

## PREAMBLE & CONTEXT

In 2008 the Diocese commissioned the Australian Catholic University Flagship for Creative and Authentic Leadership to undertake a review of Catholic Schools Office (CSO) Service to schools. Recommendations 6, 7 and 8 of this review were:

6. The Bishop establish formal processes for whole-of-Church dialogue amongst CSO, school communities, priests, parents and other key stakeholders on issues relating to Catholicity, Catholic Identity and the evangelising mission of the school as an educational ministry of the Church.
7. Whole-of-Church strategies be initiated to strengthen collaborative relationships within and among schools, the Diocesan Office, parishes and other stakeholders.
8. The CSO establish a 'Catholic Identity and Evangelisation Project Team' (CIEPT), comprising key stakeholders for the education system, reporting to the Director, to plan directions, priorities and targets for the future with regard to Catholic Identity and Evangelisation of all Catholic schools (primary and secondary) in the Diocese.

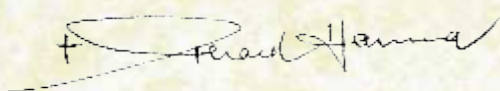
This Mandate is in response to recommendations 6 & 7 in particular. Recommendation 8 will be dealt with elsewhere.

This Mandate is also a key response by the Wagga Wagga diocese to the NSW and ACT bishops Pastoral Letter *Catholic Schools At A Crossroads*, which challenged school systems to renew their purpose, identity and direction.

In developing this Mandate I have also reflected on the Catholic Schools Office Vision and Mission statement under the headings of Faith, Learning, Care, Service and Stewardship.

As chief teacher of this Diocese I now commission all involved in Catholic schools to join me in bringing good news to the poor, proclaiming release to captives, giving sight to the blind, letting the oppressed go free and proclaiming the year of the Lord's favour (cf. Luke 4:18).

May the Spirit of the Lord be upon us and anoint us as we continue our adventure in Catholic Schools.



+ Gerard Hanna DD  
Bishop of Wagga Wagga  
18 July 2011



## CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

Bishop Hanna's Mandate to all involved in  
Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga



# BISHOP HANNA'S MANDATE TO ALL INVOLVED IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

## THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND ITS PURPOSE

The Catholic school participates in the evangelising mission of the Church and is the privileged environment in which Christian education is carried out. In this way, 'Catholic schools are at once places of evangelisation, of complete formation, of inculturation, of apprenticeship in a lively dialogue between young people of different religions and social backgrounds'.<sup>1</sup>

In order to fulfil this mandate to evangelise, schools of the Wagga Wagga diocese provide an education in which young people encounter and engage with Jesus and his message.

Catholic schools are therefore welcoming, compassionate and inclusive communities of faith, learning, care, service and stewardship.

## FAITH

### FAITH - TEACHING, CELEBRATING AND LIVING OUR CATHOLIC FAITH

The truth of Jesus Christ is revealed in a way of life. The first followers of Jesus were known as people of 'the way', because their way of life exemplified the good news of Jesus and the values of the Kingdom. The Catholic school therefore continues in 'the way' of Jesus by bearing witness to his life and teachings. When we observe a life devoted to loving and serving God by loving and serving neighbour, we know we are in the saving presence of the truth.<sup>2</sup>

The Catholic school, in collaboration with parents, the Parish and local Church, proclaims God's Reign through Christian witness and the Ministry of the Word. Ministry of the Word includes the teaching of a rigorous Religious Education curriculum based on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the principles of the *General Directory for Catechesis*, Sacramental and Liturgical celebrations, Prayer, action for Justice, Retreats and all activities of catechesis.

Catholic schools are called to be dynamic signs and instruments of the life-giving good news of Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>

## LEARNING

### LEARNING - INSPIRING, INFORMING AND ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITIES IN LEARNING

In Catholic schools learning and the emphasis on the growth and well-being of the whole person is paramount.<sup>4</sup> The Catholic School is privileged and obliged to develop the spiritual dimension of the human person.<sup>5</sup>

The purpose of all learning in Catholic schools is both for the good of the individual person and the common good leading to authentic transformation of persons and society as a whole.<sup>6</sup> The interrelatedness of human knowledge means that all Learning Areas explicitly or implicitly teach about God and religious values or questions. Hence, Catholic schools need to help students reflect critically on the contribution religious understandings can make within each learning area.<sup>7</sup>



## CARE

### CARE - BUILDING CARING AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS THAT PROMOTE WELLBEING AND LEARNING

Care of persons in Catholic schools is founded on the inviolable dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God.<sup>8</sup> 'The Catholic school is a school for all, with special attention to those who are weakest.'<sup>9</sup> This radical inclusiveness is a clear expression of and witness to Christ's life and teaching by a school community. Therefore each school is to be sensitive to the particular and unique needs of the local community and respond with compassion and kindness. Concomitantly, the Catholic Schools Office has a duty to support schools as they discern and address these needs.

## SERVICE

### SERVICE - EMBRACING LEADERSHIP WHICH FOSTERS COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT AND PARTNERSHIP

All who are employed in Catholic Schools must remember that they have a role of Christian service. They are to be a sign to all of the Christ who came to serve rather than to be served.<sup>10</sup> This imperative is especially critical for those who hold formal leadership positions in schools and the CSO.

The ideal partnership between parish and school gives witness to collaborative practices which further the evangelising mission of the Church.<sup>11</sup>

## STEWARDSHIP

### STEWARDSHIP - CARING FOR PEOPLE, CREATION AND RESOURCES

As Christians we have a particular concern for the environment; we understand and appreciate the interrelatedness of all creation and know creation as a gift from God which requires equitable sharing and wise stewardship. Therefore schools have a moral imperative to practise decision making that is ecologically and ethically sustainable.<sup>12</sup>

1. Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1997) 11.
2. Cf. Gal 2:15-16.
3. Cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School* (1977) 35-37; Congregation for the Clergy, *General Directory for Catechesis* (1997) 259.
4. Cf. *The Catholic School* (1977) 29, 35.
5. Cf. *The Catholic School* (1977) 30.
6. Rom 12:4-5, Jn 10:10; Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium* (1964) 32; Second Vatican Council, *Declaration on Christian Education* (1965) 8; *The Catholic School* (1977) 39, 56; Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools* (1982) 18-19.
7. Cf. *The Catholic School* (1977) 37-54; Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of the Catholic School* (1988) 64.
8. Gen 1:26.
9. *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1997) 15.
10. Mt 20:28.
11. 1 Peter 5:3-4; *Lumen Gentium* (1964) 36; *Lay Catholics in Schools* (1982) 33; *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1997) 18-20.
12. Gen 2:15; Ps 24; Catholic Earthcare Australia, *On Holy Ground* (2005) p.4, Benedict XVI, *World Day of Peace Message: 'If you Want to Cultivate Peace Protect Creation'* (2010) 1.