

VCEA's Commissioning Mass brings Catholic education together in celebration

The Board and executive of the Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA) were commissioned last night at a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Peter A Comensoli and concelebrated by fellow Company Member Bishops Bird, Bennett, and Mackinlay at St John the Evangelist Church.

Sr Eileen Ann Daffy, the fifth Company Member of VCEA, led the Rite of Commissioning.

They were joined at Mass and Dinner by stakeholders from across Catholic education and the education sector more broadly, including Deputy Premier and Minister for Education the Hon Ben Carroll MP and Minister for Children the Hon Lizzie Blandthorn MP.

In leading the celebrations, Archbishop Peter commissioned the VCEA Board and Executive to embrace our mission, recognising the dignity of every child and affirming their right to a Catholic education.

'We gather this evening from across Victoria, united in Christ's love and bound to each other in the pursuit of exceptional education and high-quality pastoral care for every single student in our Catholic schools,' he said.

VCEA Chair James Merlino said that 'It is a sacred duty to be commissioned as a steward of Catholic education in Victoria, and a great privilege to walk the well-trodden path of the clergy, school staff, and parents who have come before us.

'I am pleased that the VCEA has been able to bring new skills and experience into our sector since its renewal last year, enriching the support that we are able to provide to schools and their proprietors in key areas such as Catholic mission, school regulation and funding and advocacy,' he said.

'Tonight's Commissioning Mass was a reaffirmation of our commitment to serve our sector with integrity, compassion and humility,' said VCEA CEO Professor Elizabeth Labone.

'We are grateful that so many of our valued partners and stakeholders from across the Victorian Catholic education sector and Parliament were able to join us for us this joyous celebration,' she said.

The Commissioning Mass was celebrated at St John the Evangelist Church, East Melbourne, with dinner following at the co-located Catholic Leadership Centre.

Also concelebrating were Auxiliary Bishops Terence Curtin and Anthony Ireland.

The members of the VCEA Board, James Merlino (Chair), Patricia Cowling, Lynn Glover, Marcelle Mogg, Damian Murphy and Chris O'Grady, were commissioned alongside CEO Professor Elizabeth Labone, and executive members, Bruce Phillips, Geoff Bell and Tracey Bannan.

The Victorian Catholic Education Authority is the peak body for Catholic school education in Victoria.

There are more than 158,000 families who choose to send 215,000 students to the 496 Catholic schools in Victoria. This represents 1 in 5 Victorian students.

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Media contact Scott Cresswell 0433 099 044