



We proclaim a crucified Christ

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15 September 2020

Dear Fathers and Deacons,

I am pleased to provide this update on the governance change process for Catholic schools in the Archdiocese.

As you are aware, the State Government requires us to complete the governance changes of our schools by 1 January 2021. I am grateful for all that you have shared with the School Governance Steering Committee during the consultation phase, including your advice, concerns, hopes and expectations. We will be creating a new company, to be called Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS), whereby MACS will govern and operate these schools, and I will be tasking the MACS leadership with responsibility for a fruitful mission in Catholic schooling in the years ahead. The inaugural MACS Board is currently being formed and I invite you to consider nominating a member of the clergy with an appointment in the Archdiocese for a position as a Director of the Board as per the MACS constitution using the attached nomination form.

You will see in the attached material that parish priests or canonical administrators will continue to hold real ministerial leadership in the school/s within your parish. This has been a key concern of mine: that we be determined to ensure a clear leadership responsibility and role for the clergy in the years ahead. The important Charter, titled *Working Together in Mission*, outlining the shape and nature of your ongoing leadership in our schools, is available for download at this [link](#) and I encourage you to read it closely in preparation for further discussion.

The attached Clergy Information Pack contains the following information:

- The Statement of Mission, which forms part of the MACS constitution
- Recommendations by the School Governance Steering Committee
- Summary of a number of key elements of the Governance model including
 - (a) Catholicity and the Catholic life of the school
 - (b) Duties and responsibilities of parish priests
 - (c) Land and buildings
- A link to the governance website where documents such as the Position Paper, the MACS constitution and *Working Together in Mission* Charter will be uploaded
- Contact details for the School Governance Steering Committee if you have any further queries or issues you wish to raise.



Archbishop of Melbourne

You will soon receive a joint letter from Gerard Dalbosco, the Chair of the School Governance Steering Committee, and Jim Miles, Executive Director of Catholic Education Melbourne, with further information about the implementation phase into which we are moving. The letter will also contain copies of the agreements associated with the transition of the schools into MACS and the scheduled process of consultation and completion. The agreements have been developed on the basis of canonical advice and have been reviewed independently by a legal firm engaged by the Archdiocese to ensure they protect the interests and patrimony of parishes.

Gerard and Jim's letter will outline a range of supports and assistance available to you as we move through and complete the transition of the schools into MACS. It will also refer to a process being undertaken in schools to obtain the information that MACS will need in order to assume responsibility for the governance of the schools.

Members of the School Governance Steering Committee and the Governance Secretariat will be available to answer any queries during the implementation phase of the governance process. The next steps include:

- A series of group information sessions (via zoom) to further outline and explain the agreement making process
- Further rounds of consultation to address individual queries including one-on-one sessions with a Transition Support Team.
- Finalisation of all agreements.

Now that we are entering into the implementation phase, I thank you in anticipation of your participation in this very significant process for our Archdiocese. We have received a great legacy in our Catholic schools and we seek to honour that legacy in the midst of change and reform.

You and your parish communities are in my prayers, especially during this time of the Pandemic.

With every grace and blessing, I remain,

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne