This year Caritas College (R-12) celebrates 145 years of continuous Catholic education conducted in the Josephite tradition, since Saint Mary of the Cross and two sisters established the first Catholic school in Port Augusta in 1871.

In recent years we have articulated our school motto: 

*In Omnibus Caritas – In all things love*

to inspire staff and students to take to *joy in belonging, pride in achieving* and *hope in serving.*

Pope Francis has declared this year an Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy “so that we may become a more effective sign of (God’s) action in our lives.” We are invited to open ourselves (our thoughts, actions and words) as doors of mercy, through which anyone who enters will experience the love of God who *consoles, pardons, and instils hope.*

In this Holy Year, we look forward to the experience of being the voice, hands and face of God to those we encounter, and treating all with merciful acceptance and dignity.

There are many examples and references to God’s mercy in Scripture. The psalms of the Old Testament provide many beautiful expressions which can help us understand what merciful behaviours are:

*“He executes justice for the oppressed; he gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous.” (Ps 146:7-9)*

*“We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a *wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace.*” (Pope Francis, 2015)*

In 2016, we also celebrate 150 Years of Josephite Education. St Mary of the Cross and Fr Julian Tenison Woods both had a deep sense of call to respond to the needs of the isolated children in outback Australia who were not receiving any education. At that time there was no religious congregation that was able to respond to these widespread needs. God’s Spirit worked through Mary and Julian, two very different yet equally passionate people, and the first Josephite school was opened in Penola in 1866.

As we join with the wider Josephite community, we celebrate and give thanks for our own strong and ongoing connection with the Sisters of St Joseph, and our proud and rich tradition that Mary MacKillop started here in Pt Augusta. We are proud and committed stewards of this legacy.

As the school year commences we contemplate:

- How did Mary and Julian show mercy in these humble beginnings of both Catholic education and Josephite education in SA?
- How can we, individually and collectively, open our doors of mercy to those in the Pt Augusta community in 2016 in the spirit of Josephite education?
Principal’s Vision for Leading Learning in 2016

Our theme for this school year *Merciful is God – In All Things Love* will lead us into reflection that honours our rich Josephite story. This will be reflected in our words and actions, carrying on the dream Mary MacKillop started in 1871 as we work hard to deliver a contemporary, lived expression of Catholic Josephite education at Caritas College in 2016.

CESA has developed a Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools in SA which includes nine domains. We will self-assess and review our performance relating to one or two key indicators for each domain.

Our diocesan Director of Catholic Education has articulated key priorities for 2016 as part of the Strategy for leading Catholic education across SA to new levels of excellence:

- Enhancing the Catholic identity of school communities
- Strategy for leading Catholic Education to New Levels of Excellence
- Strong leadership across all schools
- High quality teaching and learning
- Effective administration and resourcing
- Building cultures of pastoral wellbeing

Our School Improvement Plan for 2016 is closely aligned with national, state, diocesan and parish agendas. It reflects the feedback received from last year’s School Opinion Survey of students, families and staff, and analysis of a range of data sources, including student assessment (National Assessment Program and Wellbeing surveys) and a variety of staff consultation opportunities.

In 2016 we eagerly anticipate working with new facilities in Administration, staff amenities, Visual Arts and new classrooms. As a staff group we will each be developing personal goals at the start of the year which we will receive feedback on as part of our personal review processes. We will work with the broader community to develop our medium-term strategic directions for our school, taking account of our current local context, and our vision to continue to provide excellent education for students. We will continue to work with all stakeholders as we review our practices in line with Positive Education principles. Another focus is to ensure we are fully implementing the Australian Curriculum in a relevant and rigorous way. A range of data will be gathered and used to inform all these initiatives. We will also refine our processes for Teacher Performance and Development, including the process for Annual Appraisal. And overarching all this, will be our commitment to our school theme: Merciful is God – In All Things Love; this will permeate our actions, decisions and commitment to students and families throughout 2016.

*In Omnibus Caritas*

*Joy in Belonging; Pride in Achieving; Hope in Serving*
**Key learning priorities in 2016:**

All these priorities are aligned with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and the National Professional Standard for Principals, and will be reflected individually for teachers in Personal Professional Learning Plans that are developed at the commencement of the year in line with the Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework:

- Faith and Spirituality Formation in the context of Josephite charism
  - with opportunity for one staff member to participate and accompany students to the JJAMM student leadership formation conference in Sydney.
  - Participation in the Diocese of Port Pirie Social Justice Outreach Experience – Good Samaritan Early Childhood Centre Kiribati (July 6th-18th 2016) with one staff representative participating from Caritas College.
  - In partnership with the Sisters of St Joseph through the rural mentoring project (Sr Josie Huppatz)
  - through reflection days and other staff professional learning experiences
  - participating in celebrations to commemorate 150 Years of Josephite Education in SA in 2016

- The school community prays together to promote the Catholic identity of the school, to honour the Catholic tradition and to respect the faiths and religious backgrounds of all, in the context of the Year of Mercy with the College theme for the Year: **Merciful is God – In all Things Love**

- Promote the benefits of Catholic education at Caritas College. This will be enhanced and supported by a diocesan initiative to celebrate Catholic Education Week (13th – 20th May). The theme for this year is ‘Opening Doors of Mercy.’

- Action Research will be undertaken and the School Board will work with the community to gather and analyse data to inform strategic directions for the College for 2017-2019.

- Continuing to develop an innovative model that supports the development of educational leaders, as a lighthouse school for implementing a model of distributive leadership, and providing on-site leadership development training. This program has been designed and developed in collaboration with Port Pirie Diocese and Dr Stephen Brown, CEO QELi.

- Implementing a new process for staff annual appraisal: Education Support Officer annual review using contemporary and relevant data, self-reflection and review in light of the school improvement goals; teaching staff applying principles in the Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework.

- Using evidence-based data to review, plan and analyse teaching and learning practices in literacy development i.e. using data to improve student outcomes, with a focus on using the Language and Literacy Levels to focus on sentence types.

- Fully implementing Australian Curriculum across birth-12, ensuring it provides for breadth and depth of learning with adjustments to ensure access for all, and that there are clear curriculum/learning standards and goals at class and school level, including the playgroup at MacKillop Learning Centre.

- Building strong relationships between staff, students and families that are caring, polite and inclusive.

- Providing regular opportunities for students to define their learning goals and provide feedback on teaching and learning.

- Developing whole school understanding and implementation of Positive Education principles and practices.

- Developing individual and group behaviour education learning plans across R-12.

- Involvement in a range of professional learning projects: Graduate Certificate in Catholic Studies; Leadership formation program.

- Enhancing teaching and learning through the development of capital resources, including development of Stage 11 – new classrooms (Year 10 and Languages), Visual Arts, Administration.
2016 School Improvement Plan

1. Catholic identity
   1.2 Catholic social teaching:
      - The school demonstrates a mission which is inclusive by reaching out to those who are marginalised and ensuring this outreach is reflected in its policies, procedures and programs.
      - The school has a planned and structured approach to charitable works, aligned to the mission of the Church and the local community context (including diocesan initiatives to support the works of Sisters of Good Samaritan in Kiribati, St Vincent de Paul, Catholic Mission, Caritas Australia, and Sisters of St Joseph (works of charity)).

   1.3 Prayer and liturgy:
      - Prayer services and liturgies occur regularly and staff, students and parents actively prepare and participate in them.
      - The school community prays together to promote the Catholic identity of the school, to honour the Catholic tradition and to respect the faiths and religious backgrounds of all students.

2 Focused vision and goals
   2.1 Strategic Directions
      - The strategic plan identifies key directions, improvement goals and targets and is future orientated, flexible, dynamic and responsive to changes over time. *(refer CESA school’s marketing and communications planning framework)*

   2.2 Strategic planning:
      - The annual school improvement plan identifies the key improvement goals for the year, based on the school’s Strategic Plan.
      - Quantitative and qualitative data is identified for collection and analysis to assess progress on achievement of the improvement goals.

3 Strong leadership
   3.2 Setting directions:
      - Collaborative and purposeful professional learning across the R-12 school community improving outcomes for all students.
      - The effectiveness of teaching and learning is monitored and evaluated through observation, feedback, analysis and use of relevant data.
      - Parent and student voice in learning is actively encouraged.

   3.3 Building leadership capacity:
      - A positive learning environment across the school community is built and sustained through contemporary leadership structures; supported by providing opportunity for staff professional learning re educational leadership
      - Effective strategies for staff development; staff induction; succession planning; professional learning; faith formation; leadership development and performance review are developed and implemented (including review of ESO performance review processes).

4 High expectations of all
   4.1 Shared responsibility:
      - We communicate clearly to families that we expect all students to learn successfully and have high expectations of all staff.
      - Teachers have shared responsibility and accountability for the care and successful learning of all students, particularly those who have additional educational or pastoral needs.

   4.2 Engagement with families:
      - Families are integral members of the school community who share responsibility for student achievement and wellbeing.
      - Families receive effective and timely feedback on their children’s learning progress.
      - Families provide feedback on a range of school matters through formal and informal structure

5 High quality teaching and learning
   5.1 Curriculum:
      - Teachers plan for differentiated learning that is both developmentally appropriate and challenging.
      - There are clear curriculum/learning standards and goals at class and school level.

   5.2 Quality teaching:
      - The design, planning and evaluation of teaching programs are based on research, student assessment data, student feedback, curriculum and appropriate pedagogy.
5.3 Assessment and reporting:
- Reporting practices support improved learning outcomes by developing partnerships between school, students and families.

5.4 Student engagement in learning
- Students provide teachers with constructive feedback about teaching and learning.

6 Effective use of data
6.1 Systematic identification and collection of data:
- The school collects appropriate data for identified groups and uses it in the planning process.

6.2 Analysis and interpretation of data
- Teachers build their skills in analysing and interpreting a broad range of student achievement data (focusing on pedagogy for literacy learning and wellbeing data - positive education principles and practices)

6.3 Monitoring and use of data:
- Teachers use data continuously, collaboratively and effectively to improve teaching for learning.
- The school implements a series of targeted improvement strategies.

7 Orderly and safe learning environments
7.1 Relationships:
- School-wide programs are in place to promote positive relationship building.

7.2 Positive behaviours:
- Teachers establish clear expectations of students and deal promptly, fairly and respectfully with behaviour issues.
- Students demonstrate an understanding of the school’s behaviour policy and approach and act accordingly.

7.4 School policies and practices:
- A whole-school positive behaviour education policy and approach supports and ensures an orderly and safe learning environment for students and staff.

8 Strong home, school, community engagement
8.1 Family engagement
- Building strong partnerships with parents and families by creating a culture of welcome, inclusion and a shared responsibility.

8.3 Consultation, collaboration and decision making:
- Families are active contributors to school decision making and planning processes that support learning; school policy and practice; and community building initiatives.
- Increasing opportunities for engagement with families of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander students in order to enhance learning outcomes for all students.

9 Effective administration and resourcing
9.2 Finance:
- The school budget aligns to the school’s improvement goals.
- The school demonstrates effective stewardship of finances, resources and facilities focused on meeting identified needs and future demands.

9.3 Infrastructure and physical resources:
- The school plans effectively for future infrastructure needs which support student learning and stewardship of the school site (including Stage 11 building project: Visual arts, Administration and GLAs).