

The Joy of the Gospel

It is fifty years since Catholics were urged to think differently about their responsibility to go out and tell the Good News to others i.e. evangelise. Pope Saint John Paul II urged us in this regard to demonstrate a new "ardour, method and expression." How, as followers of Christ, can we go out and show God's love for each human being?

The new evangelisation, as illustrated by the leadership of Pope Francis, is focused on an openness to people outside of our Church or those who are not active members of the Catholic community. How wonderful is the inspiration Pope Francis displays with his gestures of simple humanity in our very secular world. He has succeeded in capturing billions of people through his demonstration of love for individuals.

Clearly, the world is thirsting to hear about the importance of love, kindness, compassion and human dignity, to combat blame, corruption and plain evil.

As Pope Francis has stated so succinctly, "There is an eclipse of the sense of God in the world's affairs." Hence the need for standing up and being counted in what we do and say!

In the Catholic community, local, regional, national or global, we stand with other believers in proclaiming the truth of the Gospel message. This proclamation is enticing for many people – think of the Beatitudes; our belief that we are all sons and daughters of the same loving God and that we are all sisters and brothers in God's human family.

Catholic schools are a statement of Christ's voice in the 21st century. Our students, their families and the wider community of our towns and cities are a tangible and visible presence of Christ in our daily lives.

May we boldly capitalise on the "Pope Francis effect." This is a great time to be a bold and confident Catholic.

"We still do not know one-thousandth of one percent of what nature has revealed to us."

Albert Einstein

Greetings

Tēna koutou – ngā mihi o te wā ki a koutou.

We rejoice with the international Catholic Church over the recent canonisations of Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul.

The Catholic Education of School-Age Children

This new document by the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference has recently been distributed to schools. It outlines the bishops' thoughts about the Catholic education network. It will stimulate much fruitful discussion and inspire many new initiatives. The document is available on the NZCBC website. <http://www.catholic.org.nz/nzcbc>, and there is a link on www.nzceo.org.nz.

New Zealand Catholic Education Convention, Horizons of Hope, 10-12 June 2015, Wellington

Horizons of Hope, the next Catholic Education Convention, will be held in Wellington, 10-12 June 2015. Please note this in your planning diaries, and consider it when you are budgeting. It would be helpful if teachers and leaders could begin considering whether they would like to offer a seminar for the convention. A formal invitation to present seminars will be circulated a little later in the year, but expressions of interest are welcome from now onwards to s.apathy@nzceo.org.nz.

Vatican Statistics

The latest Statistical Yearbook of the Church reports that by the end of 2012 the worldwide Catholic population had reached 1.228 billion, an increase of 1.14% (slightly ahead of the global population growth rate of 1.09%). Catholics as a percentage of the global population remained essentially unchanged, at 17.5%.

What Makes a School Catholic

Five essential elements defined by Monsignor Jim Cassin, executive secretary to the Commission for Catholic Education and Formation of the Irish Episcopal Conference:

- The belief that the human person is made in the image of God and is therefore worthy of respect. Jesus is the exemplar par excellence.
- The belief that we meet God in the 'bits and pieces' of everyday life. Our daily interactions, the sacraments, liturgy and prayer are all ways God approaches us and we approach God.
- The belief that we are saved as a community. We learn how to form a community of care, with special attention to those who have less or are suffering.
- The fact that we belong to a tradition going back to Christ saying "Go and teach all nations." It is our duty to be faithful to that tradition and to interpret it anew for today.
- The fact that we value knowledge. We strive to provide an education of excellence.

Five practical applications of these elements:

- We deepen young people's relationship with Jesus through intentional and systematic catechesis.
- Young people can hand on the faith through experiencing ministry in social justice and in peer leadership.
- Parents need to be catechised and empowered in their role as evangelisers of their children.
- It is crucial to support the catechesis of young people in their period of transition from school and in their post-school world.
- It is important to find ways of vocational recruitment and discernment.

The full article is at www.zenit.org/en/articles/official-of-irish-bishops-conference-on-what-makes-a-school-catholic/. (Or contact NZCEO for a paper copy.)

75th Jubilee

St Brigid's School, Dunedin is holding its 75th Jubilee on the weekend of 23 – 25 May. Contact: jubilee@stbrigidsdn.school.nz

Free Book Downloads from Accent Publications

The Theology Research Unit of the Diocese of Auckland has taken over Accent Publications. Books can be ordered from www.accentpublications.co.nz, including the 2014 book *But Is It Fair?*, ed. Fr Neil Darragh. Out of print publications can be downloaded free, including *Te Tangata: The Human Person*, M Shirres; *Doing Theology Ourselves*, Fr Neil Darragh; and *At Home in the Earth*, Fr Neil Darragh.

Congratulations to Principals New to the Leadership of Catholic Schools

Steve Wheeler, St Patrick's School, Masterton

Anne Pratt, St Patrick's School, Waimate

Paul Melloy, St John's College, Hastings

Anna Wormald, St Pius X School, New Plymouth.

NZCEO and Noel Leeming

The collaboration between NZCEO and Noel Leeming has resulted already in a number of special opportunities for families and friends to buy products at reduced rates. We encourage you to make use of these opportunities when they are provided.

Congratulations

Hato Paora College, Feilding, had a 100% pass rate in NCEA levels 1, 2 and 3 last year – a first for the school. This success was the result of five years of hard work, including enhanced professional development, and a lot of other strategies.

Congratulations to Caritas

- Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand is congratulated on its very successful inaugural Caritas Challenge. Congratulations also to all the schools that took part in it. This new nationwide activity encouraged youth to walk in someone else's shoes.
- The most recent Singout4Justice song writing competition received a bumper number of entries, with some stunning music. Well done to the students who entered the competition, and to their music teachers. The winner will be announced on 23 May.

School/Parish Partnership Working

St Joseph's Catholic School, Opotiki, with a roll of 234, 61% Maori and 31% Pakeha, has a strong relationship with its parish and parish priest. In recent years it has had remarkable success in supporting families to engage in the Church at sacramental level, with 16 students being baptised in late 2013 alone. Last year the school staged the production *Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat* with guest stars parish priests Fr Gerard Paterson as the narrator and Fr Richard Pipe as Jacob. Amazing!

"Of all human pursuits, that of wisdom is the most perfect, the most sublime, the most profitable, the most delightful."

St Thomas Aquinas

Congratulations

- Peter Braithwaite, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, St Teresa's School, Riccarton, was awarded the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) for his lifetime of service to education.
- Contributors to Tui Motu's March and April 2014 editions: Shaun Davison, DRS Pompallier College, Whangarei, 'With Beautiful Eyes' (March) and 'Dan' (April); Lyn Smith, Religious Education Co-ordinator, The Catholic Institute of Aotearoa New Zealand, 'Why Bother?' (March); Hayden Kingdon, DRS, St Peter's College, Epsom, 'Education as Liberation' (March).
- St Patrick's School, Taupo, featured in the Education Gazette 24 February 2014 in relation to the school trialling aspects of the design phase of an after-school programme for students aged 7 – 11 to be kaitiaki of their homes in relation to injuries from falls in the home.
- NZ Catholic has started an engaging 'Eye Spy' supplement full of games, puzzles, and stories for primary aged children.

Pope Francis Says

"The digital highway is ... a street teeming with people who are often hurting, men and women looking for salvation or hope. By means of the internet, the Christian message can reach to the ends of the earth."



"Please turn off your cell phones and turn on your wireless ebook readers"



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 Debbie Vreeburg

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