



In recent months metropolitan and provincial newspapers have carried the 2009 NCEA results for the nation's secondary schools. Overall, our Catholic schools have shown excellent results, which is a great credit to our principals, teachers, students and boards of trustees, not forgetting parents and caregivers.

Part of the growing success of our schools, both primary and secondary, arises from our Catholic educational philosophy and school culture. This in turn is based on our faith which is founded on the three great virtues of faith, hope and love.

The new Archbishop of New York, Timothy Dolan, stands up for the fundamental importance of Catholic schools in the life of his great city. He says we are called to be men and women who love and share that love with the students and families we serve. If we cannot do our work with love, there is little sense in doing it. The Archbishop is not too keen on any educators who love themselves above all else, however. He says such individuals are the last thing our Church needs as followers of Christ.

All this translates into the importance of positive relationships in enabling students to achieve. Certainly, the recently published Ministry of Education landmark Best Evidence Synthesis outlining what works in delivering student achievement across the board, is unequivocally clear that a holistic, loving approach to student education does work with all students.

Thank you for encouraging young people in our schools to feel they are important and that they belong, while they are in your educational care. The way we deliver our educational services is the message students will remember. Their lives will depend on it.

"If anything in life matters then everything in life matters – every action of ours affects others and changes us."

Greetings

Ngā mihi o te wā ki a koutou.

With the mid winter holiday time about to begin, we hope that you are really able to enjoy the break.

Catholic Schools' Day

Congratulations to schools on their wonderful events marking Catholic Schools' Day. Ways of marking the day included: St Patrick's School Taupo celebrated over a whole week, and the school had a four page feature in the Taupo Times. St Mary's College, Wellington celebrated its 160th anniversary on Catholic Schools Day with Archbishop John Dew and the college community; a group of students modelled uniforms of the previous 160 years. Catholic education in Dunedin was featured in a three page spread in The Star, which included a great photo of Tony Hanning, Director of the Catholic Education Office, wearing his well deserved Papal Medal.

Handbook for Boards of Trustees of Catholic Schools

The 2010 (green cover) edition of this document has now been sent to proprietors for distribution to schools. You could call your diocesan office if you do not have copies yet. We have also had considerable interest in the document from other integrated schools, who find much of the publication useful.

Useful Websites

www.eurekastreet.com.au is a Jesuit site which provides excellent material on social justice worldwide, and also material of particular relevance in Australasia and the Pacific. It is possible to get a free subscription to a daily or weekly email of news.

www.seetheholyland.net covers in words and photographs nearly 70 holy places in Israel and the Middle East, and provides travel tips and advice on how to organise a pilgrimage. It is likely to be very useful to schools. It has been set up by Pat McCarthy, former editor of New Zealand Catholic.

Congratulations: First Principalships in Catholic Schools

Br David Miller, De La Salle College, Mangere East.

Brendan Stephenson, St Joseph's School Paeroa

Congratulations

O'Shea Shield public speaking competition: St Mary's College, Wellington won the competition, and St Catherine's College, Kilbirnie won the Bishop Viard Trophy.

Bishop's Shield public speaking competition: St Peter's College, Gore won the competition.

St Mary's College, Wellington: The school recently held its 160th birthday. Our national system praises the college as the trail blazer for Catholic education for girls in the Wellington region.

St Patrick's College, Kilbirnie: The school recently celebrated its 125th anniversary with a series of highly successful events highlighting its rich history and current successes. One thousand former students took part, along with students and friends of St Pat's Town. The college was the first Catholic boys' secondary school in New Zealand. Our national system offers congratulations.

Caritas Aotearoa Annual Report Published

The annual report of Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand makes wonderful reading. The page reflecting on the support given by Catholic schools in fundraising for Caritas shows the excellence of schools' practical commitment to social justice.



"Why are you wearing your cap backwards?"

The Trading Circle Shop – Online Ordering

The Trading Circle shop in Milford, Auckland has its new website up and running. Visit www.thetradingcircle.org.nz to order gifts and other items made by women in third world countries who are being supported by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd to improve their lives.

Catholic Schools in United States Face Radical Change

Nearly one in five Catholic schools in the U.S. has closed this decade, with the likelihood of many more closures. Pupils in parochial schools have dropped by more than half since the peak of over five million pupils in the 1960s. Raising enough money to cover tuition costs is the major problem for schools and dioceses, particularly as middle-class Irish and Italian families have moved to the suburbs, leaving urban Catholic schools to cater for lower-income blacks and Hispanics. Some schools have converted to charter schools, some dioceses have appealed to local donors and philanthropists for major ongoing funding, some parishes ask parishioners to give a certain percentage of their salary to the diocese or the school to help with costs. Many agree that a system-wide overhaul is needed as philanthropy is not enough. As communities centralise administration under trained lay professionals in order to achieve better business processes, a new focus is replacing the current message "we're poor, give us money" with "we serve the poor - invest in us, and we'll provide a good return on your investment." (See www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1929589,00.html)

Catholic Character in New Zealand Catholic Schools – Excellent Practice

Schools will shortly receive a compendium of examples of excellent practice in Catholic Character, gathered from around the country. We trust it will provide a stimulus for thinking about new initiatives that can further support excellence in our schools.

NZ Catholic School Pupils' Ethnicity 2009

European 58%, Pasifika 15%, Māori 13%, Asian 10%, Other 3%, Foreign Fee Paying Students 1%.

**"Do not grieve for good people,
but rather rejoice that they were
born and lived."**

Gen. George Patton

Missionz Update

The Missionz Shop has novel roll-a-prayer boxes for \$5.00, missionary rosaries 80 cents, (prices plus postage) short prayers and reflections 50 cents, and mission money boxes. Profits go to the Pope's Mission Societies. Email pmsnz@extra.co.nz to order. Missionz News provides monthly stories about missionary projects supported by New Zealand Catholics through the Pontifical Missions Societies.

Catholic Enquiry Centre to Celebrate Golden Jubilee in 2011

In preparation for the CEC golden jubilee, director Fr Allan Jones seeks suggestions, memories, photos and articles about individuals' experience of CEC. You are also reminded that CEC has a range of wonderful materials that might be of interest to some parents or senior students. See www.catholicenquiry.org.nz or email info@catholicenquiry.org.nz.

Evangelisation and Initiation of Students

Many students from Catholic families have not yet received the sacraments of initiation. It would be helpful if Boards of Trustees, principals and DRs could put in place a plan to identify such students, and prepare a pathway to the sacraments. The Catholic Enquiry Centre has resources, as have the National Centre for Religious Studies and Diocesan Religious Education Offices. Parish personnel are ready to provide support.

New Church Members

Over 200,000 individuals were received into the Catholic Church in the United States on Easter Saturday 2010.

A Good Idea

Oakhill College, Castle Hill, NSW has printed its five guiding principles on business cards, to issue to students and community members.

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