nation.

## Conference Eucharist

The conference Eucharist was celebrated at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Bendigo by Bishop Tomlinson and diocesan clergy. The Cathedral overflowed as diocesan priests processed into the Cathedral followed by Sandhurst Principals who received an official blessing from Bishop Tomlinson.

Following the Eucharist presentations were made to the Religious Orders in recognition of service given to Catholic Schools throughout the history of Catholic Education in the Sandhurst Diocese. Individual water colour paintings by Mr Terry Jarvis depicting Sacred Heart Cathedral were presented to a representative from each of the Religious Orders.



# Workshops & Seminars

The keynote speakers I attended were relevant and inspiring, they really did unsettle me and allow me to re-imagine from a new perspective. The conference was an opportunity for me, personally, to reflect on, renew and reinvigorate my own calling to the ministry of teaching and leadership in a Catholic context.

*Sue Carroll - Curriculum Leader  
St Augustine's College, Kyabram*

Our re-imagining and our dreaming as we walk together in faith will bring blessings for us but most importantly for the students and families whom we serve.

*Ms Phil Billington - Director  
Catholic Education Sandhurst*

I have been a teacher for nearly thirty years in the catholic system and I was extremely impressed with the quality of presenters at the conference. Each workshop and/or lecture I attended was of interest to me and I came away with a positive outlook. Educationally this was great.

*Paul Richardson - teacher  
St Augustine's College, Kyabram*

I would just like to thank you firstly for the opportunity to attend and then the conference itself. As a parent I was very happy with the content and affirmed the move towards recognizing parents as co-workers in a child's education. I have come away with lots of ideas to try out and will definitely facilitate some forums with the intention of contextualising our community and having the uncomfortable conversations we need to have. Thank you to Phil Billington and Catholic Education Sandhurst for an extremely professional conference.

*Estelle Star - School Board Chair  
St Michael's Primary School, Tallangatta*

I do believe that I am re-imagining my mission. My role in the education of the children in the Sandhurst Diocese has been re-examined, restructured and returned to its original enthusiastic shape! What a wonderful time!

*Michelle Hicks - teacher  
St. Luke's Primary School, Shepparton*

## Keynote Presenters:

### Fr Frank Brennan SJ AO

#### Re-Imagining the Mission - A Pilgrimage of Faith

Frank Brennan is a Jesuit priest, an adjunct fellow in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the ANU, professor of law in the Institute of Legal Studies at the Australian Catholic University, and professor of human rights and social justice at the University of Notre Dame Australia.



### Maggie Farrar UK

#### Leadership as Pilgrimage - Re-imagining the School Landscape - Improving Student Achievement and Life Outcomes

Maggie Farrar is a Strategic Director at the National College for School Leadership in the United Kingdom responsible for Succession Planning, Research and Policy, Impact and Evaluation, new models of leadership, locality based leadership development, and knowledge management.



### Ben Jensen

#### Re-imagining the Educational Mission - Developing a Performance Culture in Schools

Ben Jensen is Director of the school education program at the Grattan Institute. Ben is an expert in examining how to accurately and meaningfully measure school performance, how schools operate and are organised, concentrating on effective teaching practices, teacher management, school leadership, and their effect on school outcomes.



### Robert Fitzgerald AM

#### Re-imagining the Mission - Imperative & Opportunity!

Robert Fitzgerald was appointed as a full-time Productivity Commissioner in the Federal Government in January 2004. Robert has a diverse background and extensive experience in commerce, law, public policy and community services. Robert was also the Community and Disability Services Commissioner and Deputy Ombudsman in NSW.



### Phil Glendenning

#### The First, the Last & the Next Peoples - The Challenge for Australia and the Church

Phil Glendenning is the director of the Edmund Rice Centre. He was one of the co-founders of Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTaR) and for ten years was National President. Phil has served on the Boards of the Australian Council for Social Service (ACOSS), various committees of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, and the Centre for an Ethical Society.



'Drawing is...' workshop with Bronwyn Beer



Maggie Farrar

Many of the Workshops reflected the Conference Theme of 'Re-imagining the Mission' which captures the importance of the need to continually strive for improvement even in circumstances where we believe we are performing well. Re-imagining the Mission calls us to open ourselves to the Spirit to commit to new ways to bring the Good News of God's love to all, so that they may have 'life to the full'. (Jn 10:10)

Over 30 **seminars** were offered at the conference including:

**Maggie Farrar**  
**Building the Capacity of School Leaders**

This seminar included suggestions about ways in which the leadership capacity of everyone working in schools can be built and enhanced. The focus was on the building of individual capacity irrespective of roles in relation to improved outcomes for students.

**Dr Elio Capra SDB**  
**The Eucharist is not over until we deliver the casserole!**

The Eucharist in the early Church; The Eucharist for the early settlers and convicts; the role of the Eucharist today; What can we do to prepare young people (and their families) to appreciate the meaning, the role and the power of the Eucharist in their lives?

**Russell Jack**  
**The Immigrants' Journey**

Russell shared his experience of Chinese migration in the area of Bendigo. He identified the challenges as well as the many ways in which Chinese migration has shaped Australian Identity.

**Kath Murdoch**  
**Not just 'units of work' - Inquiry as "mindset" for teaching and learning**

The intention in this workshop was to take participants' thinking beyond inquiry as a framework for designing "units of work" and to explore the way in which inquiry can also become a disposition or 'stance' that influences all of our teaching.

More than 60 **workshops** presented by Catholic Education Office and school-based staff from Sandhurst took place at the conference including:

- Jason Kimberley** Educating young Australians for a sustainable future
- David Walker** Teaching with Shared Praxis
- Catherine Dooley** Striving to be Catholic: Handing on the Tradition
- Pru Robertson** Building Emotional Intelligence in Children
- Christine Sebire** Preparing Sacramental Nights for Parents
- Tony Loorham & Stuart Thompson** Learning Communities - from Vision to Implementation to Reality
- Kate Roache** Fighting Poverty through Education

I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone involved in Bendigo for the outstanding organisation of the conference. I loved the little details, such as recyclable lunch boxes, the lights on the cauldron to remind us of the fire always, the heaters, the trees, the free lattes, the eatable table decorations and so much more... I got a lot out of the workshops I attended, love socialising with old and new friends and felt totally relaxed on both days.

*Ruth Phillips - teacher  
 St Mary's Primary School, Echuca*

Congratulations on the Conference! Firstly, it was a game undertaking considering the organizing and the logistics for over 2,000 people. All facilities were well organized, eating arrangements were amazing and having a very willing and friendly staff to help arrange and direct us all, went as smoothly as clock work. The Welcome on the Thursday morning was just excellent, then with Fr Frank Brennan S.J. to follow set the Conference on its winning way. Well done! Please pass on my congratulations to the staff, a great team.

*Fr. Michael Morley - Parish Priest  
 Tatura and Tongala*

Being new to the Catholic system I found the conference and the workshops offered invaluable. It has given me insight into new teaching practices and also challenged my thinking on a personal level.

*Georgia Snowden - teacher  
 St Mary's Primary School, Cohuna*

I came away from the conference feeling energised and inspired! The workshops and keynotes provided offered so much - not only providing the opportunity for learning as a teacher, but growing as a person. A most worthwhile conference - many thanks.

*Gerri Eden - Junior School Coordinator  
 St Mary of The Angels Secondary College, Nathalia*

This was my first conference in the diocese and as a graduate teacher I found it to be highly enjoyable, educational and faith affirming. I approached the conference with an extraordinary level of excitement and was not disappointed.

I'm glad the diocese is committed to an event like this and to its schools, teachers and ultimately its students. I look forward to the next conference and will recall this one fondly.

*Kyle Hoad - teacher  
 Notre Dame College, Shepparton*



Karen Morrissey



Kath Murdoch



Robyn Treyvaud



Patrick Duignan

# Conference Art Show



The Catholic Education Sandhurst Conference Art Exhibition showcased the works of students from every school in the diocese, inspired by the conference theme, "Re-Imagining the Mission- A Pilgrimage of Faith."

For the first time the conference art exhibition brought together the artistic and creative talents of every primary and secondary school across Sandhurst, with all 54 schools submitting artwork for the exhibition.

The exhibition was coordinated and curated by Ms Cath Watter from the Catholic Education Office and with the help of Arts trainee, Ingrid Thompson from Catholic College Bendigo, the art exhibition was displayed in the entrance foyer of the conference dinner venue, creating an avenue of art which welcomed participants as they entered.

The inspirational display highlighted the importance of The Arts in our schools and enabled those taking part in the conference to enjoy the students artistic interpretation of the conference theme.

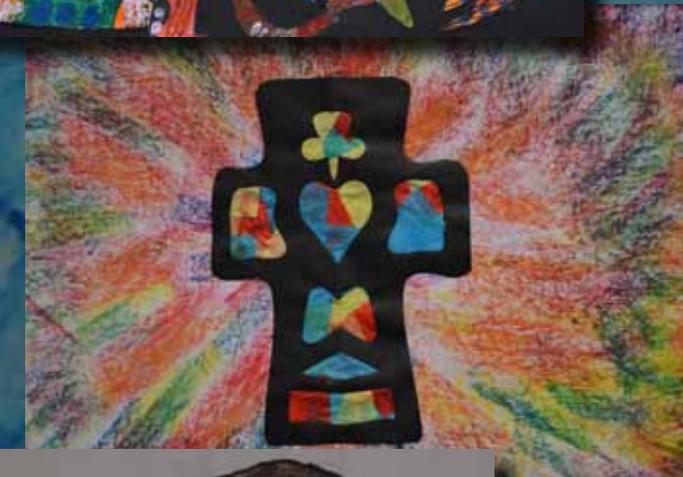
The MacKillop Art Exhibition, inaugurated in 2010 to commemorate the Canonisation of Mary MacKillop provided a catapult for assembling a collection of student work for the Diocesan Conference.

The MacKillop Art Exhibition held annually each October at Sacred Heart Cathedral Bendigo showcases an exceptional array of student art and continues to grow each year. The 'Artist in Residence' program, which complements the MacKillop Art Exhibition, has built on the capacity of students to create quality art pieces specifically for the exhibition. The 'Artist in Residence' program involves expert tuition from renowned Australian water-colour artist, Terry Jarvis who runs individual workshops for schools who choose to take part in the initiative.

An exciting inclusion to this year's exhibition is the establishment of the MacKillop Art Award, a prize to the value of \$1000 for the best exhibited artwork from a senior student in years 10-12. The MacKillop Art Exhibition will further explore the conference theme of "Re-Imagining the Mission - A Pilgrimage of Faith," which is also the diocesan theme for this year.

The establishment of the Catholic Education Sandhurst Council for the Arts (CESCA) which was launched at the Diocesan Conference will ensure the development of excellence in The Arts throughout Catholic Education in the Sandhurst Diocese. The group provides an exciting direction for the involvement of Arts professionals, industry partners and community members in further advancing the Catholic Education Sandhurst Arts Strategy.

The Arts continues to be a focus for Catholic Education Sandhurst and will continue to grow in our schools each year, enabling the wider school community to celebrate the collective talents of Sandhurst students and to acknowledge the skill of the specialist art teachers who instruct and inspire them.



# Closing Ceremony

Before the final curtain fell on the Catholic Education Sandhurst Conference for 2012 there were more workshops and seminars to attend, and despite the poor weather conditions, there was a buzz amongst the participants who had enormous expectations for the day ahead.

Exceptional keynote speakers from across the globe took centre stage at the beginning of day two. **Maggie Farrar** from the United Kingdom joined an amazing line up of seminar presenters including **Ben Jensen** from the Grattan Institute, Productivity Commissioner **Robert Fitzgerald AM**, and director of the Edmund Rice Centre, **Phil Glendenning**.

Each seminar provided an hour of clarity and insight into the conference theme as presenters shared their particular areas of expertise with each group. Participants were able to select the presenter and topic of interest by nominating which seminar they attended.

A gathering prayer of Liturgy took place at each seminar location, the same prayer shared by everyone assembled in their chosen space, the passages chosen from the Catholic Social Justice Series booklet "Take off your Shoes, Walk on the Ground."

The seminars were an excellent way to start the second day of the conference as Ben Jensen focused on *Re-Imagining the Mission of Education* with an emphasis on developing a performance culture in schools. Maggie Farrar presented an excellent insight into improving student achievement and life outcomes from an international perspective, drawing on similarities between the education system in Australia and the U.K.

Productivity Commissioner, Robert Fitzgerald AM used his extensive experience in commerce, law, public policy and community services to explore the conference theme through his seminar address; *'Imperative and Opportunity.'* Phil Glendenning tackled the challenges facing Australia and the church drawing on his time as National President of Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTaR).

Further workshops took place mid-morning and following lunch before the delegation gathered once more in the Marian Gymnasium for the closing ceremony and the launch of Catholic Education Sandhurst key documents.

Perhaps Director of Catholic Education Phil Billington summed it up best when she asked the congregation, "where do we go from here?"

"The deep imagining from the fruits of our conference comes from our hearts and we can't prescribe that, we can't prescribe learning, we can never prescribe growth, but we can provide opportunities in which that can happen," said Phil

"This afternoon we are drawing together, not just the fruits of our conference but the fruits of the conversations we have had as a community of learners over the past couple of years and that is represented in the launch of some of our core guiding documents, but they are just that, they are guiding documents, they are not confining documents, they are a map, they are a way of moving forward that we hope and pray reflects who we are as God's people here as the community of the Diocese of Sandhurst," Phil summarised.

The three core documents launched at the Diocesan Conference were:

## **The Sandhurst School Education Board (SSEB) Strategic Directions 2012 - 2015**

Officially launched and presented to Sandhurst Principals by the Chairperson of the Sandhurst School Education Board, Mr Michael Cavanagh and the Bishop of Sandhurst, Bishop Leslie Tomlinson

## **Catholic Education Sandhurst Council of The Arts (CESCA)**

Officially launched by Monsignor Frank Marriott, Vicar General of the Diocese of Sandhurst and Administrator of the Sacred Heart Cathedral

## **Charter of Sandhurst School Improvement (CoSSI)**

Officially launched by Mr Max Fletcher, Co-Deputy Director of Catholic Education Sandhurst: Educational Leadership

With a conference of this size there were many people who needed to be thanked before the final blessing took place. An incredible number of people contributed to the overall organisation and ultimate success of the two day event. From the organising committee to the workshop and seminar presenters, sponsors, Catholic Education staff, caterers and Catholic College Bendigo who provided the venue, to name a few. The event could not have happened and would not have been such a success without the many hands that guided and made things happen.

A moving blessing from Bishop Leslie preceded the final song, *Amazing Grace*, and it was appropriate that the song chosen to begin the conference should also be the concluding song. Before the final note was sung those assembled were standing; united in song and in affirmation of the conference which was challenging and inspiring.



# Snapshot of Sandhurst

## Innovation in Learning - St Monica's Wodonga

St. Monica's Wodonga is continuing to make significant gains with its educational provision through the Inquiry Learning approach, self-directed learning and focus on contemporary learning styles.

The change in pedagogical approach to teaching and learning has been based on strong research, deep reflection, many school visitations, the selection of enthusiastic flexible teachers and the search for new and innovative ways to enhance and draw out the potential of every student.

The creative open learning spaces allow the students more freedom to move around and also to have access to other teachers to support their learning. The flexibility that is offered to students depends on individual needs and the recognition that we all learn in different ways and at different times.

The senior team has invested enormous energy, vision and courage to create a learning environment that matches the best practices of contemporary education. The journey has at times been unnerving, unsettling and they have at times been on a very rocky road. However they were prepared to show enormous courage to re-envision St. Monica's school.



## Walker Learning Approach - Authentic Learning



When you walk into the classrooms at St Liborius students are authentically engaged in real, relevant and meaningful learning presented through the Walker Learning Approach. This approach places the child at the centre of the curriculum and the interests of the students are the central element for planned learning experiences in the classroom. Teachers encourage students to engage in meaningful learning that allows them to explore, create and construct. When students are given the opportunity to learn through their authentic interests a range of skills are being enhanced associated with their social, emotional, cognitive, language and physical development.

St Liborius believes that the Walker Learning Approach (WLA) is a pedagogy that supports the whole school philosophy, but most importantly creates independent and resilient learners that are motivated to take ownership of their learning. Teachers support students to achieve their academic best through investigative and personalised learning.

## Yennie Moore - 34 years of service!

After 34 years of service as Administrative Officer at St Michael's Primary School, Tallangatta, Yennie Moore was farewelled with a Mass and Dinner on the evening of 13th October.

During the celebrations the inaugural Yennie Moore School Scholarship was announced in recognition of Yennie's contribution to the St Michael's Primary School Tallangatta community from 1978 - 2012. Each year a student who consistently demonstrates the criteria will receive \$150 to assist in their education. The inaugural scholarship was presented to Bethany Hildred. Bethany received her award for her work ethic in the classroom, the compassion she always shows towards her peers and her willingness to support those in need.



## Australian Catholics Young Journalist Award 2012

A record number of entries were recorded for this year's Australian Catholics Young Journalist Awards with more than 650 entries in total. The Young Journalist Awards highlights the inspirational stories that Australians have to share and showcases the literary talents of our young people.

Sandhurst schools were well represented in the awards with Macey Gillman from St Patrick's Wangaratta announced as the overall winner of the Junior section with her piece entitled, "Monsignor White." Macey interviewed and wrote the story of Monsignor White's life leading up to his Golden Jubilee as a Priest this year-an exceptional effort! Further success was achieved in the Intermediate section with Catholic College Bendigo students Emma McIntosh awarded Runner-up, and Gabrielle Henthorn receiving a Highly Commended award.

The latest edition of Australian Catholics also features another talented Sandhurst girl, with Molly Hancock from St Joseph's Echuca being chosen as one of six guest editors for the Spring publication. The six students from Victorian Catholic schools were selected for the guest editorship positions which took place earlier this month. The week long internship was designed to provide hands-on experience, which included conceptualising, workshoping, conducting interviews, and writing. The guest editors were mentored by Acting Editor Fatima Measham and Fr Andy Hamilton SJ and had an opportunity to meet with media professionals in Melbourne. The students were chosen not only for their writing skills but also their capacity to lead and work within a team. What an incredible experience for our journalists of the future!



## Collaborative Professional Learning at St Mary's Echuca - Focusing on Reading

A whole school collaborative approach to learning, teaching and team building is taking place at St Mary's Echuca and the results are remarkable.

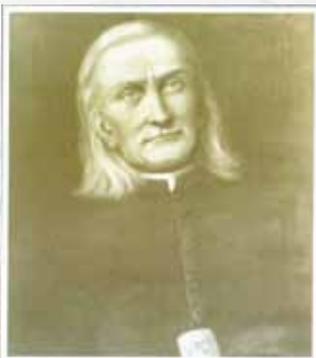
It has been four years since St Mary's moved to a new site and school buildings with a more open plan learning environment. With student numbers close to 400 and the design of the school into Prep, Junior, Middle and Senior Unit areas the need for a whole school approach to learning and teaching was all the more necessary.

Reading has been a curriculum focus for St Mary's Echuca this year and they have been working with the Catholic Education Office to implement a whole school approach using the Western Australian First Steps in Reading program. Staff have recently been involved in a two day Professional Development program to unpack the First Steps in Reading resources. Supporting this, Education Consultant Petra Teggelove from the Catholic Education Office has been working with the Literacy and Unit Professional Learning Teams over the year planning meetings and further developing staff data literacy skills. St Mary's is seeing some excellent results and look forward to reflecting on their work for this year in forward planning and goal setting for the future.



## Celebration of Rev. Dr Henry Backhaus' Bicentenary

From September 3-7 the City of Greater Bendigo gathered to commemorate the 200 year anniversary of the birth of the Rev. Dr Henry Backhaus, the first resident Priest on the Central Victorian Goldfields. Born in Paderborn in Germany, the Diocese of Sandhurst owes much to Dr Backhaus who was a man of great vision, intellect and was dedicated to spreading the Word of God and God's love across the Goldfields for over 30 years. His legacy lives on in so many ways, Bishop Leslie Tomlinson paid a wonderful public tribute to Dr Backhaus at a special civic celebration at the Conservatory Gardens in Bendigo on September 6.



"Henry Backhaus was both Father and friend to his people. Just as he deeply loved his congregation and the wider Sandhurst community, he was beloved by all. When Henry Backhaus died on September 7th 1882 the grief felt by the Sandhurst community was considerable and at his funeral four days later, more than ten thousand people lined the streets to farewell him," said Bishop Tomlinson.

A series of events celebrating the bicentenary of his birth and his significant contribution to the community of Bendigo were hosted by the City of Greater Bendigo in partnership with the Trustees of the Estate of Rev. Dr. Henry Backhaus and the Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst. Highlights included a sound and light show depicting the journey of Rev. Dr Backhaus and viewings of a small selection of rare Backhaus artifacts.



# ardinal Rodriguez

A man of grace

Article by Tim Fischer AC, former Holy See Ambassador and former Deputy PM, now author and farmer. 22 August 2012

## **Caritas Cardinal Rodriguez's dash to Central Victoria, Australia:**



An uplifting 24 hours of functions and action and above all listening in the name of Caritas at Shepparton, Diocese of Sandhurst in the middle of Victoria, Australia.

It is a long way from the Elysee` Presidential Palace Paris and a reception hosted by the President of France on a mild Friday Parisian spring evening in 2011 to a bracing

winter's Friday in Shepparton in central Victoria , Australia in 2012 and a light breakfast at St Brendan's Presbytery kitchen table.

As President of Caritas Internationalis, His Eminence Cardinal Rodriguez was making a dash to visit Shepparton, a modern city in Central Victoria with the usual economic ups and downs, and currently with ninety empty shops in the CBD. The Cardinal was coming for a busy round of meetings and functions all in support of Caritas Internationalis, as part of his visit to Australia.

Due good scheduling fortune, I have had the privilege of witnessing and conversing with His Eminence Cardinal Rodriguez close up in both locations, Paris and St Brendan's Shepparton, miles apart physically and in every other way but I encountered the same Caritas Internationalis President Cardinal Rodriguez with feet firmly planted on the ground, a cheerful smile and above all a capacity to listen and converse.

The Cardinal had a very heavy schedule for the 24 hours or so he spent in Shepparton, firstly travelling by car from Melbourne to arrive and be greeted by the Bishop of Sandhurst , Bishop Les Tomlinson and local Parish Priests Father Joe Taylor and Father Michael Grace.

First up there was a quick working lunch involving the Cardinal in discussions with the Bishop and several other priests, including the Caritas Director for the Sandhurst Diocese, Father Rom Hayes.

After this, Sandhurst Diocese Catholic Education Director Ms Phil Billington whipped the Cardinal across the Goulburn River to nearby Mooropna and a nigh on two hour meeting with the Sandhurst School Education Board, discussing the best way forward with education in the 21st century and international perspectives.

It was then onto a meeting with the younger brigade, the Youth Ministry Reference Group, but no time for a burst on the saxophone or piano, both of which the Cardinal can play well, very well indeed even though he is lacking in time for practice.

This meeting was led by Father Rob Galea, an accomplished singer and guitar player who was ordained in Malta in 2010 and is now based in Shepparton. After prayers, the Cardinal discussed with the group the Scriptures and how best to reach out to the youth in today's busy world.

Then it was another working meal or dinner, with local Caritas Leaders, there was no chance to have a long relaxed dinner as by 7.30pm, the party was due at the Parish hall for a Forum open to all parishioners and chaired by Phil Billington, involving both the Cardinal , Fr John Murray OP from Rome, Bishop Tomlinson and a large crowd on a cold winter's night. It was an evening of prayer and exchange of ideas, including discussing various perspectives on evangelisation in the modern area.

The good Cardinal was up early for a cuppa and light breakfast in the kitchen of St Brendan's Presbytery where I caught up with him for a few minutes, canvassing the work of Caritas and the important interface with Rome, plus happily recalling the running of the Caritas Express I helped with in May 2011 from the Pope's platform to Orvieto.

This was followed by Mass where the Cardinal was chief celebrant and he gave a friendly homily well pitched at the large number of school students present. After a few media calls, the Cardinal then had a formal gathering with Senior Secondary students from across the Diocese and discussed the role of Caritas, thanked them for their support and answered questions on aspects of Caritas Internationalis.

This meeting also included a section with focus on reaching out to indigenous people, following visits some students had made to the Northern Territory.

After a farewell bite to eat it was a case of on the road back to Melbourne by car, travelling with Father Paul Murray and Brother Mark O'Connor Head of the Melbourne Archdiocesan Office for Evangelisation. It had been an action packed visit of just over 24 hours, to a part of Sandhurst with deep commitment to Caritas Internationalis, a commitment greatly boosted by the generous time and energy Cardinal Rodriguez had given with his visit.

I must add it had been a pleasure to catch up with a Cardinal Rodriguez from Honduras, who I first met in Rome whilst I was on posting and saw briefly in Paris at the reception in honour of a high award to Monsignor Nicholas Thevenin of the Papal Prefecture. I suspect the next meeting or sighting will be at an airport, as he is always necessarily on the move. I urged him to keep an eye out for my successor in Rome, Ambassador John McCarthy QC who went on posting to Rome the same week as the Cardinal completed his visit to Australia.



## A READER'S POINT OF VIEW

Australia's national anthem talks about a nation surrounded by sea and one that abounds in nature's gifts of beauty "rich and rare". And when *Advance Australia Fair* was written more than 130 years ago, we had boundless plains to share for those who'd come across the seas.

Certainly my great-grandfather must have agreed with such admirable sentiments when he jumped ship (twice) near Newcastle more than a century ago. He only got caught once.

But apparently, a lot of us think there's not enough of Australia to go around and if you have ever watched the SBS documentary, 'Go Back To Where You Came From', you would have seen some of these sentiments rise to the top and even boil over.

And while the show's producers thrive upon the contrasting and emotionally charged views that will inevitably surface and spill over into social media, there's a much greater point to be made in addition to the number of refugees our nation accepts and how we process and accept those who make the incredibly dangerous journey to Australia in search of a better life.

There's no doubt Australia needs to do better when it comes to the perception of refugees who make the sometimes deadly trip from places such as Iran, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka.

Firstly, the words illegal and boat people do not go together. Secondly, turning boats around is not a serious option, and may even be illegal itself.

Thirdly, we must do more, and we must do it more quickly.

But much more needs to be done back where it all begins, where the problems in society are so bad that so many people are prepared to risk absolutely everything to try and come to Australia for a better life. We also need to process refugees far more quickly.

Fixing the problems in places like Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Sri Lanka is far easier said than done, and remains one of the greatest humanitarian challenges for the global community to both accept and more importantly, face up to and act upon. But until it is done, or there are at least substantial improvements, the flow of refugees will not stop, and neither will the tragic loss of too many of their lives.

Peter Kennedy  
Editorial courtesy of the Bendigo Weekly



# Bishop Joe Youth Scholarship

## Leadership & Spirituality

For senior students in Years 10 - 11 in each of the Catholic Secondary Colleges in the Sandhurst Diocese

When the SSEB decided to create a scholarship to honour the life of Bishop Joe Grech it was an obvious choice to provide a scholarship for the young people of the Sandhurst Diocese, in whom Bishop Joe had such profound belief. The Bishop Joe Scholarship is enabling senior students in our diocese to develop their spirituality and leadership skills and a deeper connection to their faith and church.

Bishop Joe was born in Malta on December 10, 1948. 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, where he served until his untimely death on December 28, 2010.

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 much loved champion of young people and was enthusiastic in his commitment and leadership of many World Youth Day celebrations across the world. He was always available to young people in particular and had such faith in young people across the world.

Bishop Joe was very committed to 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.

Bishop Joe was very committed to providing young people with access to quality catechesis and believed strongly that our senior students did not want their religious education to be anything but rigorous. He was very optimistic about the Church and the important contribution of young people in its growth and development. Bishop Joe 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.

The Bishop Joe Grech Youth Scholarship was created by the Sandhurst School Education Board to honour the memory of Bishop Joe and to continue his legacy to the young people of the Sandhurst Diocese. The scholarship will enable senior students in Sandhurst Secondary Colleges to participate in spirituality or leadership programs beyond their schools, promoting young people as significant members of the church. The Sandhurst School Education Board believes that our young people can lead change in the hearts of other young people when they are nourished in faith and spirituality, the Bishop Joe Scholarship will give them the opportunity to flourish as leaders in our schools and the wider community.

## Liam Shay - Catholic College Wodonga

The reason I applied for the Bishop Joe Grech Scholarship is quite difficult to explain as I had multiple reasons, my main motivation was that I was unable to attend World Youth Day in Madrid last year after suffering from heart arrhythmia, thus I felt going for this scholarship would give me peace of mind after the disappointment of not being able to go.

When I was called into the interview for the Bishop Joe Scholarship I felt incredibly excited and I knew I had nothing to worry about. You may be wondering why I had nothing to worry about but it's truly quite simple, you see as a grade four I remember the first time I saw Bishop Joe. I was sitting with my legs crossed in assembly nervously waiting for a big man to come walking through the assembly hall, yet once he entered, I soon realized that when the teachers described him to being large they meant his 'larger as life' personality, not his actual size!

To this day I still remember the first words I heard coming from Joe's mouth, "GOD DOES NOT MAKE RUBBISH!" I absolutely loved it, and if he, a small Maltese man, could make a room full of people go quite by a simple word, I knew he was special. Thus I took on all of his words and thought about what they could mean to me. I remember before my interview as I sat nervously waiting for them to call me in, and I don't know why but began to hum 'God does not make rubbish,' Father Rob Galea's song, whilst waiting to be called.

I guess that is the true beauty of this scholarship. It's not named after a man who lived hundreds of years ago and the closest will get to knowing him is through research in books and documentary's the beauty is I know Bishop Joe.

Keeping in touch with Bishop Joe's message I've chosen two places for my scholarship money to go, Remar Blue - Condobolin Solidarity Experience and Interchange Wodonga Sensory Garden. You may wonder what they have to do with Joe's message? It's quite simple. The money will be going to assist those who are seen as "worthless" by society. Interchange is a program for mentally disabled youths which I'm heavily involved with and Remar is my own way of finding or connecting with God, and hopefully not only myself, but the entire Remar group will benefit from the money given.



## Tekarie Albert - St Joseph's College Echuca

In first semester, I put my name down for the Bishop Joe Grech Memorial Leadership Scholarship for Senior Students and I was fortunate enough to receive this incredible award. During the first weekend of the holidays from the 5th to the 8th of July, I attended the Rising Generation's 10th national leadership conference in Collaroy, New South Wales.

While I was there, I met many incredibly inspiring adults and over 200 motivated and encouraging adolescents, some as young as 14 and ranging up to the age of 18. The theme throughout the course of the conference was the word 'AWAKEN', on this journey we were awoken to our leadership potential, given a new understanding of what it means to lead and we were called to action to awaken the capacity of those whom we led.

Throughout each day we were encouraged by our adult and junior mentors to question, challenge, expose, reflect upon and dream about the core of inspiring leadership. The camp also dedicated each day to a certain word and our schedule and speakers were related to these topics. Passion, Vision, Values, Resilience and Service were the focus points of our day.

I left the leadership conference feeling energetic, full of life, confident, but also a little sad that I was leaving all of my new friends. Rising Generations was an incredible experience and allowed me to step out of my comfort zone and grow as a leader. I cannot wait to share what I have learnt with not only the leadership team and teachers but also my fellow peers. I would encourage any students with an interest in leadership to apply if the scholarship returns in 2013, as the National Leadership Conference was well worth every minute and throughout the camp the members were able learn so much about not only leadership, but themselves as a leader. Just remember the first step in making a difference is the mind set you choose to adopt at the start of your journey.



## Bree Villella - Marian College, Myrtleford

This year I was awarded the Bishop Joseph Grech Memorial Youth Scholarship. There were many reasons why I chose to apply, though the main reason behind my decision was the inspirational persona of Bishop Grech. I will always remember Bishop Joe's enthusiasm and charisma, he would light up a room and inspire all in his presence on his visits to Marian College and these visits were always memorable. When he smiled, I felt the urge to smile as well, and that is one of the reasons why I applied for the Bishop Joseph Grech Memorial Youth Scholarship: Leadership and Spirituality.

When applying for this scholarship I had to outline an organization and a conference that I had attended and supported. I chose the Presentation Conference (Presentation Sisters' Schools with the founder Nano Nagle) and the Reach foundation that was founded by Jim Stynes. The Presentation Conference was an opportunity for me to extend my leadership skills and hopefully become a competent leader of the future.

I hope to one day light up a room full of students with enthusiasm and be an amazing leader like Bishop Joe. With this scholarship I am hoping to do a further program through Jim Stynes foundation; Reach. I choose the Reach foundation, not only because of the late football great Jim Stynes, but also because of Reach's motto 'To encourage self-belief and positive thinking in all.'

# Launch of Catholic Education Sandhurst Key Documents

In May 2012 at the Catholic Education Sandhurst Conference the Sandhurst School Education Board (SSEB) Strategic Directions for 2012 – 2015 and the Charter for Sandhurst School Improvement (CoSSI) were launched along with the Catholic Education Sandhurst Council for the Arts. The Conference was a combination of celebrating achievement as a Diocesan community of learners through workshops and challenging us as a system of schools and as a Catholic Education Office, through Keynote Addresses and Seminars to grow and develop to become more for students so that they may 'flourish and live life to the full'.

CoSSI inspires and informs the philosophical and professional practice of Catholic education in Sandhurst. It is an intentional aspirational document which is monitored and evaluated through the School Review process and predicated on the firm belief that every student can learn and every school can improve.

The SSEB Strategic Directions 2012- 2015 is the system-wide expression of the leadership actions needed to ensure that state, national and international research, practice and political advocacy inform and inspire the stewardship of the 54 school communities with the Sandhurst diocese. This period is grounded in the commitment to 'Re-imagining the Mission – a Pilgrimage of Faith'. The intentional decisions to embed best practice in both programs and processes, re-shape practice and processes to achieve optimal outcomes or to innovate to ensure the initiation of new practices or processes were decided following a process of discernment by CEO System Leadership Executive, Leadership Team and Consultative Group.

## Charter of Sandhurst School Improvement (CoSSI)



The launch of the Charter of Sandhurst School Improvement (CoSSI) at the 2012 Diocesan Conference was the culmination of a two year collaborative journey of thinking, re-conceptualising and developing of ideas.

When Catholic Education Sandhurst first started this journey the aim was to produce a resource that would be both aspirational and practical in assisting the reshaping of culture around school improvement in Sandhurst for the next five years.

Deputy Director of Catholic Education Sandhurst, Mr Max Fletcher said it was important to acknowledge each member of the CoSSI Reference Group, comprising of school principals and Catholic Education Office leaders who offered invaluable insights, questions and constructive critiquing during the process.

"I must also acknowledge CoSSI leaders and Education Consultants, both past and present, who have been involved in the writing of the different sections. Phil Billington and Luci Quinn have also provided great conceptual insights along the way, said Mr Fletcher.

"One person in particular I want to acknowledge is Ms Amanda McKenzie who has journeyed with us from the start as facilitator, critical friend and ultimately as the writer of the overall resource."

The launch of the Charter for Sandhurst School Improvement means that in one way the work for Catholic Education in Sandhurst has just begun. The mantra that every

school can improve and every child can learn creates a moral responsibility to ensure that this happens in practise and that Sandhurst schools provide the environment for maximum learning opportunities and outcomes for each and every child. CoSSI provides a framework for continuous improvement, the challenge is to bring it to a lived reality.

Mr Fletcher said that it was a pleasure to hand the resource over to school leaders. "You are the practitioners in our schools; use this as a foundational resource to assist you, and to assist all of us in our sacred work as we seek to bring each person in our schools to the edge of their divine possibilities."

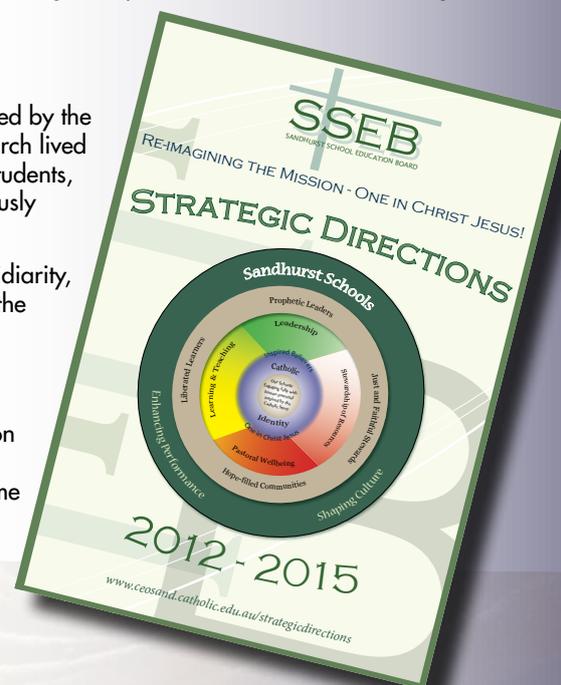
## Strategic Directions 2012 - 2015

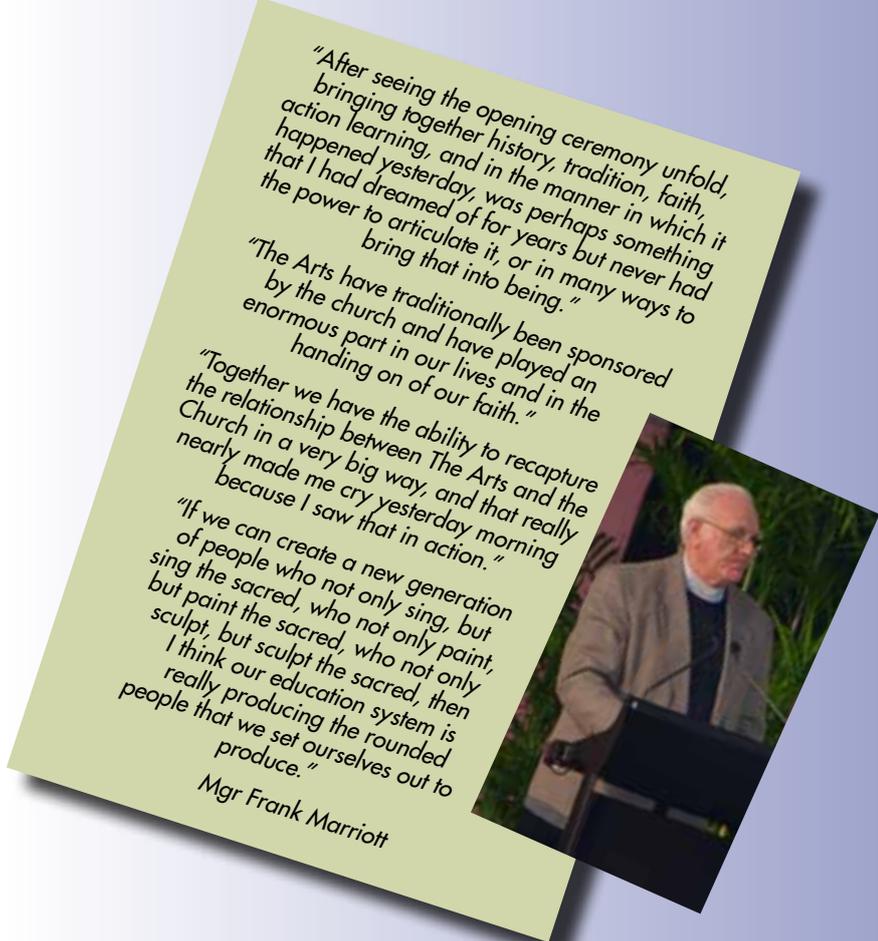
The Sandhurst School Education Board (SSEB) Strategic Directions 2012-2015 are informed by the ever-changing contexts of education and society within the educational mission of the Church lived out in the Diocese of Sandhurst. The commitment to covenant relationships with families, students, staff, parishes and the broader communities is a response to the Gospel call to be consciously transformational.

The mission of Catholic Education Sandhurst is grounded in the guiding principles of subsidiarity, co-responsibility, stewardship and dialogue which inform every aspect of endeavour and the foundational documents of Source of Life Religious Education Core Document, Charter for Governance and the Charter of Sandhurst School Improvement.

Catholic Education Sandhurst works within the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) in responding to government agendas and in particular, the Melbourne Declaration of Educational Goals for Young Australians (MCEETYA 2008) which has as its goals that Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence and that all young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.

The processes engage all the participants in Catholic education with students at the heart.





## Catholic Education Sandhurst Council for the Arts (CESCA)

The Catholic Education Sandhurst Council for the Arts (CESCA) was launched at the Catholic Education Sandhurst Diocesan Conference on May 25 2012. CESCA is being established to provide strategic direction and the involvement of Arts professionals, industry partners and community members in further facilitating the development of the Catholic Education Sandhurst Arts Strategy which seeks to:

- Encourage the development of excellence in The Arts for all who participate through advocacy.
- Provide access to professional creative partners who are experts in various fields of The Arts.
- Provide opportunities for students and school communities to participate in performances and exhibitions at the highest level.
- To enable and support the provision of constructive feedback and professional learning opportunities for teachers, students and school communities on their creative work in the form of expert adjudication.
- Promote and foster The Arts in liturgies and celebrations in Sandhurst schools.

The foundational members of the Council are:

<b>Phil Billington</b>	Director of Catholic Education (Chair)
<b>Denise Braddon</b>	Executive Officer of CESCA
<b>Fr John Corcoran</b>	Parish Priest of St Joseph's Cobram with a strong knowledge and background in The Arts
<b>Matthew Emond</b>	Director of Bendigo Theatre Company
<b>Terry Jarvis</b>	Internationally renowned Water Colour Artist and inaugural Artist in Residence for Catholic Education Sandhurst
<b>Sr Geraldine Larkins</b>	Sister of St Joseph and accomplished singer and performer and educator
<b>Nicole Muir</b>	Managing Director of Australian School of Performing Arts
<b>Anne Walsh</b>	Experienced leader in Multi-media

The inaugural meeting was held in August at which the Charter for CESCA was developed and the process to develop the Strategic Directions for 2013 – 2016 commenced.

CESCA will also formalise the structures required to ensure the growth and development of The Arts throughout Catholic Education in the Sandhurst Diocese.

It is anticipated that CESCA will meet at least twice a year and that at least one of the meetings will also coincide with one of the Festivals of the Sacred. In its inaugural phase the Director of Catholic Education will convene the group.

# Boston Tour

an immersion in  
theological study



For the past six years a study tour to the Boston College of Theology and Ministry has been re-energizing Sandhurst teachers and leaders. On June 22 participants set off for Massachusetts, United States to study at Boston College with the aim of deepening their knowledge and commitment to their faith.

Boston College is a Jesuit University offering a world renowned religious academic program through their School of Theology & Ministry and students come from all over the world to develop personal and communal spiritual practices and to grow in faith and understanding and go on to be leaders in their Church communities and society.

The Boston College Study Tour is offered within the Sandhurst School Education Board philosophy that professional and personal renewal for leaders is essential to growth and well-being. This opportunity for leadership renewal is designed to accommodate both the needs of the diocese as well as the needs of individual school leaders.

Sandhurst leaders spend a month studying at the Boston College of theology and Ministry campus in Brighton, Massachusetts, the campus formerly housed the chancery of the Archdiocese of Boston and portions of St. John's Seminary.

The Sandhurst Study Tours and Immersion experiences are an important part of the culture of Catholic Education in the Sandhurst Diocese. Each year Sandhurst teachers and staff have had the opportunity to participate in many varied and wonderful experiences which promote personal and professional growth.

Catholic Education Sandhurst believes that creating opportunities for school leaders to study, immerse and renew is central to enhancing the life of their school and church. Study Tours and Immersion Experiences Opportunities for 2012 include:

#### **Boston College (STM) Study Tour**

**Cebu Early Career Teacher Social Justice Immersion**

**Cebu Alternative Schoolies Social Justice Immersion**

**Holy Land Pilgrimage**

**Lake Mungo**

**PBIS Study Tour Tasmania**

*"The Boston experience was a fulfilling process of education, formation, and personal development.*

*Working with people from all over the world, I was part of a wonderful atmosphere of renewal and revitalization. The academic work was stimulating and challenging, and I enjoyed a great variety of other activities, liturgies, and seminars at Boston College."*

*Jenni Hindson - Boston Study Tour Leader  
& Principal - Sacred Heart Tatura*

*"The opportunity to study at Boston College was a wonderful and enriching life experience. It is another example of how the Sandhurst Diocese is leading in visioning what is possible in and for our Catholic schools, and especially for the children and families we all serve. In facilitating learning for staff from the best people internationally in their fields, teachers return more skilled and revitalised in their mission to bring the light of Christ to students and their wider school and parish communities."*

*Fiona Dyball - Catholic College Wodonga*

*"I had such an amazing time, the teachers and students there are so incredibly rich in wisdom and faith it would have been impossible for the experience not to have had a profound effect on me. It has certainly inspired me to continue to pursue further studies in Religious Education. I also felt extremely privileged to have had this opportunity as a staff member of a Catholic school who is not employed at the CEO or in Senior Leadership. Sandhurst was the only Australian Diocese who had opened up the experience to all teachers. I have learnt so much about my faith and about myself. I feel energized and excited about my profession and my career."*

*Jennifer Frisardi - Notre Dame College Shepparton*



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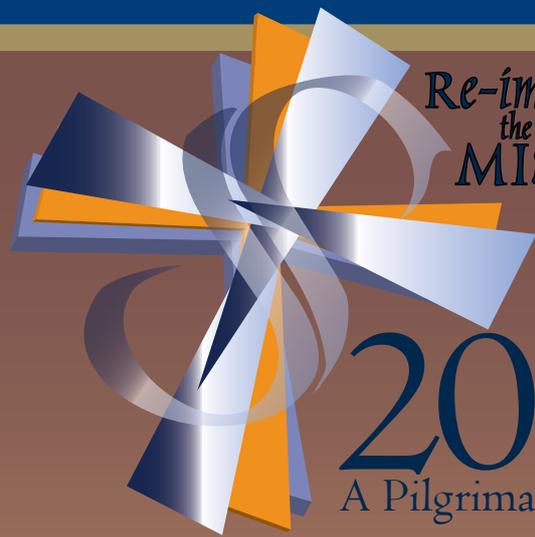


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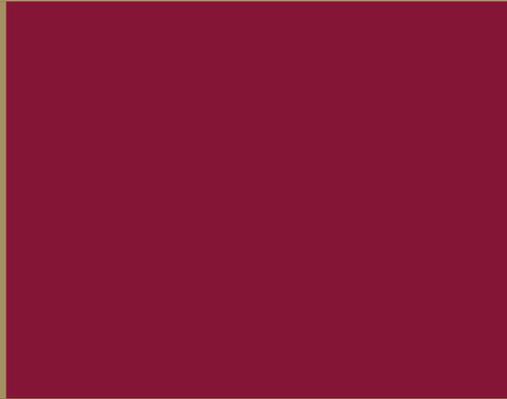
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Re-imagining  
the  
MISSION  
2012  
A Pilgrimage of Faith



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.