

## **Media Release: Hundreds of Catholic students showcased their belief in the Arts**

The **Toowoomba Catholic Schools Arts Fest: Belief in the Arts 2023** was held from 19-22 June 2023 across multiple venues in Toowoomba.

This inaugural Arts Fest showcased the talents of primary and secondary school students from across its 31 schools with nearly 1,000 performers!

The aim of the Arts Fest was to bring together students from across the Diocese and to provide them with the time and space they need to share their talents, learn something new and work together with students who attend schools that may be hundreds of kilometres away.

Students travelled hundreds of kilometres from Roma, Stanthorpe and even as far as Cunnamulla and Quilpie to get involved in dancing, singing, drama, verse speaking and visual arts.

They have been rehearsing in their own schools for months so they could be ready to perform in front of large audiences in venues like the Empire Theatre.

There is a growing body of Australian and international research that demonstrates the enormously positive impacts that participating in The Arts can have on students' academic and non-academic success.

Dr Pat Coughlan, Executive Director: Catholic Schools said, "The Arts Fest provided an opportunity for students to perform and enjoy the fun and excitement of learning new skills and collaborating with other students from other schools in the Diocese."

"This initiative grew from a determination that the Arts do not become a casualty of the challenges currently being experienced across the education sector, a crowded curriculum where Arts subjects sometimes make way for the more 'important subjects'."

"The Arts subjects nurture those sometimes overlooked experiences of the human experience, expanding the imagination, stimulating curiosity and wonder, enhancing personal and social skills, teaching collaboration and shaping positive attitudes and dispositions to learning and life."

"For students from some of our smaller schools, particularly those in the far west, this was an incredible opportunity for them to participate in large scale performances."

"The Arts provides a range of career opportunities and performing with others in front of an audience enhances self-confidence, creativity and self-discipline."

"This was a celebration of the incredible diversity of The Arts in the Toowoomba Diocese, featuring an Art Show, a showcase of student talent at the Belief in the Arts concert, and concluding with a Sacred Choral Concert and Mass."

Across the three days of the festival, students took part in workshops, collaborated with students from other schools and performed in front of audiences - all to celebrate Toowoomba Catholic Schools' Belief in The Arts!

It was a truly magical experience where hundreds of students had the opportunity to bring to life amazing productions and to participate together.

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