

ACU Rome Campus hosts Catholic school principals from around Australia

MORE than 30 Catholic school principals and educators have returned from the Australian Catholic University (ACU) Rome Campus after attending the three-week Faculty of Education and La Salle Academy Education program.

The La Salle Academy aims to develop and deliver quality teaching and research programs to help educators fully realise the aspirations of the New Evangelisation of the Catholic Church.

The group consisted of a large contingent from the Archdiocese of Melbourne as well as principals and other leaders from Catholic schools across Australia.

The program ranged from audiences with Pope Francis and various Dicasteries and Congregations, to lectures with some of the world's leading theologians and philosophers, to excursions to significant Roman sights as well as major churches, basilicas, monasteries and museums.

Principal of Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School in Prahran East Francine Walsh attended the program, saying the course has enriched her ability to advance the Catholic mission within her school community, with parents now looking more to the school to provide faith formation, both for themselves and their children.

"As a result of this Rome experience, I will be forever changed and my Catholic leadership developed," Mrs Walsh said.

"Gaining a deeper insight into key documents concerning Catholic education and how spiritualities and charisms can contribute to the culture of our school and community, and using these aspects to engage our parents and families is a key reason why I attended the program."

"Some principals in neighbouring schools that attended the program and I are already arranging for professional learning for our staff to echo some of the learning that took place in us," Mrs Walsh said.

The Dean of La Salle Academy, Professor Br David Hall fms said, "Rome became our classroom and what a rich and engaging classroom it turned out to be. Our program is about expanding the mind and touching the heart so as to transform participants in their vocation as Catholic school educators. This pilgrimage and study tour enlivened our souls and we have come home different people."

ACU's Vice President, Fr Anthony Casamento csma, who was in Rome for the program said that the program, "Reaffirmed ACU's commitment to working with Catholic school systems across Australia to enhance the development of leadership capabilities of Catholic school leaders in their vocation as mission leaders in their local school communities."

Regional General Manager Eastern Region at Catholic Education Melbourne, Marwin Austerberry attended the program saying it provided a platform to lead with confidence, but with humility.

"I saw this as an exciting opportunity to explore and deepen my faith and build my knowledge and understanding of my Catholic Identity and heritage. To build on my faith journey, it was an opportunity for reflection and deeper dialogue with others. I would like to reiterate my sincere gratitude to all involved in creating this experience."

The Faculty of Education and La Salle Academy program will run at the ACU Rome Campus again on 23 June-12 July 2019.

Media Contact: Georgina Bible, 0475 963 606, Georgina.Bible@acu.edu.au