



3 February 2025

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Colleagues, Parents, and Friends of Catholic Education WA

I am pleased to welcome you back for another busy and hopefully productive year. I especially wanted to welcome the 82,000 students who will be attending Catholic schools in 2025, particularly those students who are starting their educational journey in Catholic education for the first time.



Among this group of students commencing their journey in a Catholic school for the first time is my youngest grandchild, Matteo (see the photo below with Holy Cross Principal Albert Borrello and Kindergarten teacher Mrs Barbara Stanley), who commences kindergarten at Holy Cross College, Ellenbrook. All of my grandchildren

have, or continue to benefit from the outstanding academic, pastoral and spiritual opportunities provided by Catholic schools. The core vision of Catholic education in Western Australia is a commitment to ensuring that Catholic schools continue to be faith communities where Christ is at the centre and children are our focus.



While every year is important, this year is particularly significant in the context of our faith, as it signifies a Jubilee Year for the Catholic Church. A Jubilee Year is marked every 25 years, with the last one occurring in the year 2000.

In his letter announcing the Jubilee, Pope Francis has called on us to “fan the flame of hope that has been given us, and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open

spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision” and said the “forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth”. In the context of our mission to deliver a quality, affordable, faith-based education, this message

serves as an aspiration: to give the young people in our schools hope for the future, and a strength of mind and spirit to tackle life's challenges and embrace its gifts wherever they may lie.

This year also marks a significant milestone for Catholic education in Western Australia, with the opening of our newest school, St Marcellin Catholic College in Madora Bay; a Catholic school in the Marist tradition. The school will eventually be a full Pre-Kindergarten - Year 12 College but opens this term to around 100 students in Pre-Kindy to Year 2. I want to thank everyone who has contributed to ensuring the school is ready to welcome its foundation students and thank those parents who have put their trust in us to support your children as they grow, learn, and discover their passions in life. I especially wish to acknowledge Anita O'Donohue, the foundation principal, who has been working over the last 18 months to ensure that our foundation students will experience an excellent and authentic Catholic education.



Thank you to the thousands of families from across our diverse state who have chosen to be a part of one of our 162 Catholic school communities. Our passionate, dedicated teaching and support staff, under the leadership of our principals, and in partnership with our families, are committed to fostering faith communities which support young people to not only excel in academics, arts, culture, and sport but to grow into compassionate,

community-minded young people inspired by the model of Christ.

We recognise the privileged position that we hold in being able to serve the Western Australian community and are committed to advocating for equity in government funding for those families who pay their taxes, while also contributing to their child's Catholic education through school fees. Unlike other states, WA's Catholic schools do not receive any state government capital grant funding. Ahead of the state election in March, we have therefore called on all WA political parties to commit to providing capital grant funding to Catholic schools, along with commitments for funding in the Kimberley. You can find out more about our asks by visiting <https://fairfunding.cewa.edu.au/>.

In 2025 we also welcome new Bishops to the Dioceses of Broome and Bunbury. In November last year, Bishop Tim Norton SVD was installed as the third Bishop of Broome. Bishop Tim has a wealth of experience, including time working in Mexico City as a missionary and as the Provincial Superior for the Society of the Divine Word. Bishop Tim will bring great energy, enthusiasm and vision to the Diocese of Broome accompanied by a great commitment to First Nations people.

In January, Pope Francis appointed Fr George Kolodziej SDS, who has served as Chaplain for Catholic Education WA since January 2019, as the new Bishop of Bunbury. I have known Fr George for 30 years, and I am grateful to him for his wise counsel and spiritual support to

me and our staff during his time here. Fr George is currently the regional superior of the Salvatorians in Australia. I wish him well in his new mission in Bunbury. He is a faith-filled man who will bring a great love of Jesus to the Bunbury Diocese.

A new year often brings with it significant change. I would like to welcome Annette Morey who has been confirmed as Deputy Executive Director of Catholic Education for a five-year term.

Annette has done excellent work over the last twelve-months in the role, and I congratulate her on this substantive appointment. Another new face in CEWA's Executive team this year is Dan Wood, who began as Director School Improvement and Wellbeing on 1 January. Dan has worked in Catholic education in Western Australia for twenty years, both in schools and in the Catholic Education Office. I look forward to working with Dan and Annette in their new roles and thank all my colleagues on the Executive for their service.

Finally, on the 4 July (the last day of Semester One), I will retire after 47 years working in Catholic Education. The Bishops of Western Australia, as the employer of the Executive Director, will commence a recruitment process in Term One. Please keep in your prayers the Bishops and any potential candidates for the position.

I wish you all a successful year ahead.

Yours sincerely

Wayne Bull
Executive Director