

CHARTER FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON



A LETTER FROM THE BISHOP

The original Charter for Catholic Education in the Diocese of Rockhampton was first published in 2000 as a result of an extensive consultation process and reviewed in 2006 and again in 2015.

I hope the Charter will continue to develop a common sense of purpose for Catholic Education throughout the Diocese.



Catholic Education in the Diocese of Rockhampton has three key areas of responsibility:

- Adult Education and Faith Formation
- Religion Instruction in State Schools
- Catholic Schools and Colleges

My vision for Catholic Education and its associated ministries is to provide in partnership with families, parishes and other diocesan agencies education and faith formation from birth to death.

I look to Catholic Education to provide:

- A living experience of Jesus Christ;
- A simple gospel message;
- The formation of Christian communities;
- Prayer as central to each person's life;
- The proclamation of God's presence in word and action.

This is a tremendous responsibility for all who share the mission of the Church. Everyone needs to be involved in a variety of ways. The achievement of this vision will only be possible through dialogue and collaboration with local communities.

I want Catholic Education to continue to work in partnership with priests, the local church community, with families and schools, Adult Faith Education and Formation groups, Youth groups and other diocesan entities such as Centacare to provide Catholic education and faith formation for all.

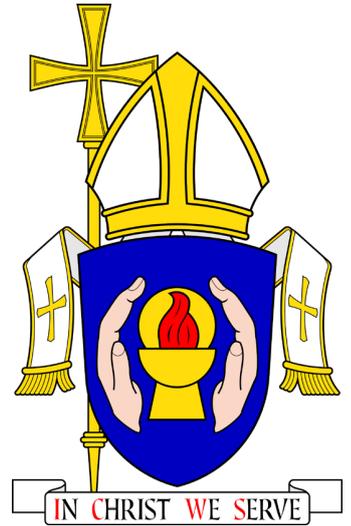
I offer you my prayers and whole-hearted support and I am confident that with God's grace this mission will truly be Good News in our world and will assist everyone to discover that "where there is love there is God".

Yours sincerely

Bishop Michael McCarthy DD

Bishop of Rockhampton

18/03/2016



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THE DIOCESAN VISION STATEMENT IS AS FOLLOWS:

**As a community of believers,
we live out the call to Baptism
through personal faith in Jesus,
witnessing together
to the Good News of the Kingdom**

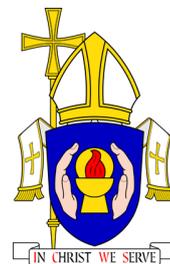
It is important to note that the Diocese of Rockhampton covers an area of approximately 415,000 square kilometres. The Diocese stretches from Bundaberg in the south to Mackay in the north and then out to the Northern Territory border. Long distances and isolation are the hallmarks of many of our communities.

Given the unique and diverse nature of our Diocese, the challenge to be a faith-filled people who service the educational and faith formation needs of our communities is addressed by:

- utilising resources well in partnership with coastal and rural communities;
- forming, training and educating people, personally and spiritually to confidently take on leadership roles;
- offering adult education and faith formation through a network of regional and parish adult faith coordinators;
- drawing on technology to enable easier and faster access to resources and services;
- consciously supporting isolated communities and being aware of the unique social problems and economic difficulties facing rural communities dependent on commodity-based industries;
- providing children from state primary and secondary schools with religious education and catechesis.

The Diocese of Rockhampton, as a community of faith, is committed to a comprehensive educational ministry that embraces and promotes lifelong faith learning. Parishes play a fundamental role in education. The first educators in faith however will always be parents.

All involved in Catholic Education in the diocese will work in partnership with families, the local church community, state schools, and Religious communities, Adult Faith Education and Formation Communities, ministries and other diocesan entities, to promote faith education for all. The responsibility is enormous as we share the mission of all who work for, and within, the Church. All need to be involved in varied and appropriate ways. The achievement of our educational goals will only be as a result of dialogue with local communities.



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In accord with Canon Law,

“Catholic education is an expression of Christ’s mission entrusted to the Church to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ. Catholic education in the Diocese is united around the Bishop as leader and teacher. The Bishop has responsibility for developing policies regarding Catholic education in the Diocese, regulating it and watching over it.”
(Canon 804.1)

The Bishop appoints a Diocesan Education Council to provide advice in establishing the broad direction for Catholic education and faith formation. This Council assists the Bishop in his responsibility for approving policies regarding Catholic religious formation and education in the Diocese.

The Diocesan Director of Catholic Education has overall responsibility for three key areas of Educational Ministry:

- Adult Education and Faith Formation
- Religion Instruction in State Schools
- Catholic Schools and Colleges

Authority for leadership, administration and management of Catholic Education in the Diocese has been given to the Diocesan Director of Catholic Education. The Director has the authority to determine priorities and to appoint personnel. The Director is obliged to keep the Bishop fully informed on all aspects of the operations of Catholic Education.

The Diocesan Director of Catholic Education is vested with the responsibility to organise and coordinate the operations of Catholic Education in such a way as to ensure:

- Optimal use is made of all resources;
- Services are delivered efficiently and in the most effective way possible;
- Services are grouped together logically to ensure synergy and cost-effectiveness.

The role of the Catholic Education Office (CEO) is to serve and support the ministry of Catholic education across the Diocese. To assist in this the CEO provides Religious Education and curriculum services and support; financial and administration support and school and educational services to schools and colleges; as well as support to Adult Faith Education and Formation and the outreach Ministry of Religious Education in State Schools.



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As chief teacher of faith and shepherd of the Diocese of Rockhampton, the Bishop expects Catholic Education and faith formation to:

- give witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ through the way we relate and act with others;
- participate in the mission of the Catholic Church;
- nurture communities where an individual's giftedness and dignity are visibly respected;
- promote quality education and learning that is lifelong and life-giving;
- provide education that supports the holistic development of persons;
- serve all who seek our values and give special attention to those who are weakest;
- work together in a spirit of collegiality and partnership.

In enacting this mission across the Diocese, the following principles will guide our actions and endeavours.

The principle of witness:

- recognises that Christian witness is the first act of evangelisation;
- affirms and supports all who witness to the Gospel through their life and work;
- builds vibrant and life giving communities both within our Churches and beyond them;
- acknowledges that when we give witness to total dependence on a loving God through our presence, actions and words, this enables the Spirit to work through our efforts;
- brings the Gospel into personal and family relationships, communities, workplaces and schools;
- values people.

The principle of spirituality:

- acknowledges the role of the Holy Spirit as guide;
- helps each person see key moments in life as times of personal and spiritual growth;
- respects and nurtures each person's faith journey;
- allows people the freedom to explore all experience that speaks to them of their God;
- gives expression through signs, rituals and activities to God's Spirit which inspires and invigorates.



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The principle of reflection:

- allows space for all to be;
- allows for critical reflection in the identification, allocation and prioritising of agreed tasks;
- acknowledges where we have been and where we might go;
- engages in critical examination of our values, intentions and performance;
- exercises prudence in choosing the right course of action.

The principle of Christian leadership:

- is life giving;
- is creative and reconciling;
- makes for a group of vibrant people with a mission;
- unleashes the possibilities of each person;
- is characterised by service;
- devolves decisions to groups best able to make them;
- relies on mutual support.

The principle of partnership and co-responsibility:

- recognises mutual dependence;
- encourages and recognises the gifts and talents within each person;
- gathers the wisdom of the group while drawing from the individual;
- seeks to involve others in decision-making;
- considers relationships to be “sacred ground” on which we stand with others;
- takes a humble and gentle approach to differences and seeks to discern rather than dominate;
- stands with those who are without influence and status;
- invites interaction between people which can be vulnerable yet life giving;
- calls people to levels of deep understanding and prophetic action.

The principle of transparent decision-making:

- is characterised by trust, honesty and openness;
- opens relevant information to all;
- plans processes which include those affected by decisions;
- gives adequate time for reflection;
- embraces diversity of opinion and vigorous debate;
- creates an environment which celebrates the right to speak out with honesty and integrity.

This Charter was recommended to the Bishop and approved by Bishop Michael McCarthy on 18 March 2016.