

CATHOLIC SERVICE

Throughout the two millennia of Christianity the focus of service to others has always been strong. Its manifestations have been and still are demonstrated in a myriad of diverse activities. This, of course, is strength. In each instance, the focus is respect for the individuals and groups being served, with a wrap-around support structure, which amounts to a hand-up, ahead of a hand-out.

The Bible has two significant questions about the concept of service. In the Book of Genesis God seeks out Cain, the murderer of Abel, and asks him: "Cain where is your brother?" And in Luke's Gospel, in the story of the Good Samaritan, the lawyer asks Jesus: "Who is my neighbour?"

The idea of universal fraternity was embraced by the United Nations in its 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This makes it clear what our relationships are with one another in the civil jurisdiction.

Pope Francis, however, is very clear on the issue. "Service is not merely an ethical commitment, and not a volunteering of excess leisure. A Christian heart never goes on vacation. It is always open to serve where there is a need, because it knows that where there is a need there is a right, and these people, because they are our brothers and sisters, have a right to our attention." (Homily 2013).

It is important that leaders in the Catholic community promote the importance of the ethic of service amongst our young people. We are now global citizens with better understandings of how the impoverished and disadvantaged people of the world live. By seeking to raise the profile of those in need, there is a greater chance of engaging our people in this service ethic.

It is not happy people who are thankful. It is thankful people who are happy."

(Anon)

Greetings

Ngā mihi nui ki a koe me tō whanau.

We wish you well as winter tightens its grip, even as longer days become apparent!

Articles

For Your Diary and Financial Planning

'Horizons of Hope' New Zealand's triennial Catholic Education Convention, will take place in Wellington, 10-12 June 2015.

Recent documents from the Congregation for Catholic Education

- www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/index.htm 'Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools Living in Harmony for a Civilisation of Love'. This document shows the breadth of vision the Church has in relation to our multicultural world.
- http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_20140407_educare-oggi-e-domani_en.html 'Educating Today and Tomorrow: a Renewing Passion'. This document was sent to Bishops' Conferences and we think you might find it an interesting read. It echoes some themes our own Bishops have been presenting to us.

Caritas SingOut4Justice Song Writing Competition Winners

Junior Section: 'Waiting' by Jessica Hannah Rodgers, Carmel College, Auckland

Senior Section: 'Hide and Seek' by Maisy Start Walter and Tobias Girod, Champion College, Gisborne. Congratulations.

Congratulations to our Most Recent Principal New to Leading a Catholic School

Graeme Norman, St Anthony's School, Huntly.

Congratulations to McAuley High School

McAuley High School was one of seven schools identified in a report, 'Towards Equitable Outcomes in Secondary Schools: Good Practice', from the Education Review Office (ERO) that looks at the practices of lower decile secondary schools achieving great results for their students. The report stated that each school had:

- A strong vision for every student's success and that it focused on the wellbeing of the students and on helping them to be the best they could be.
- Strong links with families and communities in ways that supported the students' learning.
- Parents and Whānau were involved in developing the pathways which their teenagers followed.
- Great leadership of school principals in managing change with a focus on positive outcomes for every student enrolled at the school.
- Teachers who believed that students can succeed and that they have a responsibility to help them do so.

Catholic School Clusters

Catholic school clusters exist in various parts of the country. Most recently the Christchurch Catholic secondary schools' cluster has devised three targets, on special character matters, on priority learners, and on becoming a single network in the city of Catholic education 0-18 years. There has been a gathering of primary and secondary Catholic school principals on the 'one network' idea. Significant sharing of best practice is occurring.

Spiritual Five-a-Day

A reflection on religion, community and mental well-being by Professor Sheila Baroness Hollins, one of four lay women appointed by Pope Francis to the eight-member pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors:

G is for giving – giving to those with mental health problems in our community

R is for holy reading to deepen our faith

A is for abstinence, by which I mean silence

C is for God's creation and our daily awareness of it

E is for engaging with God in prayer.

Congratulations to NCRS on the Launch of Faith Alive

Faith Alive website is the new home for the Online Primary RE Resource (formerly known as the Primary Schools 'digital resource') See www.faithalive.org.nz (password Primaryre) NCRS wants feedback on what does and doesn't work on the site. Use the feedback panel on the website or email ncrs@tci.ac.nz.

Website Worth Investigating

www.sacredstorytelling.org is the website of Robert Wilhelm, who, for two decades, has been providing a weekly series of stories based on the lectionary readings for each Sunday. All 156 stories and supporting material are available free to anyone who subscribes by email to Parables Today, a Weekly Lectionary Storybook. Contact storyfest@icloud.com with the word 'subscribe' in the subject heading.

Congratulations

- Once again the academic results of Auckland's Catholic secondary schools have been highly praised in Metro magazine's annual analysis of last year's NCEA results. Schools are congratulated and gratitude is expressed for their commitment to their students.
- St Peter's College, Palmerston North, featured in the Education Gazette 3rd June, 2014 issue showcasing a student whose interest in Vocational Pathways led to him working one day a week at the UCOL Trades Academy. He was nominated for UCOL's Most Outstanding Student 2013 and achieved NCEA level 2 in 2013 (he is now in year 13).
- St Patrick's Catholic School Te Awamutu Board of Trustees, in its annual report to parents, strongly encouraged parents to bring their children to Sunday Mass, and the principal's annual report to parents reinforced that, saying "The community WANTS to see you celebrating the Eucharist each and every Sunday. Our community is the lesser without you." Putting out a clear and consistent expectation can have results.
- Alister Bridgman, Principal, St Mary's School, Blenheim, is one of nine Marlborough principals who recently travelled to Harvard University to attend a seven-day leadership course.
- Congratulations to Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand on the fresh new look of the Caritas Update. Schools are regularly featured in the Update.

"Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have."

Margaret Mead

Opportunities in Northern Territories, Australia

Former NZ Catholic school principal John Young reminds NZ Catholic teachers that there are opportunities in Northern Territories Catholic schools. Email john.young@nt.catholic.edu.au to find out more.

International Day of Peace 21 September

Schools might like to mark this UN-sanctioned International Day of Peace with some special event.

The Light of Faith – an Encounter with the Living God

"Faith is born of an encounter with the living God who calls us and reveals his love, a love which precedes us and upon which we can lean for security and for building our lives. Transformed by this love... a vision of the future opens up before us." (Introduction, Lumen Fidei) In a commentary on this document, Br Robert Bimonte, President of NCEA USA, says: "In our ministry as teachers we encounter young people in search of the truth each and every day. They are looking to us to help them know that God is real and that living the Gospel is possible. When they encounter caring and compassionate people who treat others with respect and dignity, it assures them that faith is worth seeking." (Momentum, Sept/Oct 2013)

Pope Francis Says

"If we destroy creation, it will destroy us."



"Just write what you know. Write about texting while I'm teaching."



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