



HELPING OUR CHRISTCHURCH SCHOOLS

Tena Koutou Katoa

Our hearts continue to go out to the people of Christchurch City as the devastation and destruction caused by the February 22nd earthquake has become more and more apparent. What happened to large parts of the City is almost unbelievable. Residents of the City and those who have visited it have a full appreciation of the extraordinary and pervasive devastation it has suffered. Not only was there severe loss of life and very significant dislocation to normal civic services, many of our principals, staff, students and others in our school communities suffered severe material losses to their homes and to the dwellings of their relations and friends. The anxiety associated with ongoing after shocks simply adds to the distress people are enduring.

There are numerous stories of heroism and extraordinary acts of support and kindness that occurred. Many of our school communities have been extremely generous in supporting individual schools in Christchurch, which is very encouraging. In these stories resides our hope and confidence in a more secure future.

The disruption to the lives of many people in a number of our Catholic school communities will, unfortunately, be enduring and will take time to remedy and heal.

INVITATION. The New Zealand Catholic Education Office has already received substantial amounts of money from donors who have requested that the National Office work as a conduit to funnel money donations, only, to those in our Christchurch schools who are most in need. The Office is doing this in close collaboration with the Catholic Education Office in Christchurch.

If any school community or other donors still wish to make use of NZCEO to channel money to our Christchurch colleagues, they are most welcome to do so.

Details about how to send any money to the office have been sent to schools and can also be found on the office website: www.nzceo.org.nz

There is no doubt that we do operate a strong national system of Catholic Schools as the outpouring of support for our Christchurch schools has illustrated.

THANK YOU most sincerely for the part you have played in helping our Christchurch colleagues in so many practical ways, fundraising amongst them.

Greetings

Tēna koutou. Ngā mihi nui kia koutou.

We wish you well as the autumn settles in along with Term II

Losses in Catholic Communities in Christchurch

Our sympathy is expressed for those Catholic school communities where lives have been lost, and where people have suffered significant damage. We ask your prayers in particular for those families where a death has occurred.

Congratulations

Warm best wishes and congratulations are extended to Monsignor Charles Drennan, whose appointment as Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Palmerston North was recently announced.

Catholic Character Review Documentation 2011 Update

Some updates have been made in the 2011 Catholic Character documentation. The latest revised documents are now on the NZCEO website, www.nzceo.org.nz, under Resources for Boards and Teachers. The text is available in both pdf and doc format, for ease of use.

Teaching Chinese Mandarin in Catholic Schools

There is a growing interest in Catholic schools in the teaching of Chinese. The Confucius Institute, located at the University of Auckland, is keen to work with any such school, to support introducing the language. Boards of Trustees or principals can contact p.lynch@nzceo.org.nz to take up this invitation.

International Search for Best Practice in Justice and Peace Programmes

Cardinal Renato Martino, President Emeritus of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, in an article in the October 2010 edition of International Studies in Catholic Education, has outlined the basic principles which should guide justice and peace programmes in Catholic schools, and has asked the journal to find examples of actual education projects in Catholic schools that are putting those principles into practice. Articles up to 3000 words long are sought by the journal on initiatives that are integrating justice and peace themes, projects and practical social action into their education programmes. The articles will be reported in International Studies in Catholic Education. Contact the editor, Professor Gerald Grace, at crdee@ioc.ac.uk.

Congratulations to Teachers Achieving Certification

Congratulations are extended to those teachers nationwide who are achieving certification in Religious Education and Catholic Special Character, gaining endorsements, and completing the Understanding Sexuality course. Teacher qualifications support the strength of the Catholic education in our schools, and give us confidence to say that our schools will remain truly Catholic in the future.

World Priest Numbers Continue to Grow

In the decade from 1999 to 2009 the number of Catholic priests in the world increased by almost 5,600. In 2009 Latin America had 42.2% of the world's Catholics and 17.3% of the priests, a slight improvement on 1999 when the figure was 15%.

*"It is in the shelter of each other
that the people live."*

Irish Proverb



"It was embarrassing. While I was taking away their cell phones, my cell phone rang"

Pope Benedict on Education

In a recent address to a general assembly of Italian bishops the Pope spoke about the "aggressive relativism" isolating young people and making them face the great life questions alone. He said, "When in a society and in a culture marked by a pervasive and often aggressive relativism, basic certainties, values and hope, that give life meaning, seem to falter, parents and teachers can be tempted to give up on their responsibilities; they may even fail to understand what their role and mission are... Children, teenagers and young people end up feeling alone facing the great questions that inevitably rise within them... Viewpoints stemming from our faith can provide instead a fundamental contribution to explaining and solving major social and moral problems."

Catholic Youth Identify with the Catholic Faith not Specific Rulings

Reporting on a wide body of US research, sociologist James Davidson reports that young Catholics today believe that the abstract beliefs and principles of the Catholic faith are important, but are more likely to consider that specific norms and codes of conduct are optional. They identify with, and respect, the Catholic faith, but may be less attached to the Catholic Church.

A Special ERO Report on New Zealand Catholic Schools – March 2011 highlighted these points:

- The special character of the school; the positive effect this has on student behaviour
- The respectful relationships between teachers and students
- The high level of community support
- Generally well considered governance and management
- In most, student achievement is at least as expected for age and level
- Teaching is of good quality with some very good
- In general, Māori students achieving well

This is all good news for our schools.

"While we have time, let us do good to all people."

Galations 6:10

Our Country's Assets

Travel outside of this country is mainly a positive experience.

It helps New Zealanders to obtain a better view of themselves against an international backdrop. Sure, we are a small nation at an extremity of the world, yet we are largely seen as a gutsy entity, which is respected in the world community.

Yes, we are not as affluent as some other countries, yet we are perceived as having a strong group IQ with an emotional quotient, which reflects our get up and go approach to life. "New Zealand would be a good place to live," is the often heard refrain when visiting off shore destinations.

It is salutary to look back over the last generation or two and count the very positive gains, which we have made in our growth as a nation. We are not the richest in the world but we do have life style benefits, which are the envy of many outside of the country. We must continue to accelerate wealth creation since that is very necessary in the long term. A high quality education system is central to this goal. In the meantime, the more we embrace the notion that ideas are now the engine of progress we will flourish as a small but significant player in the world.



"If you ask me, Miss Twilby, schools are not exactly hotbeds of free speech."

better off
bnz partners



KONICA MINOLTA

Mā te Atua koutou e manaaki, e tiaki.

Pat Lynch, C.E.O.

Susan Apáthy, Deputy C.E.O.

Maureen Condliffe, Operations Manager

Donna Campbell, Financial Controller

Jane O'Connell

Adele Pedreschi

Wendy Rozenberg

Lighting New Fires is published by the New Zealand Catholic Education Office, PO Box 12307, Wellington. Phone: 04 496 1739

Fax: 04 496 1734 or Email: nzceooffice@nzceo.org.nz

Website: www.nzceo.org.nz