

New book explores centrality of Christ as the cornerstone of Catholic schools

DEPUTY Dean of Australian Catholic University's (ACU) La Salle Academy Associate Professor William Sultmann has published a new book that explores and asserts the centrality of Christ as the cornerstone of the Catholic school.

Cornerstone: Encountering the Spirit of Christ in the Catholic School is a scholarly invitation that integrates contemporary themes from Educational Philosophy, Theology and Spirituality and will be welcomed by all who share a concern for Catholic school mission and identity, Catholic school leadership, religious education, ministry, evangelisation and formation.

Chair of the National Religious Education standing committee Sister Elizabeth Dodds RSC launched *Cornerstone* at a reception hosted by the La Salle Academy for National Religious Education Colloquium participants.

In launching the book Sister Elizabeth commented: "the book asserts and explores the centrality of Christ as the cornerstone of the Catholic school. It is a scholarly invitation into reflection, discussion, integration, collaboration and action for service within the Catholic school, in the Spirit of Christ."

Coventry Press Editor Hugh McGinlay said: "the text is for anyone who serves within, supports and is interested in the mission and life of Catholic schools. The text has special relevance to undergraduate and graduate students in Education and Theology and those pursuing higher degree research on Catholic school mission and identity."

Dean of La Salle Academy Professor Br David Hall FMS wrote the forward of *Cornerstone*, positioning the text as a resource that can support learning with a formation emphasis.

"The metaphor of cornerstone invites the response as to how the life and message of the living Spirit of Jesus is mediated through the visible lives of his followers; while the sub-title: 'Encountering the Spirit of Christ in the Catholic school' reminds us that it is through the Spirit of Christ that the community of the Catholic school draws its life and imagination," Professor Hall said.

"This is an imagination that seeks to become present and responsive to the Spirit of Christ in ways that are authentic, comprehensive, personal and practical."

Those practical responses are explored in six chapters that combine faithfulness to the Catholic tradition with contemporary insights into the nature of education, how we learn as individuals and communities and how the Spirit of God enlightens our endeavours as Catholic leaders, teachers and educators.

The book is sensitive to and reinforces professional practice shaped by a Catholic Christian meaning system; explores this meaning system through spirituality, mission and leadership; and develops ministry as the integrating quality for service and communion within the Catholic school.

Associate Professor Sultmann indicated that the book was not only a work in progress but one that "attempted to bridge at a foundational level the inspiration of Church literature with the grounded and authentic contributions operative in Catholic schools."

Cornerstone: Encountering the Spirit of Christ in the Catholic School can be purchased from Coventry Press for \$45.95: <https://coventrypress.com.au/bookstore>

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