



# St Columba's School Bayswater

Grow in Faith      Seek Wisdom      Live in Peace

## Evangelisation Plan

### VISION STATEMENT

St Columba's Primary School aims to foster the total development of each individual, within a loving community, that is totally committed to supporting the Catholic faith, principles and ideals within the framework of the Mercy Values.

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## Introduction

The Church's mission, received from Jesus Christ through the apostles, is to proclaim the Good News of Salvation to every human being. The mission of the Church is the basic mission too of the Catholic school. The process through which the Church fulfils this mission is called "evangelisation".

The Church evangelises by

"bringing the Good News into all strata of human society, and, through its influence, transforming humanity from within and making it new"

*(On Evangelisation in the Modern World 18)*

Catholic schools evangelise by:

- Striving continually to be effective schools
- Teaching students to integrate culture and faith, faith and life

## What is evangelisation?

Evangelisation is everything we do that introduces, promotes, develops and gives witness to faith. It means bringing into fuller consciousness and into the practical life of the school what we are really on about. To evangelise is to be willing to share the good news about God with others. Evangelisation is about taking the risk to care for all people, inviting them to share in a Christian community in which they come to know God more fully, and in which they form a deeper relationship with God so God becomes central in their lives.

Evangelisation is an activity of faith, built upon the power of the Message. It achieves its purpose gradually, for people need to accept the message for it to have its full effect. Evangelisation is any deliberate activity or action by which we cooperate with the self-revealing God. It involves sharing, risking and achieving.

Evangelisation, 'cannot attain its full meaning and vitality unless it issues in witness, stirs wonder and leads to conversion. Modern people listen more willingly to witnesses than to teachers and if they do listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses' (15, 21, 41, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 1975).

Evangelisation is inclusive of Primary Proclamation (the process to assist others to arrive at an initial belief in Jesus and develop an initial interest in following Him) and Catechesis (processes for sharing the Christian experiences of God and integrating these into the person's life experiences). Evangelisation is primarily about Christian Witness. As educators and as a church we need to acknowledge the 'joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties' (***Gaudium Et Spes, 1***) of the people we minister to. We need to acknowledge the current context or environment in which we live. These are the 'signs of the times,' and are needed to be continually worked with so that the Church and School Community embody the integration of faith, life and culture.

## Being an Effective School

As with many other educational traditions, the Catholic school's concept of education will be:

"the development of (students) from within, freeing them from that conditioning which would prevent them from becoming fully integrated human beings. The school must begin from the principle that its educational programme is intentionally directed to the growth of the whole person"

*(The Catholic School 29)*

However, the Catholic school is different from all other educational traditions because its vision of the "fully integrated" human being is distinctive:

“the Catholic school differs from all others which limit themselves to forming men and women. Its task is to form Christian men and women, and, by its witness and teaching, to show non-Christians something of the mystery of Christ, who surpasses all understanding”

*(The Catholic School 36)*

### **Integration of Faith, Life and Culture**

The integration of culture and faith aims to help students to develop a Gospel vision of society, and to learn practical ways of promoting that vision in Australian society. To integrate culture and faith, students need to learn to integrate faith and life, which means to learn to develop a Gospel vision of themselves as human persons, and to live this vision in daily life.

*(The Catholic School 38-48)*

### **Philosophy of St Columba's School**

St Columba's School is an expression of a philosophy of education which has an explicit and all-pervasive religious dimension. At the heart of this religious dimension is the task of the transmission of truths, values, beliefs and attitudes of the Catholic Faith.

St Columba's Primary School, Bayswater was established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1936. It is a co-educational institution providing primary education to approximately 260 children from Kindergarten to Year 7. The school is an integral part of the St Columba's Parish and there is a very close relationship between the parish and the school.

The school's motto: **FAITH, WISDOM, PEACE** is lived out in our vision of "fostering the total development of each child within a caring community that is totally committed to supporting and living the Catholic principles and ideals". Through such a vision the school is able to contribute to the building of a better and happier world for future generations.

### **Catherine McAuley: A History**

Catherine McAuley was born in late 18th Century Ireland. At that time the majority of the population was poor, and Catholics, in particular, were denied education and freedom of worship.

Catherine was born into a wealthy Catholic family in Dublin. Her father, James, had great compassion for the poor and often brought them home. He died when Catherine was five years old but his Catholic faith and deep compassion influenced her all her life. Catherine's mother, Elinor, unfortunately died prematurely when Catherine was around twenty. Catherine, however learnt poise, charm and independence. Catherine had to live with relatives until they too were reduced to poverty. Together with her siblings, she then had to move to another household of distant relatives of her mother.



Her father's deep compassion influenced her all her life

### **Linking the School Evangelisation Plan with the School Values**

Throughout our Australian history religious congregations were the foundations and the design of many Catholic Schools. Their dedication and foresight created the strength in our education system that we can be so proud of today. Our schools heritage begins with the Sisters of Mercy with the charism of Catherine McAuley.

At St Columba's School we strive to use the values of the Mercy Sisters to guide all who belong to our community in the building of a better and happier world for future generations. The values of the Mercy

Sisters of mercy, compassion, justice, service and excellence are the core values of what it means to be part of a Mercy School. We hope that in leaving St Columba's that these values are entrenched and an understanding of this charism will be taken with the children for future years.

As a Christian community, founded in the name of St Columba, and under the auspices of The Mercy Sisters, we name the values of this school as the values of these. The core value of love underpins all the Mercy values. At St Columba's we recognise the importance of Jesus' greatest commandment to 'love one another' (John 13:34). As a Catholic community we continually strive to be the *Jesus* for our children and the greater community. We acknowledge the importance of the gospel values and work at great lengths to instil this value within our children.

## **Aims of St Columba's School**

St Columba's Primary School aims to foster the total development of each child within a caring community that is totally committed to supporting the Catholic principles and ideals.

We strive:

To foster children's faith in Christ so that they are able to become more like God;

To provide a total caring environment in which each child's dignity as God's creation is respected and developed;

To affirm, respect and develop the individuality and God-given gifts of each child, staff member and school community member;

To respect and develop in each person the God-given gift of free will;

To develop the parent's role in their children's education;

To provide enriched opportunities for each child to develop to their full potential - spiritually, academically, physically, socially and emotionally;

To provide opportunities for all children to develop culturally within their own environment and to understand, respect and embrace the cultures of others in our multicultural school;

To develop a staff community in which each person is encouraged to grow and develop in Faith for the benefit of themselves, the staff, the children and the wider school community;

To endeavour to work as a total school community in meeting the needs of each member.

## **CURRENT SITUATION IN OUR SCHOOL – THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES**

We at St Columba's School believe that all people are created in God's image and likeness. Current practices of school community members that are promoted, witnessed and modelled, that encourage Evangelisation include:

- Commitment to the Mercy Values.
- Sensitivity to the needs of community members – self, students, parents and staff.
- Striving to reflect the gospel values (love, justice, compassion, mercy, truth, forgiveness, reconciliation etc) in our everyday life.
- Compassion for others.
- Support for the emotionally and materially poor.

- Justice and fairness.
- Evidence of God.
- Strong links to the parish community.
- Carrying on traditions.
- An active and caring parent body.

As with any Catholic School, St Columba's faces pressure to conform to social trends and outside influences. We see the major obstacles to Evangelisation as being:

### **SIGNS OF THE TIMES**

- The current decline of religious practice in Australia.
- Students live in an affluent society.
- They are surrounded by materialistic and individualistic attitudes and values which conflict with those of the Gospel. Many experience these attitudes and values in their own homes.
- God, religion, and religious people, all too often are perceived as irrelevant.
- Many parents have motives for sending their children to Catholic schools that are in no way related to the vision and goals of Catholic education.
- Students from many school families have little experience of the Church and its life, and so they learn about the Gospel for the first time in Catholic schools instead of within their families and parishes.

### **CHALLENGES TO INTEGRATING FAITH AND CULTURE**

- A society that places little value upon Christian faith poses serious challenges to helping students develop a Gospel vision of society by learning to integrate faith and culture. E.g. it is difficult to teach the justice demanded by the Kingdom of God in a society that largely ignores God.
- Individualism and subjectivism undermine basic Catholic moral concepts such as human solidarity, absolute values and social responsibility.
- Social attitudes often blur the Creator's vision of the human person, causing this vision to be lost.
- Declining number of people involved today in voluntary organisations, suggest a decline in respect in many for the God-given dignity of every human person.

### **CHALLENGES TO INTEGRATING FAITH AND LIFE**

- Many of the challenges Catholic schools face today in helping students develop a Gospel vision of themselves come from **the division** rather than the **integration** of faith and life.
- Practical atheism that prevails in so many areas of social life. This is revealed wherever people seem to live and plan their life priorities as if God does not exist.
- The split between faith and life weakens people's ability to appreciate Christ as the Model.

## **CLARIFICATION OF TERMINOLOGY**

### **Evangelisation:**

Seeking to bring about interior change in both the personal and collective consciences of people, so that their activities and lives reflect the Message of the Good News.

### **Christian Witness:**

Our efforts to be Christ-like. It is our response to Jesus' calling to reflect the attitudes of God.

### **Primary Proclamation:**

Raising religious awareness amongst community members through helping someone to arrive at an initial belief in Jesus Christ, developing this interest and helping them to learn more about what he taught in the Gospel.

**Catechesis:**

Deepening of faith by sharing Christian understandings of God and integrating these into a person's human experience.

Initiatory Catechesis helps belief in Christ's teaching at basic level.

Ongoing Catechesis deepens the initial belief in Christ's teaching.

Catechesis is based on the four pillars of faith which are based on the teachings of Jesus:

The Creed	Sacraments
Life in Christ	Prayer

**The Creed:**

The Creed is a profession of faith, an affirmation of the central beliefs of the Catholic Church and its members.

**The Sacraments:**

The Sacraments are seven rites that resemble the natural life of a human and the stages of spiritual life. These seven rites are divided into three broad stages of Christian initiation, healing and the service of communion and mission of the faithful. They include:

Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, Confirmation, Marriage, Holy Orders and the Anointing of the Sick.

**Life in Christ:**

Living out the Gospels by following the example of Jesus and showing love to all.

**Prayer:**

Prayer unfolds throughout the whole history of Salvation as a reciprocal call between God and humans.

**Religious Education:**

Is concerned with knowledge and is NOT catechesis, but supports both primary proclamation and catechesis.

## CHRISTIAN WITNESS

Our efforts to be Christ-like. It is our response to Jesus' calling to reflect the attitudes of God. Christian Witness is always 'the first act of evangelisation'. 'Witness' is how people strive to live as they respond to the God who dwells within them. It expresses the 'new life' a Christian receives through Baptism given through actions and words that reflect a Christ-like presence and a Christ-like love to others.

### Ongoing Formation

Staff	Students	Wider Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Supporting each other in times of personal crisis; including an awareness of meeting people where they are at</li> <li>† Prayer at the beginning of staff meetings</li> <li>† Development and building of sense of community and school spirit through activities such as St Columba's Day, Mercy Mission Day, Andrew Chinn</li> <li>† Participate in the Faith, Story and Witness Program</li> <li>† Mentor Program for new staff members</li> <li>† Parish, staff, Board and P&amp;F social evenings</li> <li>† Networking with regional Assistant Principals and Principals on a regular basis</li> <li>† Professional Development on Mercy Values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Continue to develop the Year Six Student Leadership</li> <li>† Community Service</li> <li>† Prayer at the beginning of assembly</li> <li>† Acknowledgement of country at the beginning of assembly</li> <li>† Hymn singing</li> <li>† Choir</li> <li>† Showing compassion for others who are in need e.g. fundraising for missions and other causes as they arise e.g. Project Compassion, Lifelink, Mercy Mission Day</li> <li>† Development and building of sense of community and school spirit through activities such as St Columba's Day</li> <li>† Development of positive self-esteem and values through the implementation of programs within the school e.g. Fun Friends</li> <li>† Celebrating NAIDOC Week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Greater Community involvement (singing at Christmas)</li> <li>† Prayer in Newsletter</li> <li>† School Assemblies</li> <li>† Prayer at the beginning of assembly</li> <li>† Acknowledgement of country at the beginning of assembly</li> <li>† Support families in crisis</li> <li>† Development and building of sense of community and school spirit through activities such as St Columba's Day, Mercy Mission Day, Fr's Day Breakfast etc.</li> <li>† Orientation Day for Kindergarten parents and new students and parents</li> <li>† Parent Pastoral Care Team</li> <li>† Parish, staff, Board and P&amp;F social evenings</li> <li>† Commissioning Mass at the beginning of the year for student leaders, new staff, new Board and P&amp;F</li> <li>† Promote fundraising activities through the newsletter and school website</li> </ul>

**PRIMARY PROCLAMATION**

Raising religious awareness amongst community members through helping someone arrive at an initial belief in Jesus Christ, developing this interest and helping them to learn more about what he taught in the Gospel.

**Ongoing Formation**

Staff	Students	Wider Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Continue to Develop Clergy Awareness (Guest speakers)</li> <li>† R.E. Professional Development at school and promotion of RE PD at CEO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Praying in the classroom -morning, lunch, dismissal</li> <li>† Prayer focus in each classroom</li> <li>† Crucifix in each room in the school</li> <li>† Encourage greater participation of children in Masses – Dramatization of Gospel, Wonder opportunities, Visual Arts</li> <li>† Prayer at the beginning of assembly</li> <li>† Hymn singing</li> <li>† Daily Religious Education lessons</li> <li>† Whole school Masses</li> <li>† Students from Pre-Primary – Year Six are rostered on to attend Parish Masses several times a term</li> <li>† Retreat day for all classes involved in the preparation for sacraments</li> <li>† Each class from Years 4-6 celebrate Penance twice a year</li> <li>† Year Six class celebrates the Eucharist at camp</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Prayer in Newsletter</li> <li>† Prayer at the beginning of assembly</li> <li>† Sacramental Masses</li> <li>† Thanksgiving and Graduation Mass</li> <li>† Fundraising and Missions – Project Compassion, St Vincent De Paul</li> <li>† Orientation Day for Kindergarten parents and students and new parents and students. What is a Catholic school?</li> <li>† Inviting parents and families to attend school masses</li> <li>† Publishing school and parish events in both parish and school newsletters to encourage a close relationship between school and parish</li> <li>† School and parish working in partnership with sacramental programs and retreat days and ceremonies</li> <li>† Prayer at the beginning of each School Board and P &amp; F Meeting</li> <li>† School/Parish Mass at the beginning of each term</li> <li>† Continue to implement and develop a community sense of pastoral care</li> </ul>

## CATECHESIS

Deepening of faith by sharing Christian understandings of God and integrating these into a person's human experience.

For the growth of Christian faith, the primary proclamation must be followed by initiatory catechesis. Effective catechesis matures the faith stirred by primary proclamation to the depth required to live a Christian life. Catechesis is the central activity of evangelisation. Its first stage is called initiatory catechesis. Initiatory catechesis aims to help people mature from the initial conversion to Jesus Christ, that results from fruitful primary proclamation, to a deeper personal relationship with him.

### Ongoing Formation

Staff	Students	Wider Community
† Encourage staff discussion on relevant everyday issues	† Raising students religious awareness through appreciation of creation	† Parish/School Masses at the beginning of each school term
† School Prayer at the commencement of staff briefings.	† Student Prayer (Class commencement, Pre-lunch, Dismissal)	† Encouragement of families to participate in Parish Sacramental Programs and become actively involved in them
† Continue with regular Professional Development on Faith development	† Regular Liturgy of the Eucharist. Increase children's attendance and participation in the Eucharist	† Parish/School Stations of the Cross
† Continue to send staff links to the eRecord and encourage staff to read	† Celebrating Reconciliation (Lent, Advent, Sacramental Program)	† Parish/School Carols by Candlelight
† Weekly staff prayer; inclusion of all staff – teaching and non-teaching	† Celebrating special Feast days	† Prayer at the beginning of assembly
† Participation of all staff at the Regional Mass	† Sacramental Masses	† Praying the Rosary at times of need
† Provide assistance to staff who need it with liturgy preparation.	† Thanksgiving and Graduation Mass	† School calendar includes significant feasts and Christmas and Easter celebrations
† Staff acting as Special Ministers at school masses.	† Year Six students research the lives of saints before Confirmation	
	† Holy Week Liturgy	
	† Year 4 students trained by Father to be altar servers	
	† Prayer at the beginning of assembly	
	† Retreat days for all classes involved in Sacramental programs	



## Focus for the Future

2016 (Year of Mercy)	Date	Who
Staff		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Increase focus on the Mercy Values.(CW) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Particularly the value of Mercy for 2016.</li> <li>• Staff have committed to read and reflect on 'The Lenten Moments of Mercy' each day of Lent. (Loyola Press)</li> </ul> </li> <li>† Money raised from our staff drinks and snacks to be donated to Catholic charities e.g. Shopfront &amp; the Kora Centre.</li> <li>† Use old church as 'Year of Mercy' Room with displays about Mercy Sisters, year books, Catherine McAuley information. (ongoing) (CW, PP) (QCS: Catholic Identity)</li> <li>† Teachers of the Sacramental Programs to undertake the Family Workshop training and assist in delivering the Sacramental Parent Workshops. (C)</li> <li>† School 80<sup>th</sup> year celebration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Term 1</li> <li>Term 4</li> <li>2016</li> <li>Term 2 – Eucharist</li> <li>Term 3 – Penance and Confirmation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Staff – Deb to forward to all staff.</li> <li>Chelsea</li> <li>Trish &amp; Nathalie</li> <li>Megan and Deb to train teachers in Year 3, 4 and 6.</li> </ul>
Students		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Increase focus on the Mercy values, particularly the value of Mercy in 2016. (CW)</li> <li>† Students to learn about the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy – each year group has a book explaining the Works of Mercy in children's language. During Terms 2 and 3 teachers will focus on each of the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy with their class. (QCS: Catholic Identity)</li> <li>† Visual Arts of important occasions will be displayed around the school e.g. Stations of the Cross. (PP)</li> <li>† Prayer time and insistence on reverence in Church. (C)</li> <li>† School 80<sup>th</sup> year celebration and blessing of new building.</li> <li>† Prepare a document for classrooms illustrating how we show reverence when we go to church. Eg kneel and pray before Mass. (QCS: Catholic Identity)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2016</li> <li>Terms 2-3</li> <li>2016</li> <li>Term 3</li> <li>Term 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom teachers</li> <li>Megan to coordinate</li> <li>Committee</li> <li>Jen</li> </ul>
Wider Community		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Increase focus on the Mercy values. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include an item about the Year of Mercy in every second newsletter. (CW, PP)</li> </ul> </li> <li>† Establishing a bursary to provide Catholic Education to a child who could otherwise not afford it. (CW)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Term 1</li> <li>Terms 3-4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deb</li> <li>School Board</li> </ul>



Wider Community		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Develop an understanding of Catherine McAuley and what it means to enrol your child in a school formed in her tradition. This includes parent handbooks and newsletter attachments. (CW)</li> <li>† Regularly opening the 'Mercy' Room' to parents and students before and after school, to allow them to reflect on what it means to attend a Mercy school and to provide quiet prayer time. (ongoing) (CW, PP)</li> </ul>		

<b>2018</b>	Date	Who
Staff		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Faith, Story, Witness. (CW)</li> <li>† Staff retreat. (PP) (QCS: Staff Wellbeing)</li> <li>† Staff will be given the opportunity to volunteer (at least once a year) at local, Catholic charities e.g. Shopfront, Kora Centre, St Vincent DePaul.</li> </ul>		
Students		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Encouraging peer modelling through involvement in leadership roles. (CW)</li> <li>† Involving students in more community service activities. (CW) (QCS: Wider Partnerships)</li> <li>† Students to be given quiet time before each liturgy to reflect on what they are going to pray for. (PP)</li> <li>† Introducing devotional areas in the school environment. (C)</li> <li>† Provide opportunities for students to grow in devotion to Mary, the Mother of Christ, whom he made our mother, particularly through celebrations of her feasts. (C)</li> <li>† Develop students' appreciation of Catholic symbols, practices and customary signs of reverence, particularly for the Eucharist. (C) (QCS: Catholic Identity)</li> <li>† Encourage greater participation of children in Masses eg. Dramatisation of the Gospel etc; reflecting the differing ages and faith development of the children. (C)</li> </ul>		Committee: Leesa & Anni
Wider Community		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Continue to implement and develop a community sense of pastoral care. (PP)</li> <li>† Clarifying our understanding of our Mercy values and translating these values into behaviours and practices. (C)</li> </ul>		

2019	Date	Who
Staff		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Staff Liturgy. (C)</li> <li>† Scripture reflection – Provide personal reflection time. (C)</li> <li>† Staff meditation. (C)</li> </ul>		
Students		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Awaken a sense of the sacred in students wherever this is appropriate in the curriculum. (PP)</li> <li>† Teachers to create a roster to allocate jobs for all students to care for inside and outside the classroom. (CW)</li> <li>† Students to pray the School Prayer every day. (PP)</li> <li>† The opportunity for students to learn the traditional Catholic expressions of adoration and reverence for Jesus who is present in the Eucharist, or the Blessed Sacrament, in Church and Chapel. (PP)</li> <li>† Children to visit Church more regularly (Adoration, Silent Prayer). (C)</li> <li>† Providing more reflective time to allow students to deepen their relationship with God e.g. explicit teaching of meditation. (C)</li> </ul>		
Wider Community		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>† Raising social conscience and awareness of social, religious and cultural issues in the wider community through the sharing of journal articles in the school newsletter. (CW)</li> <li>† Developing the Mercy Core Values as a part of the School Understanding of Faith, Wisdom and Peace. (C)</li> </ul>		