

# Message Stick

To all members of the Catholic Education family



Catholic Education  
Diocese of Rockhampton

**Friday 30 July 2021**

Good morning everyone

I hope you have all had a very enjoyable and rewarding Catholic Education Week (CEW). It has been a delight to hear of the creative and meaningful ways our schools have celebrated CEW bringing joy and a wonderful sense of unity to our school, parish and wider communities. Numerous acts of kindness and outreach to those in need were again a particular highlight and I thank, most sincerely, all staff involved in planning and presenting the many and varied activities and events that took place this week.

I was very pleased to be in Mackay for our Diocesan Catholic Education Week Mass celebration at St Patrick's Church together with representatives from our Northern Region school communities as well as those joining in via livestream. My thanks to Fr Don White for presiding and for leading us in offering praise and thanks to our God for the great gift of Catholic Education and in praying for wisdom and guidance as we continue the journey. Special congratulations to our Diocesan Spirit of Catholic Education Award recipient Natalie McCosker (APRE St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Emerald). Due to escalating COVID uncertainty, Natalie did not attend the Catholic Education Week State Launch celebrations and Award Ceremony in Brisbane this week. However, there will be opportunity to present Natalie with her much-deserved award at an appropriate future date. Congratulations also to all our Spirit Award nominees who would have received their certificates recognising their special achievement at Catholic Education Week celebrations.

I also was pleased to attend the Official Blessing of the Site for Catherine McAuley College in Mackay that will open to students in 2022. Fr Don White conducted the Blessing Ceremony and with the new College to adopt the charism of the Sisters of Mercy under the patronage of their founder Catherine McAuley, it was wonderful to be joined by a number of Sisters of Mercy for the Blessing Ceremony.

As MacKillop Catholic Primary School, Mackay celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I was pleased this week to join the community for the Blessing and Opening of new buildings and facilities. MacKillop continues to build on the traditions established by St Mary of the Cross MacKillop and I take this opportunity to thank all members of the school community, past and present, who have contributed to the development of this wonderful place of learning where witness to the school's motto of *Faith and Service* is exemplified every day.

Another highlight of my visit to Mackay was attending the Official Blessing and Opening of the redeveloped educational facilities at St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Mackay. These new buildings and facilities will be of significant and ongoing benefit to the St Mary's school community for many years to come.

This week, Pam Betts (Executive Director Catholic Education, Archdiocese of Brisbane) announced she will retire at the end of 2021. I acknowledge Pam's deep commitment to the Mission of Catholic Education, her visionary leadership and great passion for teaching and learning. I am deeply grateful for the blessing of Pam's wise counsel, collegiality, and professionalism. Pam has been a great friend to Catholic Education in our Diocese in many ways and an incredible support to me personally. We pray that God will bless Pam in abundance in her retirement.

Last week, Leading Mathematics Education Project teachers gathered once again at the Kevin Castles Centre in Rockhampton for continued professional development on the teaching and learning of Mathematics. Participants from six of our Primary Schools heard from renowned RMIT Professor, Dianne Siemon, on the topic of *"Big Ideas of Number"*. My thanks to John Campbell (Primary Mathematics Consultant) and the Curriculum Team for their work in planning and presenting this important Inservice.

The inspirational performances of our Olympians in Tokyo have been very exciting. Watching past Catholic Education students Madi Wilson (Sacred Heart Yeppoon and The Cathedral College Rockhampton) and Meg Harris (Emmanuel and Holy Spirit College Mackay) stamp their claim on the 4x100m Freestyle Relay with outstanding performances in the heats and then a gold medal and World Record swim in the final was undoubtedly a highlight. We wish all our Olympians and in particular our past students every blessing in their quest to represent Australia honourably and realise their Olympic aspirations.

Finally, in this very special Catholic Education Week, I would like to thank each of you for all you do to serve the Mission of Catholic Education. I am most grateful for the dedication and commitment of all in our wonderful Kindergarten, Primary School and College communities, who work so diligently to make a difference in the lives of our students, their families and the wider community.

God Bless

*Leesa*



**Please remember in your prayers those members of our extended Catholic Education Family who have recently deceased.**

**Graeme Sowden** husband of Jo Sowden, teacher Marist College, Emerald.

**Please remember in your prayers those members of our extended Catholic Education Family who are unwell.**

**Ken O'Brien** father of Kylie Cunningham, teacher St Brigid's Catholic Kindergarten, Emerald.

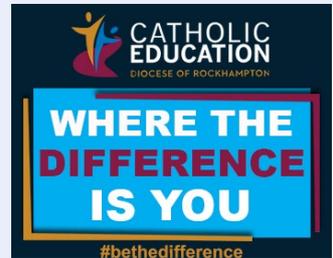


**Where's Leesa:** Monday 2 August – Thursday 5 August, Office; Friday 6 August Priests' Jubilee Mass (St Joseph's Cathedral) and Qld Directors' Forum

# Catholic Education Week

## 25-31 July 2021

Catholic Education Week celebrations in school communities included our Diocesan Mass at St Patrick's Church, Mackay followed by presentations to Northern Region Spirit of Catholic Education Award nominees pictured (below left) with Diocesan Director Leesa Jeffcoat (far left) and Fr Don White (far right). Pictured below at the Blessing of the Building Site at Catherine McAuley College, Mackay during CEW were (L-R) Julianne Gilbert MP, Leesa Jeffcoat, Sr Joanne Molloy rsm, Sr Denise Hinton rsm, Fr Don White, Fr Jayanthi Maddala HGN and Catherine McAuley College Principal Jim Ford.



### Employment opportunities:

### Experienced and Graduate Teachers:

Applications are open for full-time teaching positions for the 2022 school year. Please visit the Catholic Education website for further details.

### The Cathedral College, Rockhampton Boarding Supervisors:

Applications are open for full-time and casual positions. To apply visit [tccr.com.au/employment](http://tccr.com.au/employment)



Year 3 students at **St Joseph's Biloela** made flowers and wrote special messages to residents at Wahroonga Retirement Home. Students also prepared a display which was featured at the local shopping centre during Catholic Education Week.



### Reflection from Pope Francis



You can, you must try to seek God in every human life. Although the life of a person is a land full of thorns and weeds, there is always a space in which the good seed can grow. You have to trust God.



### Star of the Sea Gladstone

Principal Jennett O'Mullane presents flowers to volunteer Jennifer Barry during Catholic Education Week. Jennifer was recently awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for her service to the Gladstone community.



### Shalom College Bundaberg

Walsh House warmly welcomed RACQ LifeFlight Community Engagement Officer Sarah Biddle and Senior Pilot Tony Miller to a special House assembly and presented a heartfelt gift of thanks and gratitude prepared by PC3 as part of their Courage and Kindness Project (pictured above). A family member of a Walsh House student had experienced first-hand the life-saving care provided by LifeFlight having been rescued following a climbing accident.