



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Queensland celebrates spirit of Catholic education

Media Release

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The great diversity of Queensland's 306 Catholic schools was in the spotlight last week for Queensland's annual Catholic Education Week celebrations.

The theme for this year's celebrations was *Many Voices. One Spirit.*

Queensland Catholic Education Commission executive director Dr Lee-Anne Perry said the theme reflected the broad range of social, economic, religious and cultural backgrounds of the 149,000 students in Catholic schools.

"Catholic Education Week is a wonderful opportunity for us to focus on the achievements of Catholic schools across the state," Dr Perry said.

"It's a time to celebrate the uniqueness of each of our school communities but to also realise that we are one in faith and drawn together through a common heritage.

"Our Catholic schools come in many shapes and sizes from our small rural schools to large metropolitan colleges, from boarding schools to flexi-schools for disengaged students and as a sector we listen to the voices of all those communities."

This year's official launch event was held in Central Queensland, at St Joseph's Cathedral, Rockhampton, and its neighbouring school, The Cathedral College.

The launch included presentation of the Spirit of Catholic Education Awards, to staff and volunteers who have made an outstanding contribution to Catholic education.

Speaking in a special Catholic Education Week [launch video](#), Rockhampton's Bishop Michael McCarthy said: "It's wonderful to be able to invite the whole of Catholic Education Queensland here to Rockhampton to launch what is just essentially our charism, educating our young people in the faith and giving them a really excellent education – setting them up for the future."

Brisbane Archbishop Mark Coleridge said: "There are many, many voices in all of our schools and yet there's this great sense of unity bonded together by one spirit."

Bishop Robert McGuckin travelled around his vast diocese for a key feature of Toowoomba's Catholic Education Week celebrations – the annual Bishop's In-service Days, where staff gather to celebrate, reflect and learn together.

Toowoomba's executive director of Catholic Schools, Dr Pat Coughlan, said the days were powerful, unifying events for the diocese and Toowoomba Catholic Schools and a public affirmation of the highly regarded contribution of Catholic education to the life and vitality of communities in Toowoomba and further west.

“It is a privilege to experience the high staff morale and firm commitment to our mission which is such a distinctive feature of our organisation,” he said.

This year’s recipients of the Spirit of Catholic Education Awards are:

Maureen Burton

Consultant: Inclusive Education, Brisbane Catholic Education North Service Centre
(Archdiocese of Brisbane)

Nat See Kee

School Officer, Our Lady Help of Christians School
(Diocese of Cairns)

Bronwyn Reguson

President, Parents and Friends Association, St Joseph’s Catholic School, The Strand
(Diocese of Townsville)

Kathleen Hore

School Support Officer, Religious Education and Mission, Chanel College
(Diocese of Rockhampton)

Emily O’Sullivan

Volunteer, Mary MacKillop Catholic College
(Diocese of Toowoomba)

Dr Shannon O’Gorman

College Counsellor, St James College, Spring Hill
(Religious Institute/PJP schools)

Aunty Joan Hendriks Reconciliation Awards

Robyn Bloomfield

Senior Boarding Supervisor, Holy Spirit College, Cooktown

Deadly Indigenous Education Workers (Team Award)

Emma Shaxson, Melisia Ellis, Marita Murray, Good Shepherd Catholic School, Rasmussen

All the highlights of the awards and the launch event are captured in the [Catholic Education Week launch video](#)