

## **New Chair appointed to CatholicCare Tasmania Advisory Board**

Faith, compassion, energy, enthusiasm, and extensive experience – these are just a few of the qualities Anita Cunningham has brought to CatholicCare Tasmania in her appointment as Board Chair.

“As a Catholic, I look for opportunities to provide service to others,” she said.

“As an educator, I have seen the impacts of disadvantage and I have also seen the positive, life-affirming impact of compassion and justice.

“As a Catholic educator, my vocation is to help people flourish – children and adults alike.”

With a career spanning more than 30 years in Catholic Education within Victoria and Tasmania – 25 of those years spent in leadership roles – Anita is well-prepared for her new position.

In recent years, she has held several senior roles within Catholic Education Tasmania, including Principal at St Anthony’s Catholic School, Director of Learning and Teaching at the Catholic Education Office and Manager: Employee and Workforce Development for Catholic Education Tasmania.

“These roles have given me opportunities to develop skills in leading and facilitating organisational and cultural change, communication, risk management, strategic planning, and stakeholder engagement,” she said.

“My work in schools and within the education system has given me a sound and practical knowledge of the realities faced by individuals and families within Tasmania. My own brother suffered from a significant and devastating mental illness, and I know, firsthand, the trauma and toll such things take on the individual and the family.”

Anita joined the CatholicCare Tasmania board in 2022 to support the CEO and teams through board governance, decision-making and accountability practices.

“CatholicCare Tasmania is the primary social services agency of the Catholic Church across Tasmania, with over 60 years’ experience in supporting, caring for and empowering our most vulnerable Tasmanians,” she said.

“The Board is a committed group of outstanding people who are passionate about equity, justice and care for those who are at a disadvantage.”

Anita's goal is to ensure the work of CatholicCare remains true to its overall mission as a faith-based organisation.

"This means to be always cognisant during decision-making, of the mission of the Catholic Church in offering compassionate care, resources and our faith-filled work and to bring justice, equity and fairness to the lives of all," she said.

In light of the Tasmanian Government's Women on Boards Strategy 2020-2025 – which set a target of 50% representation of women on Tasmanian Government Boards – Anita noted the value women bring to boards, organisations and the wider community.

"I believe that diversity within a board creates great opportunities for new ways of thinking, complementary ideas (and diverse ideas too!) and a synergy that is not available to boards or groups that are less diverse," she said.

"It is a wonderful way to see situations from various angles, which encourages thorough discussion and, in turn, results in robust decisions."

Anita said the CatholicCare Board, and CatholicCare itself included women who are outstanding in their fields of work.

"Seeing fellow women, and particularly Tasmanian women, working, succeeding and enjoying these roles is important to all in our community and particularly to other young men and women who may aspire to use their skills, knowledge and wisdom in similar ways," she said.

**Word Count: 523**

**Photo credit:** Richard Ho

**Photo caption:** Newly appointed Chair of the CatholicCare Tasmania Advisory Board, Anita Cunningham.