

# Faith in the Future

Commemorative Magazine • Edition 4, December 2021



St Joseph's Primary School,  
Bundaberg c.1915 and today.





AUSTRALIAN  
CATHOLIC  
SUPERANNUATION  
RETIREMENT FUND



Want to be  
your best  
financial self?  
**We can help.**

- Award-winning products, services and financial advice team
- Face-to-face and online seminars at no additional cost
- Simple-to-understand articles on investing and managing your money

**Click here** to find out more.



# Faith in the Future Virtual Symposium addresses educational improvement


The National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) hosted the second annual Faith in the Future Virtual Symposium on Wednesday 27 October with a keynote presentation by international educational expert Dr Lyn Sharratt focusing on educational improvement.

The symposium, founded last year, is held to mark World Teachers' Day celebrated in Australia on Friday 29 October, and was the final national event for the celebration of the Bicentenary of Catholic education in Australia.

Dr Sharratt's keynote address titled, 'This is the WORK!', explored the need for alignment, focus and resolve by teachers and leaders to ensure every student can meet and exceed their potential.

"It starts with system alignment from a diocese perspective through to the school and into the classroom so that each teacher and leader knows the big picture and the smaller picture of who the students are in their care," Lyn said.

With Michael Fullan, Lyn has researched what it takes to improve both system and school improvement and has identified 14 parameters that need to work together for system alignment (below).

| 14 Parameters of Improvement |                                  |  |  |   |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Shared Beliefs               | Designated Knowledgeable Other   | Ongoing Assessment Improves Instruction  | Principal as Learning Leader           | Early & On-going Intervention   |
| Case Management Approach     | Job-embedded PL                  | Collaborative Assessment of Student Work | Multi-modal Resources in Central Place | Commit School Budget to Priority  |
| Staff Commitment to Learning | Parental & Community Involvement | Literacy Instruction in Content Areas    | Shared Responsibility & Accountability |  |

© Dr. Lyn Sharratt, *CLARITY: What Matters MOST in Learning, Teaching & Leading 2019*

"These areas aren't new to you, but what might be is that they all need to work together for system alignment," Lyn said. "And there are three of those parameters that are non-negotiable – shared beliefs and understandings, shared responsibility and accountability... and a case management approach where we put 'faces on the data' and know how to teach each student."

"Our shared responsibility is to own all the faces in our care. If everyone is responsible for every face and even cares about the faces of students down the road as much as they do about the faces in their own school then accountability will follow naturally."

In looking towards 'future sustainability', Lyn says teachers and leaders must:

- Stay the course with relentless consistency
- Measure your impact: individually and as a team
- Use student work as evidence of growth
- Scrutinise student data to make wise decisions
- Use the five questions to determine 'precision in practice'
- Integrate the 14 parameters everywhere

A panel discussion moderated by renowned Australian broadcaster Geraldine Doogue AO unpacked the keynote address and explored Lyn Sharratt's work as it is being applied in schools.

The student and school leader panellists from across Australia were Year 11 students Hayley O'Connor and Wasim Farah from St Andrew's College, Marayong; principal Ros Oates from Our Lady of the River Primary, Berri; principal Patricia Hales from St Joseph's College, Lochinvar and principal David Adam-Jones from St Therese's Primary, Bentley Park.

In 'putting faces on the data' student Wasim said, "the first thing we must do is inculcate a sense of self awareness in who we are as students and educators". He said this sense of self-awareness was made palpable by his college principal around each student setting high expectations for themselves.



Dr Lyn Sharratt presenting at the Virtual Symposium from Ontario.



Fellow student Hayley agreed saying they were encouraged by their teachers and leaders to “reach for the stars and try as hard as we can, because at the end of the day as a student that’s the most important thing that we should be able to do”.

Ros Oates said Lyn’s work and the Clarity Learning Suite is a handbook that leaders can use to get effective learning happening in classrooms.

Ros said it helped create a sense of ‘systemness’ in her diocese and when she walks into another Catholic school in South Australia they are “all talking the same language”. The work has had a profound impact on her as a rural principal because she is “inline and walking with knowledgeable others” in the work.

In making the difference for students, principal Patricia Hales said it is the “sharp focus” that Lyn speaks about and not trying to do everything, but “narrowing it down to say what are those strategic goals we are looking at, and what data are we drawing on to establish a goal that we know is going to have a positive outcome for all our students”.

Principal David Adam-Jones said, in the Catholic context, clarity is about kinship.

“Kinship is about a bond...and the important relationship with the child and the relationship with the teacher in the context of the Catholic school,”

he said. “And we do that really well.”

In response to Geraldine’s question, “has learning become an adventure?” Hayley said, “I feel like learning is an adventure, but I do feel like the HSC in itself has become a bit outdated and I don’t want to say it’s ruining the adventure... but it needs to be updated... because we are really changing the way we are learning, but we are not changing the way we are being assessed.”

National Catholic Education executive director Jacinta Collins said the symposium is an opportunity for school leaders and staff to engage in a broader professional discussion.

“Catholic education serves one in five students and we recognise the work of our leaders and staff

who are committed to lifting learning standards for over 777,000 students across 1,755 schools in Australia,” Ms Collins said.

“Over the past two years our school communities have responded extraordinarily to the additional demands of remote learning and teaching due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“As we continue to face an unpredictable future, opportunities like the Virtual Symposium and our national conference to be held next September in Melbourne, will provide additional professional opportunities for educators and leaders to share their expertise and experiences in our collective work of improving learning for students,” she said.



Watch the Virtual Symposium via the [200 years website](#)



# Take a look inside: *From Humble Beginnings*

**A** new book, *From Humble Beginnings: Commemorating 200 years of Catholic education in Australia* shares the stories of the oldest continuing Catholic schools in each existing diocese in Australia.

The first Catholic schoolhouse in the Diocese of Wollongong was established in a small slab cottage in Campbelltown, a newly established settlement in the south-west of Sydney.

Nestled on five acres of land donated by James Burke, the schoolhouse was located near the intersection of Appin and Old Menangle Roads. It catered for boys aged between 12 and 20 years, whose attendance depended on the demands of farm life undertaken by the early settlers.

From its humble beginnings educating the children of local Irish Catholic families in a small slab cottage, **St John the Evangelist Primary School** has grown into a three stream coeducational school, providing a quality Catholic education that reflects the individual needs and changing demographics of the community.

**All Saints Parish School** is situated in the Parish of Portland on the far



Above: St Patrick's School, Campbelltown c.1870 was part of the historical journey of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wollongong. Below: Our Lady of the Sacred Heart students and principal Majella Lynch-Harlow.

south west coast of Victoria. It was established in May 1849 by Fr Michael Stevens and is the oldest continuing Catholic school in the Diocese of Ballarat. Among the generations of outstanding and committed teachers who have worked in the school, at present, it is the only Australian Catholic school to include a canonised saint among its lay teachers: Mary MacKillop.

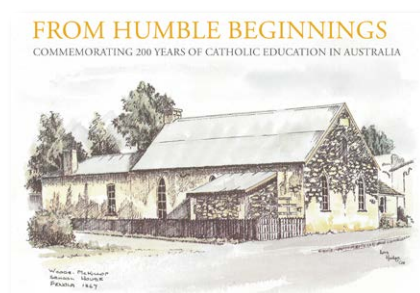
The oldest school in the Diocese of Cairns, **Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School**, was founded on Thursday Island (Waiben) in 1887, three years after the formation of the Sacred Heart Mission. A verandah with a view to the blue of the Torres Strait provided the first classroom.



Sydney-born Sr Mary Margaret, as she was known, is generally considered to be the school's founder. ●



All Saints students c.1910.



*From Humble Beginnings: Commemorating 200 years of Catholic education in Australia* is available in paperback and hardcover (68 pages).

Order *From Humble Beginnings* via  
[www.200years.catholic.edu.au](http://www.200years.catholic.edu.au)

# Pioneer Catholic Educator remembered

For 200 years Catholic schools have been established and staffed by pioneer clergy, religious and lay educators, many of whom devoted their entire lives to Catholic education.

This lifelong contribution to Catholic education is exemplified through the work of Fr John Neill OP OAM, who passed into eternal rest on Saturday 21 August at the age of 89.

National Catholic Education executive director Jacinta Collins said Fr John was a passionate advocate, who made a remarkable contribution to Catholic education in Australia.

"Fr John's work as a teacher, school leader and instrumental champion of tertiary Catholic education, exemplifies the enduring contribution the clergy have made to Catholic education in Australia over 200 years."

"In honouring Fr John, we also acknowledge his contribution as a member of the National Catholic Education Commission," Jacinta said.

Archbishop of Sydney Anthony Fisher OP said Fr John was a man of faith, modesty and real kindness.

"He was a loyal son of St Dominic, a true pastor and a much-loved university chaplain," he said.

"Fr John made a quite extraordinary contribution to Catholic education in this country."

The University of Notre Dame Australia's Vice Chancellor Professor Francis Campbell praised Fr John as a visionary leader and much-loved member of the university.

"He was not only a founding father of our institution, he was widely considered to be one of the founders of Catholic universities in Australia," Prof Campbell shared in a statement to staff and students.

"As early as the age of 17, John had a vision for a Catholic University in Australia, and after expressing his desire to become a priest, he joined the Dominican order.

"He would ultimately go on to hold a number of high-profile positions within Catholic education during over half a century worth of service.

"We are greatly saddened by the loss, but are thankful to have known Fr John and to have benefited so much from his love and commitment," Prof Campbell said.

Australian Catholic University Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Zlatko Skrbis said Fr John impacted



*Fr John Neill OP. Image from the University of Notre Dame.*

the lives of many staff and students at the university in its foundational years, an impact that continues to resonate today in the mission and values of ACU that he worked so passionately with others to instil at the university's establishment in 1991.

"He brought his extensive experience in Catholic education, deeply influenced by his Dominican charism and always ensuring the foundations of ACU were firmly anchored on the heritage and traditions of the University's predecessor colleges," Prof Skrbis told [The Catholic Weekly](#).

"Even after his formal association with ACU ended, Fr John maintained an active and engaged interest in the life of the University and remained a passionate advocate for the mission of ACU and the role of Catholic higher education more generally in the Australian tertiary sector," Prof Skrbis said.

Fr John was born in Sydney in 1932 during the Great Depression and lived with his family in Sydney's eastern suburbs, attending high school in Randwick, but also helped the family make ends meet by working in a retail position in the city. He joined the Dominican Order in 1955 and was ordained a priest in 1960 at 28.



*Fr John Neill OP OAM with Blackfriars Priory School students in 2016.*



Fr John spent 25 years at Blackfriars Priory School in Adelaide starting as a teacher in 1963 and then became headmaster from 1972 to 1988. He was the fifth headmaster of the school and each year the Fr John Neill Scholarship supports a Year 12 student in need, providing assistance for the tuition and school expenses.

In 1978, Fr John was elected chair of the Independent Headmasters Conference (South Australia), a significant and prestigious appointment in recognition of his standing as an educator. He was the first Catholic to be appointed to this position.

He served for a time as chair of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools, as a member of the Standing Committee of the Headmasters Conference of Australia and as a member of the National Catholic Education Commission.

Between 1990 and 2000, he was prior and then master of students

at St Dominic's Priory in Melbourne. Fr John was the University of Notre Dame Australia's (UNDA) first employee, establishing and becoming director of the Notre Dame Planning Office in 1988, that

"Fr John's work as a teacher, school leader and instrumental champion of tertiary Catholic education, exemplifies the enduring contribution the clergy have made to Catholic education in Australia over 200 years."

preceded its formal foundation in the 1989 and brought to life the first Catholic university in Australia. Fr John later served as trustee and governor of the UNDA from 1996 to

2009 and he long served as chaplain of the Sydney campus. He was also a foundation member of the company of the Australian Catholic University and served as a member of the ACU senate.

In 2001 he joined the spirituality team of the Sydney Catholic Education Office. He became Parish Priest of St Benedict's Broadway in 2005.

In 2014, he received an Order of Australia, presented by Dame Marie Bashir, then Governor of NSW, for his contribution to education and the Catholic Church.

In recognition of his extraordinary contributions Fr John was honoured by the Australian College of Education (Fellow 1986), the University of Notre Dame (Hon LL D 2006), the Pope (Croce pro ecclesia et pontifice 2012) and the Commonwealth of Australia (OAM 2014). ●

Source:  
McGee C. 2017 'Catholic Education in Colonial New South Wales'.



## Unlock literacy with EdTech

Our reading and writing tools help students to learn, understand and express themselves with confidence.

Get started at [text.help/200years](https://text.help/200years)



# The first religious orders to establish Catholic schools in Australia

In their pastoral letter to mark the 200th anniversary of Catholic education in Australia, the Catholic Bishops of Australia recorded their gratitude for the extraordinary contribution of the religious institutes to education in Australia. This contribution has been highlighted over the four editions of this commemorative magazine.

## Loreto Sisters

The Sisters of Loreto, or the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as they are formally known, was founded by English woman Mary Ward in 1609. Loreto is the Irish branch of Mary Ward Sisters established in 1822.

In 1875 the City of Ballarat received their first Catholic Bishop, Dr Michael O'Connor, from Ireland. Dr O'Connor also happened to have been the parish priest of Rathfarnham, the location of the mother house of Loreto. He was familiar with the Sisters' mission in education. As part of his vision for his new diocese, he invited Loreto to establish a convent and school in Ballarat. Eight Sisters

and two candidates, led by Mother Gonzaga Barry, arrived in Melbourne on 19 July 1875, after a three-month voyage. Their journey was marked by cramped quarters and debilitating seasickness; nevertheless, by the time the group disembarked, they were prepared for the challenge and seemed to take all situations in their stride with the help of a strong, grounded, trusted leader and, perhaps, a leap of faith.

The very next day, they were whisked away to Ballarat, where they were welcomed in style; many Irish expats seeing nuns for the first time since their own arrival in Australia. After some months acclimatising and searching for a suitable property, the two-storey house on Lake Wendouree was purchased and Mass was celebrated on 24 September.

A few days later, the first students arrived, and Loreto Mary's Mount boarding school was established. By November, the Sisters had purchased a property closer to the centre of the city for a day school and soon also took over the administration of the



Mother Gonzaga Barry, founder of Loreto in Australia c. early 1900s.

local parish primary school. This was to be the pattern as Loreto established convents and schools across the country – in Portland, Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Hamilton, Adelaide, Brisbane, and the Kimberley, as well as kindergartens, teachers' training colleges, and parish primary schools.

As with all religious orders, Vatican II brought significant freedom to reclaim the founding charism. The Sisters of Mary Ward's Institute were to take a model for apostolic religious who would go where the need was greatest, and not be restricted by a monastic model of enclosure. The years following Vatican II saw Loreto's ministries expand into their mission, "To transform the Church and the world, particularly by empowering women to seek truth and justice", with ministries in education, social welfare, development and justice.

In 2015, Loreto Ministries was established by the Loreto Province of Australia and South East Asia as a not-for-profit public company responsible for the governance of Loreto Schools



Early Mary's Mount pupils, 1876.



in Australia. Loreto Ministries aims to ensure the sustainability of Loreto education into the future. ●

#### SOURCES:

Loreto Ministries Australia & South East Asia, 2021, accessed September 2021.

All images courtesy of Loreto Ministries Australia & South East Asia.

## Brigidine Sisters

Bishop Daniel Delany, founder of the Brigidine Sisters in 1807, shared with the first Sisters his episcopal motto of *Fortiter et Suaviter* – Strength and Gentleness. This motto has been a source of inspiration for the Brigidine educational mission.

Bishop Delany had the benefit of a theological and liberal arts education in France. On his return to post-penal Ireland, he instigated a sophisticated educational process, which encompassed education of children and adults in both religious and secular learning.

The foundation of two teaching congregations, the Sisters of St Brigid and the Brothers of St Patrick are testimony to Daniel Delany's conviction that education was the paramount means of empowerment, social transformation and social justice

In 1883 Bishop James Murray of Maitland in New South Wales appealed to the Brigidine Sisters in Ireland to assist in providing education for the many immigrants



Students from Clonard College, Geelong.

coming to Australia. In response, the first foundation of the congregation was made in Coonamble, a town in the central west of New South Wales.

Bishop Martin Crane, first bishop of the Sandhurst Diocese in Victoria, made a similar request and a second foundation was made in the rural town of Echuca in 1886.

Initially there was a spreading out to other rural towns in both New South Wales and Victoria. As cities expanded, and there was a need for Sisters to access both formation opportunities and tertiary education, foundations were made in urban areas in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. The third wave of expansion of school ministries

occurred as the population grew as a result of post-war migration. Foundations in these years were made in Adelaide and Perth.

A vision of education across the life span is inherent in the Brigidine story. It has spurred initiatives that go beyond the specifics of school education: teacher training and professional development, a variety of adult education programs and an educational approach to parish-based ministry and community works. In the last 50 years this has also expanded to engagement in theological education, social welfare, counselling, nursing, prison ministry, hospital chaplaincy, retreat work, spiritual direction and aboriginal ministry.

Changing needs have led to the establishment of specific community works by the congregation and have been of different duration according to need. Examples of these works are spirituality centres, family ministry, Alternate School Program (community engagement and outreach to school refusers) and the Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project.

Collaboration with others committed to a just and inclusive education, inspired by the model of Jesus in the gospels, has been a pattern over the years. In 2014 a new collegial partnership occurred when governance and ownership of the secondary schools owned by the



The Australian Brigidine pioneers.

Brigidine Sisters and Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project were transferred to Kildare Ministries, a new Ministerial Public Juridic Person.

The story of Brigidine education continues under the governance and leadership of Kildare Ministries which includes Brigidine College, Indooroopilly; Brigidine College, St Ives; Kildare College, Holden Hill; Clonard College, Geelong; Kilbreda College, Mentone; Killester College, Springvale; Marian College, Ararat; Marian College, Sunshine West; St Joseph's College, Echuca and Star of the Sea College, Brighton.

On the occasion of the bicentenary, congregational leader of the Brigidine Sisters Catherine O'Connor said, "We join and celebrate with all who have benefitted from, contributed to and continue the long, rich and fruitful history of 200 years of Catholic Education in Australia". ●

#### SOURCES:

[Brigidine Sisters](#), accessed September 2021.

[Kildare Ministries](#), accessed September 2021.

All images Courtesy of Brigidine Sisters and Kildare Ministries.

## Patrician Brothers

For 138 years and counting, the Patrician Brothers have contributed to Australia's Catholic education story. Irish Bishop Daniel Delany of Kildare and Leighlin diocese, founded the Brothers of St Patrick in 1808 to counteract British colonial policies



Br Domenic Xuereb FSP and students from Patrician Brothers College, Fairfield.

that denied education to Catholic young people.

Though the 1880 Public Instruction Act had mandated free, compulsory and secular education for every child in NSW, it also severely penalised all faith-based schools by ending government subsidies.

Nevertheless, predominantly Irish Catholic communities remained tenaciously committed to their schools, but needed volunteer Religious to keep the doors open and expand.

The first Patricians to arrive in Australia took charge of St John's School, Maitland in 1883. Within 10 years, 39 Patrician Brothers had disembarked in Sydney at the request

of Irish NSW Bishops – Murray of Maitland, Quinn of Bathurst, Lanigan of Goulburn and Cardinal Moran of Sydney. Small Patrician schools opened in Bathurst and Goulburn (1884), Albury (1885), Dubbo, Armidale, and Wagga Wagga (1889), and Orange (1890). Other 19th century foundations were made in the Sydney suburbs of Redfern and Waterloo (1886), Ryde (1890) and Forest Lodge (1892).

By 1920, management of Catholic schools for boys in Regional NSW had transferred to Marist, De La Salle and Christian Brothers. Meanwhile, Patricians consolidated their schools in Sydney, and as membership grew, the Brothers moved into the rapidly expanding, multicultural Western and South-Western suburbs of Granville (1942), Blacktown (1952), Fairfield (1953), Liverpool (1954) and Marayong (1981).

In common with all Catholic schools, faith formation is the bedrock of Patrician school communities. Today, their lay principals and leadership teams partner with the Brothers to enrich school culture, by sharing the inclusive spirituality of St Patrick's Breastplate Prayer, Christ in Everyone who sees me. ●

#### SOURCES:

[Patrician Brothers' Australia](#), 2021, accessed September 2021.

Images courtesy of Patrician Brothers' Monastery.



Students from Patrician Brothers school in Bathurst c.1892.





Students and OLSH Sister at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College, Kensington c.1960s.

## Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

The story of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart's (OLSH) contribution to Catholic education in Australia began in 1885.

The first five OLSH Sisters, four from France and one from Ireland, arrived in Sydney on 31 January, opening their first school in Botany that same year. Margaret Sweeney, a 19 year old from Ryde, greeted the Sisters on their arrival and later became the first Australian Daughter of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. The OLSH congregation had been founded just 11 years prior by Fr Jules Chevalier MSC in Issoudun, France. Education has always been a central ministry in the congregation and tradition.

Three years after founding their Sydney Mission, the Our Lady of the

Sacred Heart School was established on Thursday Island (Waibení) by OLSH Sisters in 1887, which is the oldest school in the Diocese of Cairns. The first classroom was a verandah, with classes taught by Sydney born Sr Mary Margaret who is generally considered to be the school's founder.

From Sydney, the OLSH Sisters spread throughout NSW establishing schools, then to Tasmania in 1905. In July 1908, five OLSH Sisters travelled to the Northern Territory to open

"Together may we strive  
to make a difference  
in our community,  
country and indeed our  
world... that enables and  
enhances others to live  
and realise values of love,  
compassion, forgiveness  
and reconciliation."

and staff St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Darwin, originally called St Joseph's. Local priest Fr Francois Xavier Gsell who instigated the establishment of a Catholic school in Darwin, had a six room hut built for the Sisters to teach in. Located in the central business district of Darwin adjacent to St Mary's Star of the Sea Cathedral, St Mary's is the oldest school in the Diocese of Darwin.

From these humble beginnings the OLSH Sisters have taught and formed countless generations of young people, as they established and ran primary and secondary schools across every Australian state except Western Australia.

Approximately 60 schools, across urban, regional and remote communities have been under the leadership of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Today, the OLSH Sisters mission and values remains alive in the attitudes and actions of the many students and educators, in schools across the country. These schools continue to be inspired by the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart charism and the congregation's motto, 'May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be Everywhere Loved'.

Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart provincial leader Sr Philippa Murphy said: "As we celebrate 200 years of Catholic Education let us remind ourselves of our proud history and may this be a time for all involved in Catholic education to a renewed commitment to being open to the light of Christ that shines in our history and in our hearts".

"We are thankful to those who have gone before us and for the sound foundations they have laid, which enable us to provide an excellent holistic education, to our young people, based on the spirit of Jesus Christ," Sr Philippa said.

"Together may we strive to make a difference in our community, country and indeed our world - a difference that enables and enhances others to live and realise values of love, compassion, forgiveness and reconciliation.

"Catholic Education now and always 'Strong in Faith, Strong in Education'," she said. ●

#### SOURCES:

[Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Australia](#), 2021, Our History, accessed September 2021.

Dr B Phelts. *St Mary's: The Life and Times of a Parish School*, 1908 to 2008.

Historical image courtesy of Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Image courtesy of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College, Kensington.



Students from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College, Kensington today.



# The University of Notre Dame Australia

offers a transformative educational  
experience embedded in the  
Catholic intellectual tradition, with  
a focus on ethical decision-making.

**No.1 university in Australia  
for Overall Satisfaction\***

\*2020 Student Experience Survey, undergraduate and postgraduate coursework categories (qilt.edu.au)

**“Lecturers are always  
willing to help and  
the University is  
always providing you  
with opportunities  
to advance your  
knowledge.”**

*Brittany*  
Marketing Graduate

**notredame.edu.au**





## Wagga Wagga launches a history of schools

A special Mass was celebrated by Bishop of Wagga Wagga Mark Edwards OMI in St Michael's Cathedral on 3 November to mark the Bicentenary of Catholic education in Australia.

After the Mass, Bishop Edwards launched the commemorative book, *Our Story: Sowing the Seeds from Generation to Generation*, which looks at the history of each school in the diocese and recognises the vision, courage and dedication of the early founders.

In his homily, Bishop Mark said Catholic schools provide a spiritual enrichment, a spiritual growing... or, as they would have said in the 1850s, a passing on of the faith.

Today, the diocese's 25 primary schools and five secondary schools educate more than 8,600 students from diverse backgrounds and



Bishop Mark Edwards with principals and student representatives from Mater Dei Catholic College and Kildare Catholic College.

employ more than 1,500 staff.

In a recorded message played at the start of the celebrations, Jacinta Collins said Catholic schools, all across Australia, were built and sustained by the commitment to the Church's mission of education and through sheer hard work.

"The 30 schools in the Wagga Wagga diocese share this story of

determination and the resilience of the clergy, lay men and women, and religious congregations who built and staffed schools through years of great hardship and financial struggle," Jacinta said.

For more highlights visit  
[www.200years.catholic.edu.au](http://www.200years.catholic.edu.au)

## BICENTENARY PARTNER FEATURE

## CCI protects schools against cyber attacks

Australian Catholic schools hold the private information of some 777,000 students. It's no surprise the education sector is a key target for data theft or that it has become the victim of increased cyber security attacks during the Covid pandemic. Remote learning sees students access IT systems from multiple locations, using programs across a range of devices. With far more entry points to sensitive data than ever before, schools are more exposed to cyber security threats in the form of phishing, social engineering activity and ransomware attacks.

When a school loses data because of theft, there are serious privacy implications. Disruption to learning continuity is costly and some attacks have shut down entire schools.

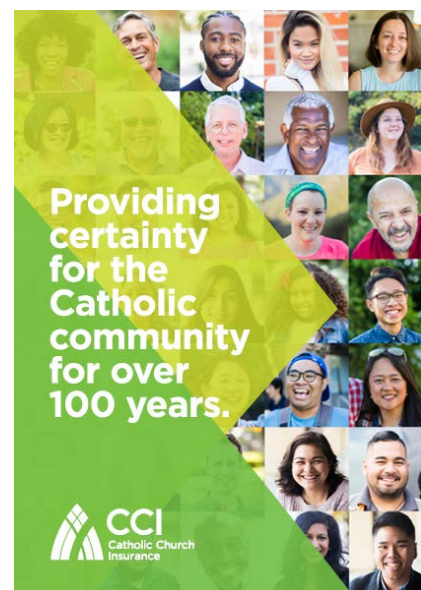
A Cyber insurance policy is a key component of a school's defence

against malicious attacks. CCI's Cyber policy protects schools against first and third-party losses, and our partnership with cyber security experts provides ongoing support to schools during and after a cyber event.

Attacks on schools often involve fraudulent invoices or present as data breaches. Fraudsters bank on schools being less likely to have IT experience to manage cyber security matters, but our education clients are no longer a soft target.

CCI's Cyber insurance solution can complement and enhance your school's cyber security framework. ●

Visit our risk support website via [risksupport.ccinsurance.org.au/cyber-security](http://risksupport.ccinsurance.org.au/cyber-security) to access our range of cyber security resources or contact your CCI Client Relationship Executive to find out more.



 **CCI**  
Catholic Church  
Insurance  
[www.ccinsurance.org.au](http://www.ccinsurance.org.au)



# Our bicentennial year of celebration



From top, left to right: 1. Students from St Gertrude's Catholic Primary, Smithfield at St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney. Photo: Giovanni Portelli. 2. Students from St John's Catholic College, Darwin at St Mary's Cathedral. 3. Students and staff with Auxiliary Bishop of Brisbane Ken Howell at St Mary's Church in Ipswich. Source: Brisbane Catholic Education. 4. NCEC chair Nicholas Moore, executive director Jacinta Collins and Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP. Source: Peter Rosengren. 5. Student readers at St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, Adelaide.

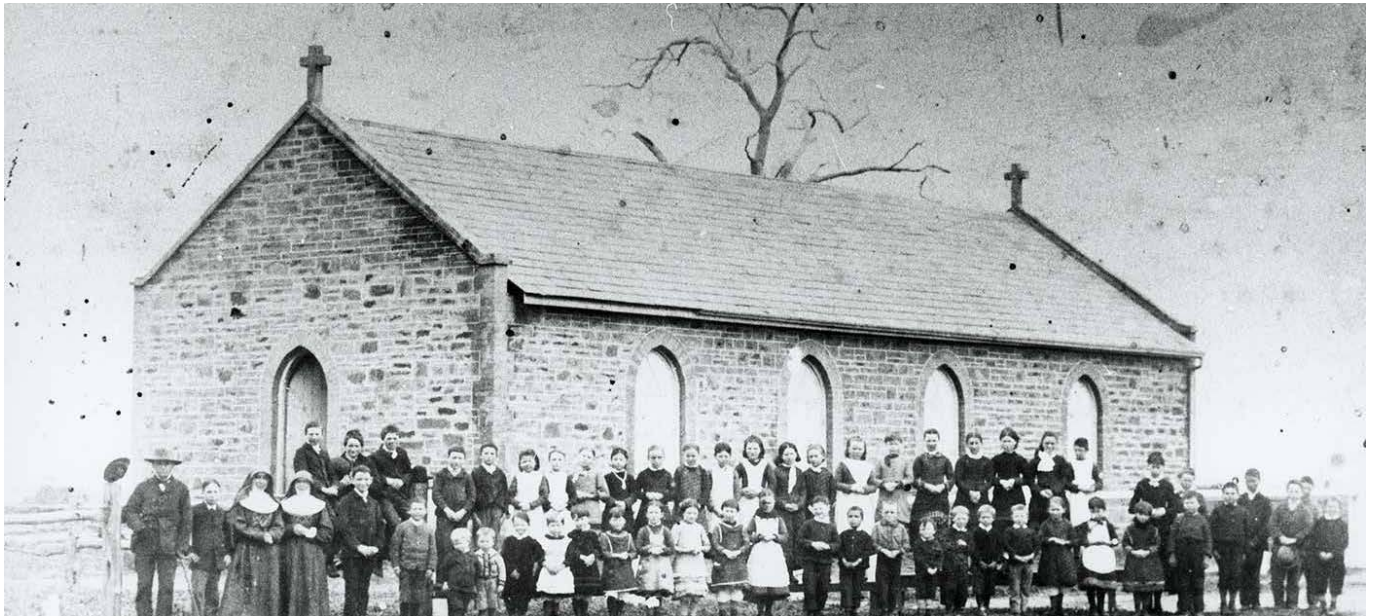




Photos 1- 9: Scenes from the student version of the 'Faith in the Future' National Song written by Fr Rob Galea. 10. St Mary's Parish School, Goondiwindi QLD marks the 200 Years of Catholic Education with a celebration cake. 11. Students with their 200 years banner at Our Lady of Mercy College, Heidelberg. 12. Students and staff celebrating at St Raphael's Catholic School, Cowra NSW. 13. Students and staff from Warlawurru Catholic School Red Hill, Lundja Community in Western Australia.



# Plenary Council: Looking at the future of Catholic education through a missionary lens



St Joseph's Catholic School, Strathalbyn. The "schools first" policy prioritised Catholic schools as the best way to form faithful Church members and foster a solid sense of Catholic identity in Australia. Image: National Museum of Australia.

Following is an extract of an article that was first published in [The Record](#).

Catholic schooling was the "adamantine rock upon which the future of the Church in Australia would be built," according to the Australian Bishops of the First Plenary Council in 1885, becoming, according to Catholic historian Edmund Campion, "the single most distinctive feature of Australian Catholicism".

Its goal, to form faithful Church members and foster a solid sense of Catholic identity. The "schools first" policy was reaffirmed at the Second Plenary Council in 1895 and today, as the Church in Australia [holds] the Fifth Plenary Council, it will be asking members to consider the question: "In what way does the Church in Australia recommit to the mission of Catholic education, including Catholic schools and universities in the decades to come?"

The Fifth Plenary Council of Australia *Instrumentum Laboris* states that Catholic schools make a

significant impact, educating more than 750,000 students across Australia, and as "places of evangelisation, formation and enculturation, allow students and teachers to explore and experience the Catholic faith tradition."

It continues by saying, "For many children, the first time they hear about God in a substantial way—or experience prayer and liturgy—is through attendance at a Catholic school, and Catholic education offices have developed new curricula and pedagogies (teaching practices) in religious education that relate to the contemporary student population of our schools."

For example, in 2006, the then Western Australian Catholic Education Office's push to introduce Religious Education (RE) as a Tertiary Entrance Examination subject in 2006, was hailed as a step towards the revival of Catholic religious education across the state. It had always been compulsory for students at Catholic schools to study the basis of their faith, yet now Catholic students had the flexibility to utilise RE as a subject to enter university.

The proposed change, supported by the Curriculum Council, would allow RE to be taught under the Outcomes Based Education system, making the subject more systematic, with students required to treat it as seriously as any other subject.

"This approach will change the way RE is taught. We are opting for a program that will prepare and encourage youth to continue their journey of faith beyond the school classroom," said then Catholic Education Office assistant director of RE, Debra Sayce.

Despite being described by *The West Australian* and *The Australian* on March 23, 2008, as a "disadvantage" to students, who would have to spend as much time studying for RE as other core subjects, such as Math and English, Ron Dullard, then Director of Catholic Education, defended the program, saying that it "would add flexibility for Catholic students because Religion could be used to gain tertiary entrance."

*Extract and images used with permission from [The Record](#).*



# Reflecting on the bicentenary of Catholic education



**Riley Wakely-Young, Year 3**

STAR OF THE SEA SCHOOL, HENLEY BEACH  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

I have really enjoyed being a part of celebrating 200 years of Catholic education. I love the song 'Faith in the Future' and I like singing it with my friends at school and at home for my family. It is wonderful to be a valued member of my Catholic school community that has been a part of Catholic education in South Australia for over 100 years. We constantly look for ways we can put our faith into action and live our core school values of respect, inclusivity, compassion, collaboration, and honesty. I look forward to growing my faith as I continue my Catholic school journey. ●

must be no complacency: we must focus more than ever on 'the Catholic difference' including transmission of faith, on access and enrolments, and on educational opportunity and excellence," he shared in his homily. After two centuries of service, we in Catholic education are determined to make an even greater contribution to the lives of our young people, families, church and society, happy 200th birthday Catholic education. ●



**Jacinta Collins**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL CATHOLIC  
EDUCATION COMMISSION

Catholic schools have served Australian families for over 200 years. As we build on the rich legacy of those that came before us, we have faith in the future of Catholic education and our shared mission to both educate and enliven the faith lives of future generations of children and young people. ●



**Mawson Kidman, Poppy Flint & Alida Broken**

MARY MACKILLOP MEMORIAL SCHOOL  
PENOLA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

We were a part of the 'Faith in the Future' song and video. At the time, and now when we watch it back, we feel really special and proud that we were able to represent our school and the whole community in that sort of way. We felt like we could express how we feel about Catholic Education in song form – and we love to sing. The microphones and camera felt very weird, but it came out really well. 200 Years is a really long time and to be part of the celebrations by contributing to the music video we felt like we were part of something special. Being a part of Catholic Education is a nice place to be. We see Mary MacKillop as a role model and we look up to her to be the best people we possibly can. Standing outside the school house we were thinking what she has taught us about living a simple life. ●



**Archbishop of Sydney Anthony Fisher OP**  
CHAIR, BISHOPS COMMISSION FOR CATHOLIC  
EDUCATION

The bicentenary of Catholic education in Australia invites us to remember the past with gratitude, be inspired by that story in the present, and look forward with faith in the future. But there



**Nicholas Moore**

CHAIR, NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATION  
COMMISSION

It's a remarkable achievement that Catholic education has successfully responded to meet the needs of Australia's changing population, and economic and social circumstances over 200 years. As we celebrate this significant milestone, it's timely to take stock of all that has been achieved and to look ahead to identify how we can better deliver an excellent standard of Catholic schooling for generations of young people to come. ●

For more stories or to submit your own visit the [200 Years website](https://www.200years.catholic.edu.au).

# Biographical Dictionary of Catholic Educators

A new book has been published by Coventry Press featuring 30 biographies of Catholic educators spanning the 200 year history of Catholic education.

*Not Forgotten, Australian Catholic Educators 1820-2020* is edited by Seamus O'Grady and Anne Benjamin and is part of a larger project, the Biographical Dictionary of Australian Catholic Educators which was created to keep alive the stories of the people of Catholic education in Australia.

The book captures the stories of some of those who forged Catholic education in Australia to ensure they are not forgotten, and are honoured appropriately, in a way which can inform and influence new generations of Catholic educators.

Following are brief extracts of three educators from the book.



**Francis (Frank) Michael Martin**  
1928-2015

*Astute negotiator and visionary architect of a Catholic education system*

By Anne O'Brien

...When Labor won government in December 1972, the scene was set for Martin's transformative work in Catholic education to expand in scope and depth. Prime Minister Gough Whitlam immediately set up

an Interim Committee of the Schools Commission, with Professor Peter Karmel as chair, to investigate the needs of all schools throughout Australia.

When Martin accepted nomination to this Commission to represent the Catholic sector, he was told that he would be pilloried throughout Australia and that he was unlikely to survive B A Santamaria's The Movement, Democratic Labour Party, undermining of him. Nevertheless, at the initial meeting of the Interim Committee, Martin achieved a major coup whereby a block fund would be allocated to each state Catholic authority which in turn was required to allocate the fund according to need... ●

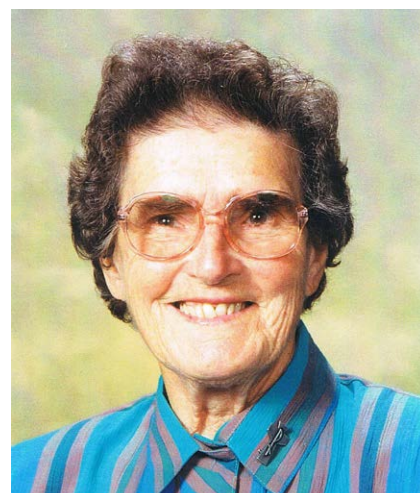


**Elizabeth Fitzgerald (Mother Mary Benignus Fitzgerald RSM)**  
1890-1946

*Beloved educationist inspiring generations*

By Sr Gabrielle Foley RSM

...Enshrined in the memory of those associated with her in her school days (at St Mary's College, Gunnedah) is a quiet picture of a most loveable character whose innate honesty and personal charm endeared her to all. It was no surprise to her teachers that she chose to spend her life as a "Bride of Christ"... ●

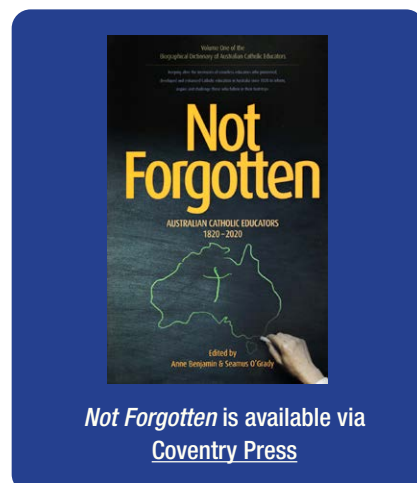


**Winifred Agnes Ryan (Sr Agnes Ryan MSS) 1915-2011**

*Founding congregational member and pioneer educator*

Sr Corrie van den Bosch MSS

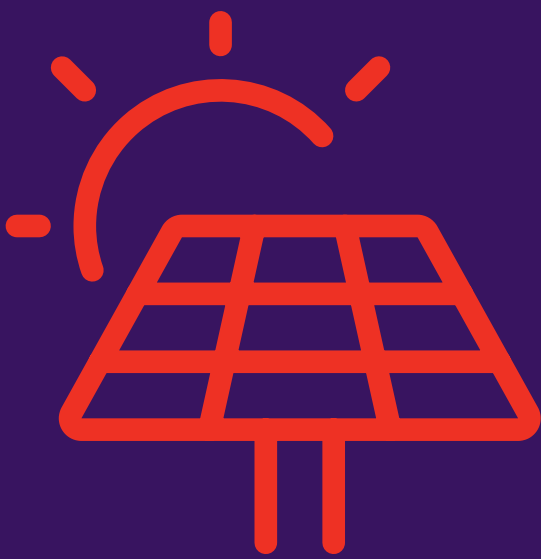
Agnes Ryan's obituary in *The Courier Mail* noted that to "give adequate coverage of her story as a Missionary Sister of Service would require a book of no mean proportions". This biography, therefore, is a challenge to overview a life filled with many achievements and "firsts", as Sr Agnes (who went by her middle name), stands out as a founding member of the Missionary Sisters of Service, a pioneer in Australian catechetics and, if not the first, then one of the first women to teach in an Australian Catholic seminary... ●



*Not Forgotten* is available via  
[Coventry Press](http://Coventry Press)



# Celebrating 200 years of Catholic education in Australia



**No. 1**  
**ENERGY  
EFFICIENT  
UNIVERSITY**

Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association  
Annual Survey 2020

**Apply now**  
**[yourfuture.acu.edu.au](https://yourfuture.acu.edu.au)**

CRICOS registered provider: 00004G



Catholic Education  
CELEBRATING 200 YEARS  
*Faith in the future*



We gratefully acknowledge the generous support  
of our Principal and Gold Partners.

#### PRINCIPAL PARTNERS



AUSTRALIAN  
CATHOLIC  
SUPERANNUATION  
RETIREMENT FUND



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NOTRE DAME  
A U S T R A L I A



ACU  
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

#### GOLD PARTNERS



CCI  
Catholic Church  
Insurance



texthelp®



NATIONAL  
CATHOLIC  
EDUCATION  
COMMISSION