



Pope Benedict XVI, speaking in 2008 at the Catholic University of America, referred to Catholic schools as “bearers of wisdom”. This is indeed an accolade for all those involved with our schools.

Saint Mary MacKillop, in whose recent proclamation of sainthood we greatly rejoice, recognised the pivotal importance of imparting wisdom by way of literacy in the schools she founded in rural New Zealand in the nineteenth century. Literacy today is much broader than the fundamentals of reading and writing. It is now extended to the multi level abilities of being able to read, interpret, and understand language, leading to literacy in history, religion, technology, philosophy, sciences and the arts.

Our Church has a proud tradition going back over four hundred years of providing elementary education and, in more recent times, higher education for hundreds of millions of human beings.

Our schools' emphasis on a rounded holistic education is a gift to humanity. The spiritual and faith foundation of the education we deliver enables our schools “to become especially powerful instruments of hope”. (Pope Benedict, 2008).

Education is an adventure and a journey. The late Pope John Paul II noted the following in “Centesimus Annus” (1991):

“The heritage of values which has been received and handed down is always challenged by the young. To challenge does not necessarily mean to destroy or reject, but above all to put these values to the test in one's own life and through existential verification to make them more real, relevant and personal.”

Parents, teachers and pastors are always challenged to present our faith in terms young people understand. This is not easy, yet as Saint Mary MacKillop believed, and we today also believe, the mysterious action of God's grace in the lives of students is a fundamental reason for us always to be people of hope. Our Prime Minister was perceptive when he recently stated, “education is a liberation”. All this is part of our schools' mandate to be “bearers of wisdom.”

“Do all you can with the means at your disposal and calmly leave the rest to God.”

Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop, 1891

Greetings

Kia tau te rangimārie.

Hopefully the variable spring weather will give way to a great summer!

New Catholic Church Website

The New Zealand Bishops are congratulated on the wonderful new Catholic Church website, www.catholic.org.nz, which was launched recently. The website manager is looking for videos from Catholic schools, particularly of groups singing religious music. Excellent technical quality is a must. Send material or make inquiries to Angela Pyke, communications@nzcbc.org.nz, or 021 611 052.

Congratulations

We congratulate Mike Nolan, Manager of the Catholic Education Office in Christchurch, his team, and all those in the Canterbury Catholic schools for their magnificent response to the challenges of the disaster. They have worked with wonderful commitment. The Canterbury community and New Zealanders overall, have shown a truly admirable practical concern for their fellows in need.

St Paul's School, Dallington and Catholic Cathedral College are commended for the way in which they have worked together – St Paul's School, whose buildings are unusable, has been welcomed into accommodation at Catholic Cathedral College. Diocesan Office staff have welcomed St Paul's teachers into Cathedral House, giving up offices to enable the St Paul's management team to work on the relocation programme. A magnificent contribution of effort and good will by everyone, despite, in some cases, significant personal difficulties to deal with simultaneously.

The Ministry of Education team has been highly supportive, and we owe them a very big thank you for their generous spirit, commitment and sheer hard work.

Congratulations: First Principalship in a Catholic School

Bridget Rika, St Joseph's School, Matata

The Common Good Imperative

A document entitled ‘The New Zealand Catholic School System: The Common Good Imperative’ was recently sent to schools and Boards of Trustees. In a letter accompanying the document, Bishop Peter Cullinane praised the way in which schools and proprietors have been prepared to uphold the Catholic principle of the common good, helping each other by taking turns to access the money made available from the government for schools, and putting the most needy schools first.

Catholic Character in New Zealand Catholic Schools 2008–2009

Schools have recently received a document providing examples of current excellent practices in Catholic schools and colleges. (Look for the red title page!) We congratulate the schools whose excellent work has led to the development of this set of ideas. We hope to provide updates from time to time.

New from Caritas

Caritas has announced that the 2011 Lenten Justice focus in schools will be on ecological justice. In the Schools Spotlight in the Spring Caritas Update, schools were praised for the way they acknowledge and celebrate cultural diversity.

McAuley Lecture on Mary

The 2010 McAuley lecture by Sr Elizabeth Julian, ‘Our Lady of Mercy, Reclaiming the Title Today’, is available to read at www.mercyworld.org. (Go to Spirituality, then select McAuley Lecture).



"Where do you enter the password?!"

CTS Website

www.cts-online.org.uk is the Catholic Truth Society website, where all books and other products can be ordered on line. The newly released and highly praised film about Fatima, 'The 13th Day' is available from CTS.

The Purpose of School Reviews

Schools are reminded that the purpose of school reviews, whether internal, accomplished by ERO, or Catholic Character Reviews, is to improve education within the school, for the students. Therefore it is essential that all recommendations be followed up on and actioned. This is important not only for ERO reviews, but equally for Catholic Character Reviews. Proprietors can expect their representatives on Boards of Trustees to report on the follow up of review recommendations. It is suggested that schools provide a copy of the latest Catholic Character review to ERO reviewers, as it provides excellent information on the school's values and its approach to curriculum.

Sacraments of Initiation and RCIA

All Boards and principals are reminded of the importance of identifying students who have not yet been baptised, so that they can be offered appropriate programmes leading to Baptism and the other Sacraments of Initiation. Often parents can be offered re-evangelisation or RCIA programmes, or other forms of Faith support, at the same time. Increasing numbers of schools and parishes are working together on such projects.

Working Together on Seamless Catholic Education

Bishop Peter Cullinane is congratulated on the initiative he has undertaken to increase the proportion of Catholic primary students going on to Catholic secondary schools. He and the Diocesan Catholic Schools Manager, Lynette Roberts-King, met with school principals, staff and Board of Trustees members in four key locations in the diocese, to analyse why students do not necessarily continue to Catholic secondary schools, and to seek

suggestions for improvements in flow through. A detailed report, full of useful suggestions, was sent to all who had participated. It could be worthwhile to request a copy of the report, and to conduct a similar exercise in other areas.

Teaching in a Catholic School

There are many students and adults in parishes or youth groupings who could be encouraged into teaching, if given a personal invitation and explanation of the fulfilling nature of teaching as a career. Board members, teaching staff and parish personnel are all asked to encourage people to consider teaching as a career, with a view to the future of our Catholic schools, and the continuing infusion of new staff that they require.

The Effect of Pope Benedict's Visit to Britain

At the conclusion of Pope Benedict XVI's visit to Britain Prime Minister David Cameron said, "You have really challenged the whole country to sit up and think... For you have offered a message not just to the Catholic Church but to each and every one of us, of every faith and none... to follow our conscience, to ask not what are my entitlements, but what are my responsibilities, to ask not what we can do for ourselves, but what we can do for others."

Our Prophetic Task – a Reminder

"The Catholic School on the Threshold of the New Millennium" states, "The work of the school is irreplaceable and the investment of human and material resources in our schools becomes a prophetic choice." Our role as communities of faith is to serve a broken, needy world, serving both Catholics and the indifferent, the weak and the broken. A broad understanding of education, evangelisation and pastoral care includes the quiet and sensitive help offered to many parents and families in our schools, which makes our schools beacons of hope for the disadvantaged.

better off
bnz partners



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Fax: 04 496 1734 or Email: nzceogs@nzceo.catholic.org.nz
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**"It is not the mountain we conquer
but ourselves."**

Sir Edmund Hillary