

# Newsletter



Inspiring. Nurturing. Learning today...Leading tomorrow.

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**God our Father, you have blessed us with the gift of children; thank you for these precious gems which adorn our house. Their laughter gives us joy and brightens our lives. They are the expressions of your presence in our home and their growth shows the mysteries of your love. May they experience your loving presence, advance in wisdom and grow in your love.**

## Dear Parents

The whole school community had a wonderful day celebrating **Mercy Day** today. Father Angelo started the day celebrating Mass for all of us in the hall surrounded by our Mercy Value banners. Congratulations to all children who received a very special Mercy Value Award this morning for displaying one of the Mercy Values. Please see the recipients below. During the middle part of the day, the children spent time learning about the Mercy Values with their friends and after lunch, we gathered again as a Mercy community to learn about the life of Mary McKillop, while the choir performed and Kindy and Pre-Primary raffled off some artwork as part of our Social Justice Mission fundraising programme. Thank you to the other year levels who raised money through Milk Bottles for Mercy and our very popular Friendship bracelets. Well done children and thank you for your generosity.

Congratulations to the following children who received the **Mercy Value Awards**. These awards are only given out once per term and to the children who display the Mercy Values of:

**Mercy:** *Be thoughtful, warm and respectful in all you do and feel*

**Compassion:** *Show you care for others' needs and help meet their needs*

**Justice:** *Treat all members of our community fairly and justly*

**Dignity:** *Respect each other, knowing we are all valued and loved by God*

**Excellence:** *Try to be your best in all that you do*

**Hospitality:** *Be welcoming, friendly and inclusive in our play and our lives*

**Stewardship:** *Keep God in our hearts and our play*

**Service:** *Make a positive difference in each other's lives*

<b>PPG</b>	Thomas Edler & Sookie Corkran
<b>PPR</b>	Helen Hudson-Kaye & Patrick Clarke
<b>Year 1G</b>	Vincent Tiller & Aryan Pateria
<b>Year 1R</b>	Libby Keating & Charlotte Harris
<b>Year 2G</b>	Quin Nunes & Vanesa Grmusa
<b>Year 2R</b>	Lana Ly & Jonathon Hine
<b>Year 3G</b>	Alexia King & Logan Cribb
<b>Year 3R</b>	Jack Keating & Ishika Sharma
<b>Year 4G</b>	Tyler Murphy & Bianca Gwynne
<b>Year 4R</b>	Jazabelle Pinesi O'Brien & Lachlan Bond
<b>Year 5G</b>	Alexia Callander & Ruby Kerwin
<b>Year 5R</b>	Li Yan Poon & Lucie Knezovic
<b>Year 6G</b>	Marcela Yep Colombero & Amy Wright
<b>Year 6R</b>	Estella Gillam & Max Rowe

It was terrific to see so many parents visiting the classrooms on Tuesday evening for the **Learning Journey**. The children enjoyed showcasing their work to their parents and it was a great way to celebrate your child's success and show him or her how much importance you place on their learning. It was also an opportunity to demonstrate the much appreciated support you have for all the classroom teachers. Thank you.

## A message from **The Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB Archbishop of Perth**

*'Please find a link to the Archdiocesan website regarding a Pastoral Letter regarding the presentation of the End-of-Life Care Report in Western Australia by a Committee of Inquiry last week. Over 700 submissions were received, including my own on behalf of the Catholic community in the Archdiocese of Perth. Less than 36 per cent of submissions favoured the introduction of some form of doctor-assisted suicide or euthanasia, but the Committee chose to recommend that laws to permit what it calls 'voluntary assisted dying' should be introduced. The laws proposed in WA present a serious challenge to human dignity in this State.*

[http://www.perthcatholic.org.au/Our\\_Archdiocese-Archbishop-Latest\\_News-2018-End\\_of\\_Life\\_Pastoral\\_Letter.htm?utm\\_term=here&utm\\_campaign=Archbishop+Costelloe+SDB+-+End+of+Life+Pastoral+Letter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=Archbishop+Costelloe+SDB+-+End+of+Life+Pastoral+Letter+CID\\_20c6ee633ce4e1f2848b3f6da8d5e4e9&utm\\_source=Email+marketing+software](http://www.perthcatholic.org.au/Our_Archdiocese-Archbishop-Latest_News-2018-End_of_Life_Pastoral_Letter.htm?utm_term=here&utm_campaign=Archbishop+Costelloe+SDB+-+End+of+Life+Pastoral+Letter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Archbishop+Costelloe+SDB+-+End+of+Life+Pastoral+Letter+CID_20c6ee633ce4e1f2848b3f6da8d5e4e9&utm_source=Email+marketing+software)

In addition, please find attached at the end of this newsletter Archbishop Costelloe's pastoral letter for the Catholic Community of the Archdiocese of Perth, including Catholic schools regarding the response to the Royal Commission.

I would like to say a big thank you to all the parents who have written some beautiful emails and letters to me throughout the term. Parents have been commending some of the great programmes we have in place at Aranmore CPS, written their appreciation of their child's class teacher, written in support of the Leadership Team's proactive nature, expressed their delight with the warm welcome they receive when they enter the front office, expressed gratitude for the wonderful pastoral care their child receives on a daily basis and the list goes on. I love receiving these emails and letters so thank you, thank you, thank you for your continual support and encouragement. It really means a lot to me and my hard working staff.

Have a wonderful holiday and enjoy the beautiful sunshine that God has provided for us all.

**Mrs Margaret Williamson**  
**Principal**

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### THE ROSARY

October is the month when we celebrate Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Please try to pray a decade of the Rosary or at least one Hail Mary each day as a family during this month.

### FRIENDSHIP BRACELETS

A big thank you to the Year 5 and Year 6 students who created friendship bracelets for Mercy Week. The Year 6 Pastoral Council gave up their recess time to sell the bracelets in order to raise money for the Mercy Works Charity. The children had fun selecting their favourite coloured bracelets from the pile. Aranmore wishes to acknowledge the Yr 5 and Yr 6 students for their excellent pastoral and faith-filled leadership.

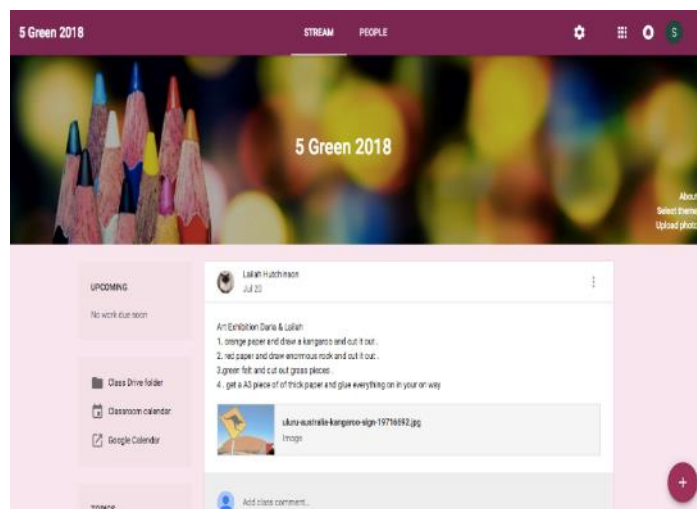


**Miss Tania James & Miss Sarah Lister**  
**Assistant Principals**

## CURRICULUM

### YEAR 3, 4, 5 CONTEMPORARY LEARNING

Term Three saw the introduction of Google Classroom in Year 5. This is an important tool used to communicate between student and teacher. Homework, upcoming assessments, events and class activities can be found here. This helps aid our 21<sup>st</sup> Century classroom.



## MERCY VALUE OF THE WEEK

### SERVICE

Make a positive difference in the life of others

**21 SEPTEMBER 2018**

### SPECIAL REMINDER DATES FOR TERM THREE & FOUR

- Term 4 commences – Monday 8 October
- P&F Meeting – Tuesday 9 October
- Faction Athletics Carnival – Friday 12 October
- Liturgy - 1G & 1R
- Interschool Carnival – Thursday 25 October
- PPR Performance Assembly & Year 4R/4G Mass – Friday 26 October
- Kindy sports carnival – Thursday 1 November
- Prayer Assembly 1R – Friday 2 November
- Prayer Assembly 2G & Remembrance Day – Friday 9 November
- AGM 7:00pm School Hall – Tuesday 13 November
- Performance Assembly 6G – Friday 16 November

### END OF YEAR DATES

- Kindy Green Concert – Tuesday 4 December
- Thanksgiving Mass – Wednesday 5 December
- Kindy Red Concert – Thursday 6 December
- Year 6 Graduation and Mass – Thursday 6 December
- Students last day of school – Friday 7 December

## PETS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

A reminder to all families and friends that dogs are not permitted on school grounds unless authorised by the Principal. While most dogs are family pets and may not react badly to child interaction, in a school setting their behaviour may be excitable and unpredictable. Some students may also react to dogs in an unpredictable way, which could cause the dog or the child harm.



If you see someone with their dog on school grounds, please feel free to remind them of this guideline as it is in place to ensure the safety of our children. If your dog really must accompany you at school drop off/pick up time, please wait for your child outside the school grounds, away from the main thoroughfares, to minimise contact with other students.

**Ms Tania James & Miss Sarah Lister**  
**Assistant Principals**

## UNIFORM

The Uniform Shop Committee and the School Board have reviewed the colour of our school sandals due to the difficulty of finding brown sandals. The Committee approached a number of suppliers and brown sandals are in very limited supply and in very limited sizes. Black sandals however are in very good supply. Therefore a decision has been made by the Committee and ratified by the School Board to change the colour of our school sandals from brown to black as of Term 4 2018. (This will also align with our black shoes). There will be a transition period therefore if your child already has brown sandals they can still wear these. Once they grow out of them please ensure you purchase black ones. We are hoping that children will be in black sandals in 2019.

**Mrs Jill Eftos**  
**Uniform Shop Manageress**

## MUSIC

Zenith Music is one of the major sponsors of the Catholic Schools Performing Arts Festival, providing the main venue for the instrumental solos and duet sections. They also provide awards to the Primary and Secondary Schools demonstrating the highest levels of Sustained Improvement and for Overall Excellence and Participation in the Spirit of the Festival. Keep them in mind if you are buying sheet music, exam books or instruments.

**Mrs Roslyn Twine**  
**Music Teacher**

## ADMINISTRATION

### SUMMER UNIFORM COMMENCEMENT OF TERM 4

This is a reminder that students in Years PP to 6 must wear **summer uniform in Term Four**. The Uniform Shop is open each Tuesday morning from 8.00am till 9.30am but **will not be opened during the school holidays**. First day of trading for Term 4 will be Tuesday 9 October 2018 from 8.00am till 9.30am.

## SOCIAL WORKER

### TAKE THE GUESSWORK OUT OF PARENTING! FREE PARENTING SEMINAR

Want to make family life easier – and happier? **Triple P's Power of Positive**

**Parenting seminar** can help you understand why kids act the way they do, and how your reactions and words can make a big difference. This seminar is free and is packed with ideas to help you give your kids the best start in life, and get more enjoyment out of being a parent.



**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 6.30 – 8.30pm**  
**Aranmore Catholic Primary School - School Hall**

Register for your **FREE** parenting seminar:

<http://www.aranmorecps.wa.edu.au/event/free-parenting-seminar-the-power-of-positive-parenting/>

Triple P's Power of Positive Parenting seminar can help you:

- raise happy, confident kids
- encourage positive behaviour
- set rules and routines that everyone follows
- get on well with your kids and argue less
- balance work and family with less stress

**Mrs Ali Fisher**  
**Social Worker**

## **P & F**

### **ARANMORE SCHOOL PAVERS FUNDRAISERS**

Mark your child's connection to the Aranmore CPS community. Whenever you walk to the School Hall you would have noticed the engraved pavers that line the entrance. These pavers have been laid to mark a child's / family's connection to the School and to raise money for the Aranmore P & F.

Members of the School community who missed out on this offer previously or who are new to Aranmore CPS are now able to purchase a paver this year to commemorate their child /family's link to the Aranmore CPS community.

The initiative is being organised to raise funds for an upgrade to the School's multipurpose sports courts, so the students can remain active throughout the year. A flyer will go home with your child today and is attached at the end of the newsletter.

For further information please contact Sandra at [aranmorepnf@gmail.com](mailto:aranmorepnf@gmail.com)

### **FACTION ATHLETICS CARNIVAL**

Year 5 are hosting the athletics carnival on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October. Each family is asked to donate some baked goods for the stall. Healthy options are also welcome. Over the school holidays start thinking about what you are going to bake.

### **RECYCLED BOOK MARKET**

On Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> October the P & F are holding a recycled book market at the Loftus Community Centre as they celebrate their 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. If you have any books at home that you no longer want please donate them. They can be dropped at the school office during the first week of term 4.

**Mrs Elle Gonzalez-Skuja**  
**P&F President**

## **SPORT**



Mason Clark of 4G (in yellow shirt) recently represented Western Australia at the Australian Karate Federation National Championships in Caloundra, Queensland held from 3-5 August. WA had a strong team of up to 80 competitors and coaching team. Mason achieved a silver medal in the Male Kumite Children Under 12 Years -45kg which was an outstanding achievement. Mason will be attending selection for the Australian team next year.

**Mr Phil Tsang**  
**Sport Teacher**

### **SWIMMING**

Congratulations to all our brave swim club members who came to our last swim club for Term 3. We commence bright and early first week back (Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> October) in Term 4 and we are indoors once again. I am sure it will be warmer and brighter in the mornings. I have given Mr Tsang the leader board numbers for Term 3 so he will put it up on the notice board.

There are quite a few children who have not made an appearance in Term 3 and have swim club equipment. Can anyone who does not intend to return to swim club in Term 4 please return their equipment. With new members joining all the time it is not possible to have equipment for everyone to loan and I really need members who are not coming regularly (or at all) to return their hire equipment so it can go into the equipment register for others to use. Thank you and I appreciate your support in this matter.

**Mrs Roslyn Soanes**  
**Swim Club Coordinator**

## **CANTEEN**

**Help needed for Term 4** in the canteen. Please contact Belinda on 0414 597 477 if you would like to put your name down.

<b>MONDAY</b>	8 Oct	Belinda
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	10 Oct	<b>HELP!</b>
<b>FRIDAY</b>	11 Oct	<b>HELP!</b>

**Mrs Belinda Civiletti**  
**Canteen Manageress**





# COMBINED SINGLE NAME PAVER & HAND DRAWN TEMPLATE

## Aranmore P & F Fundraiser

The P & F are currently raising funds for a much needed upgrade to the School's multipurpose sports courts.

DON & SHIRLEY  
ELLIOTT

### OFFER 1: \$50 INDIVIDUAL PAVER

Your donation of \$50 or more entitles you to have your name engraved into a paver as a lasting record of your valued support. The paver will be permanently installed near the entrance of the School Hall.

Size: 230 x 115 x 40mm

Emily Fielding  
2014 I am 6 Years old

### OFFER 2: \$60 HAND DRAWN PAVER

Your donation of \$60 or more entitles you to have your name engraved into a paver as a lasting record of your valued support. The paver will be permanently installed near the entrance of the School Hall.

Size: 230 x 115 x 40mm See page 2 for hand drawn template.

Please print clearly in CAPITAL letters. Each box represents a character (letter, number, punctuation mark or space). Max 16 characters per line, three lines per paver. See over the page for Hand Drawn Paver template.

NAME  
PAVER

LINE 1

LINE 2

LINE 3

Simply fill out this form and return along with full payment by cheque, cash or money order to:  
(Alternatively, call the School Office on 9444 9366 to make a credit card payment over the phone).

**Aranmore Catholic Primary School**  
20 Brentham Street  
Leederville

Contact Name

Phone

( )

Street

City

State

Post Code

Our Donation

\$

☐ Offer 1

☐ Offer 2

Offer closes on the 23 November 2018

For engraving details please complete the form on the reverse.

**SIGNATURE**  
— ENGRAVING —

Please copy and pass on to any friends & family.

**WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!**

© 2018 Signature Engraving - [www.signature-engraving.com.au](http://www.signature-engraving.com.au) v2.0

# HAND DRAWN TEMPLATE

## ENGRAVING DETAILS

PLEASE FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS WHEN CREATING YOUR IMAGE.

1. ONE NAME PER PAVER.
2. Draw your image using a good quality medium thickness black marker pen (about 2mm thick).  
eg Artline 70 'High Performance' marker.  
Do not use a ballpoint pen, coloured text or pencils!
3. Make sure you rub out any pencil lines as these will show up on the finished paver.
4. Do not include computer-generated or pasted pictures.  
The hand drawn image engraving process is set up to engrave hand drawn images only.

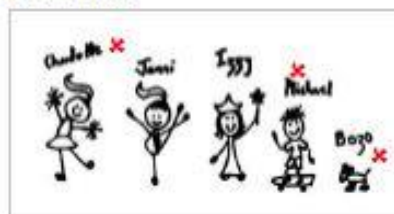
SAMPLE 1



THIS IS OK ✓

- Good clean writing
- Simple illustrations

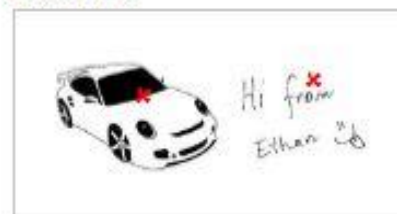
SAMPLE 2



THIS IS NOT OK ✗

- Too many names
- Illustrations too detailed
- Information gets lost

SAMPLE 3



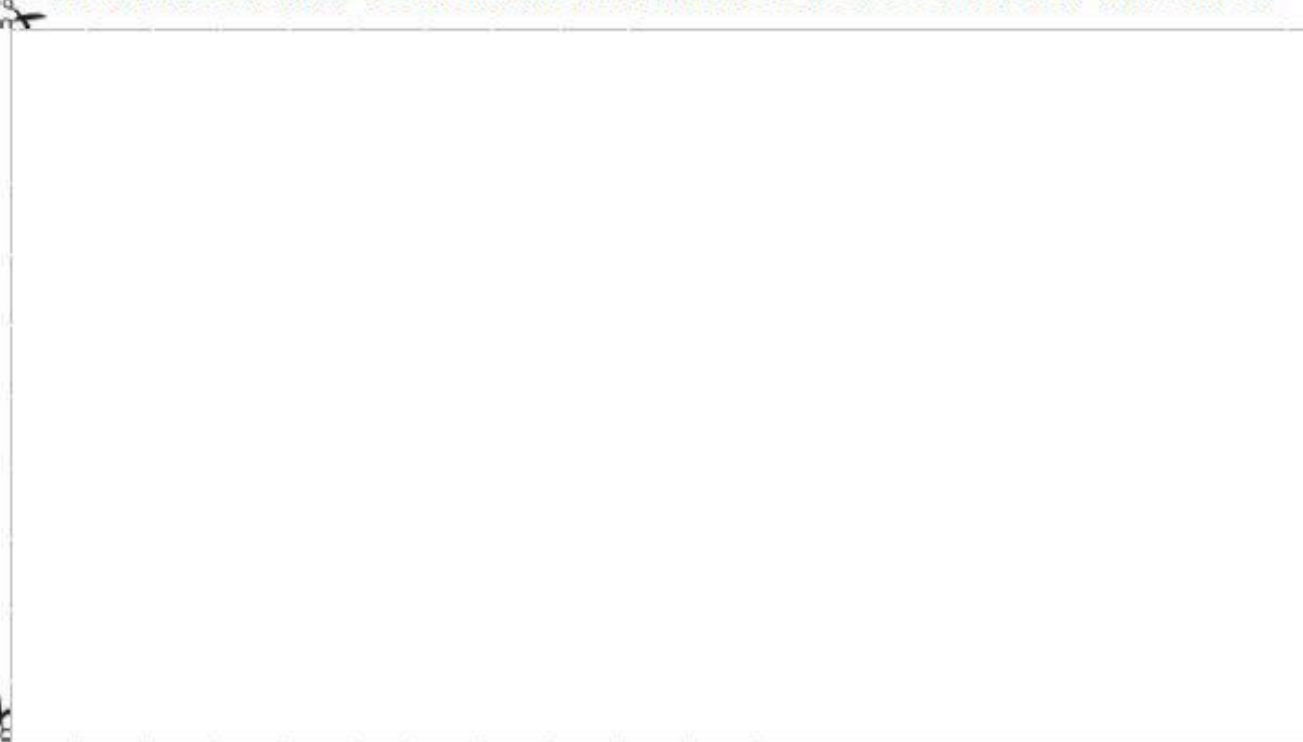
THIS IS NOT OK ✗

- Do not include computer-generated or pasted pictures
- The process is set up to engrave hand drawn images only

Administrator note: Please photocopy this page for your records, cut out the drawing below and send the ORIGINAL to Signature Engraving.

PHOTOCOPY THIS PAGE FOR EACH HAND DRAWN PAVER.

PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOUR DRAWING DOES NOT TOUCH OR GO OUTSIDE OF THE BORDER





31 August 2018



**Message from Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB  
Archbishop of Perth  
ACBC/CRA response to the Royal Commission**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am writing to you once again to share my thoughts with you as we all continue to grapple with the overwhelming tragedy of the sexual abuse of children and young people in our Catholic communities and institutions. In doing so I am deeply conscious that many bishops, including myself, have said many things about this terrible reality. However as I begin this letter I want once again to express my own deep shame and sorrow that so many people's lives have been so badly damaged by these terrible crimes. On behalf of the Catholic community of the Archdiocese of Perth I offer to all those victims and survivors of sexual abuse in the Church, and to their families and friends, my sincere and heartfelt apology. I understand that these things have been said before, and that words alone can never be enough. I continue to be determined to ensure, with the help of so many people around me, that these words will be backed up by practical action. It is this determination which lies at the heart of my desire to share this letter with you.

Some weeks ago I celebrated a special Mass in the Cathedral for representatives from our archdiocesan agencies. This is an annual event in which we acknowledge, celebrate and most importantly pray for all those who work in so many different areas of the extensive outreach of our archdiocese to the society in which we live.

While preparing my homily it became very clear to me that I needed once again to address with these key leaders in the archdiocese the shameful history of the Church in relation to the sexual abuse of children and young people. In the course of this homily I invited everyone present to reflect on the following:

*The Royal Commission has posed some difficult and uncomfortable questions for us as a Church. For me they all converge into one deeply disturbing set of questions: how could this possibly have happened? How did we manage to veer away so disastrously from those things which are at the heart of our faith? How is it possible that people who publically professed their commitment to Christ, and dared to preach him to others, could so blatantly betray him, or so comprehensively turn their backs on him?*

With the recent publication of the formal response of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) and Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) to the recommendations of the Royal Commission, and in view of the proposed national apology from the Prime Minister to victims and survivors of child sexual abuse, it is absolutely necessary that we as a Church continue to confront and be challenged by these questions. In this pastoral letter, which I offer to you not solely as a letter but as an invitation to prayer and meditation, I hope that you will find some help as you struggle to understand the tragedy which has engulfed the lives of so many. I would invite you to read it in conjunction with the statement from the Presidents of the ACBC and CRA which accompanies the release of the Church's formal response. It is made on behalf of all the bishops and religious including myself.

The Royal Commission itself, over long years of intensive investigation culminating in its final report and extensive recommendations, has been and will continue to be an invaluable tool in assisting us to grapple with the causes of this terrible tragedy. We must never allow ourselves to become complacent and think of this only as a dark past which, with the conclusion of the Royal Commission, is now behind us: it is also our present and an urgent demand on our future. Many survivors of sexual abuse, and their families, continue to suffer the consequences of the crimes



Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB  
Archbishop of Perth

that were committed against them. We must as a Church, as a community of disciples of Jesus Christ, do everything we possibly can to help people move into a better future. That we failed to do this in the past only makes it more urgent that we do so now and in the years ahead.

At the same time we must continue to explore every possibility open to us to ensure that our Catholic communities, be they parishes, schools, hospitals, social welfare agencies or anything else, are places of absolute safety for our children, our young people, and indeed for everyone who comes in contact with the Church in any way. Our Archdiocesan Safeguarding Project is a cornerstone of our efforts and a symbol of our determination to make the present and the future so radically different from and better than the past. In this regard I would like to highlight two principles which are often stressed by Ms Andrea Musulin, the Director of our Safeguarding Project. Firstly Andrea reminds us that pedophiles will gravitate to those places where the children and young people are. We want to be communities of faith where our children and young people can experience the beauty, the richness and the promise of life lived with a consciousness of God's presence and God's love. Because this is our desire and our mission we have an absolute duty to do all we can to ensure that this is exactly what people do experience in our communities. Tragically, and shamefully, this was not always the case in the past. It is because of this that another of Andrea's principles is so important. We can never afford to "take off our safeguarding hat". This is true of every member of our Catholic community: our laity, our religious, our deacons, our priests and our bishops. We are all, together, the People of God. We must carry in our minds and in our hearts a constant awareness that vigilance can never be relaxed and complacency can never be allowed to grow.

In this regard I am enormously grateful to the generous and committed parishioners who have stepped forward to be the Safeguarding Officers in their local parish communities. Their physical and visible presence is a constant reminder of the central importance of protecting children in our communities. They are also a warning to those with evil intent that Catholic communities are now the most dangerous places for them to attempt to corrupt and harm the young. Our eyes are now open and our determination to root out this evil from our midst is uncompromising. We are now, in ways that we were not in the past, listening to and acting on the words of Jesus: *Anyone who is an obstacle to bring down one of these little ones who have faith in me would be better drowned in the depths of the sea with a great millstone round his neck* (Matthew 18:6).

In the formal response of the ACBC and CRA to the recommendations of the Royal Commission we have either accepted, accepted in principle, or supported all but one of the 82 recommendations which relate directly or indirectly to the Catholic Church. While the one recommendation we were unable to accept – that which relates to the confidentiality of the Sacrament of Penance (Confession) – will be the focus of much discussion and criticism, this should not obscure the reality that the leadership of the Church has committed to acting upon all the other recommendations. A number of them have been referred to the Holy See as they concern matters over which the Australian bishops have no jurisdiction (changes to the universal Canon Law of the Church for example cannot be made by the bishops of Australia) but the majority of recommendations made by the Royal Commission have already been, or are in the process of being, or will be as a matter of urgency, implemented by the Church in Australia. In order to ensure that this happens the ACBC and CRA have jointly established both Catholic Professional Standards Limited and the Implementation Advisory Group. The former body, which is functionally independent of the Bishops and the Religious Leaders, will establish and monitor compliance with nationally applicable and compulsory standards for all institutions which seek to be, and are approved by the Church's leaders as, Catholic institutions. The latter body, comprising primarily lay people, will advise the Church's leadership on practical steps which need to be taken to ensure that the recommendations of the Royal Commission are in fact being implemented in practical and effective ways.

For myself as the Archbishop of Perth I want to repeat what I said in recent comments made available, at their request, to one of the local media outlets here in Perth:





*While the Catholic Church cannot change its teachings on the sanctity of the Confessional, including the absolute inviolability of the "sacramental seal", here in Western Australia, as throughout our country, the Church will continue to take every step available to it to ensure the safety and well-being, physical, psychological and spiritual, of every child and young person who takes part in the life of our communities.*

In my homily to Church Agencies, to which I referred at the beginning of this letter, I shared my own conviction about the challenge we are facing. I want to share that now with you.

*In asking these questions I am not for a moment suggesting that all the particular issues raised by the Royal Commission do not need to be carefully considered. Of course they must be. What I do believe, however, is that the terrible story of sexual abuse in our Church indicates a deep malaise within our Church, just as I believe that the widespread prevalence of sexual abuse throughout so many institutions in our society, including the most important institution of all, the family, points to a malign cancer at the heart of our society which should alarm us all.*

*All Catholics ... are being called at this particular time to have the courage to recognize how hopelessly inadequate, to borrow some words from St John Paul II, our witness to the gospel has been. For Pope John Paul, the explanation for this hopeless inadequacy was quite simple: we have failed to contemplate the face of Christ. We have failed to realize that unless the Church, deliberately and consciously and intentionally, refers everything it seeks to do and be to him, we will never even come close to being the Church, the community of disciples, Christ is calling us to be. If we try to build the house, which is God's Church, on shifting sands, rather than on the solid rock of Christ who is the only foundation for the Church, then the fabric of the Church will continue to unravel, to the shame and dismay of us all.*

These reflections arise from my own grappling with the question: *how could this possibly have happened?* We must, and we will, give careful consideration to all that the Royal Commission has revealed. We must, and we will, look at our structures and, where we can, reform and even abandon and replace them if they are contributors to the horror of sexual abuse. We must, and we will, face the hard questions about the dangers of an unhealthy culture of clericalism, about the lack of episcopal accountability, about the ways in which our approach to the theory and practice of celibacy may have contributed to this disaster, about the undervaluing of the role of lay people, and within that the role of women, in the life of the Church, and about so many other matters which have surfaced through the years of the Royal Commission's work. As Pope Francis said in his recent letter to the People of God *"it is essential that we, as a Church, be able to acknowledge and condemn, with sorrow and shame, the atrocities perpetrated by consecrated persons, clerics, and all those entrusted with the mission of watching over and caring for those most vulnerable"*. The Royal Commission's exhaustive work will help us to do just that.

We must also, I firmly believe, recognize that focusing on the issues identified by the Royal Commission alone, vitally important though it is to do so, will not lead to the renewal of the Church which the present moment calls for. We must have the courage to acknowledge that, for a long time, the Church in Australia (and of course not only here but in other places as well) has been going through a deep spiritual crisis which ultimately points to a "de-throning" of Christ from his rightful place in the Church. Our rhetoric may have been unimpeachable but our practice has sometimes been anything but. It is time for us, as a community of faith, to recall the words of Jesus:

*It is not those who say to me, "Lord, Lord", who will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven ... everyone who listens to these words of mine **and acts on them** will be like a sensible person who built his house on rock. Rain*

3



*came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against that house and it did not fall: it was founded on rock. But everyone who listens to these words of mine **and does not act on them** will be like a stupid person who built his house on sand. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and struck that house and it fell; and what a fall it had!" (Matthew 7:21).*

The time has come for us all first of all to listen, deeply and attentively and constantly, to the words of Christ, as they come to us in the scriptures, the Book of the Church, and then, having listened, to faithfully and courageously act on what we have heard. The time has come for us all to decide whether or not we will accept that the way we must follow is Christ's way; that the truth to which we must commit ourselves is Christ's truth; and that the life we must strive to live is our life in Christ. Those who have abused children and young people, and those who have protected the abusers, even if in doing so their intention was to preserve the reputation of the Church, were not walking in the Lord's way, were not following the path of the Lord's truth, and were not living according to the model of Christ's life.

Saint Francis of Assisi, whose name the present pope bears, once heard a voice while praying before a crucifix in an abandoned and derelict church: *Go and repair my Church for it is falling into ruins*. Perhaps we are facing a similar invitation today. Saint Francis responded by stripping himself of all but the essentials, and by gathering around him a community of people who, in different ways, sought to live in fidelity to the gospel. In many ways it was a simple as that. The abuse of children and young people represents an appalling case of infidelity to the gospel. The failure of bishops and other Church leaders to respond with courage and determination has been an equally appalling case of infidelity. Only by a renewed and uncompromising determination to live as faithful disciples of Jesus within the community of his Church can we hope to prevent further abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This is not a task which falls only to the bishops, the clergy, the religious or those who work in ministry within our communities: it is a task which we all share together. We need to discover again the call of the gospel. We need to recommit ourselves again to a faithful following of Jesus. We need, in the vivid image of Pope Francis, to become a community where people's wounds can be healed and people's hearts can be warmed – and therefore we need to learn how to be healers rather than hurters, people who know how to warm the hearts of others rather than making their hearts grow cold. Only in this way can we become a people who are walking together in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd.

This is the fundamental challenge which now faces us as we seek to implement all those recommendations from the Royal Commission to which we have committed ourselves. We are, to paraphrase some words from Saint Paul, a people who hold a great treasure in the earthen vessels of our frail humanity (cf 2 Cor 4:7). It would be dangerous to continue along the path of renewal if we rely only on our own efforts. We must place Christ and his grace, given to us in and through our life in the Church, at the centre of everything. Only Christ can renew his Church – but he seeks to do so in and through us. And so we pray, in the words of one of the Church's Lenten hymns:

What we have darkened heal with light,  
And what we have destroyed make whole.

Yours sincerely in Christ