



Vive Spiritu Fidei
Live by the Spirit of Faith

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AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITY

Ways Forward in Religious Education

Religious Education
Colloquium

ACU Canberra
12-14 November 2018

Report on Proceedings

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LA SALLE ACADEMY



To educate is an act of love ... the educator in Catholic schools must be, first and foremost, competent and qualified but, at the same time, someone who is rich in humanity and capable of being with young people in a style of pedagogy that promotes human and spiritual growth.

Pope Francis
Address to the Congregation for Catholic Education
13 February 2014



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Acknowledgements

It is with much satisfaction that I convey the appreciation of La Salle Academy to all who contributed and participated in the Religious Education Colloquium (12 - 14 November 2018).

The experience was most significant in that we achieved considerable insight into our shared mission within a process that invited service, communion and dialogue.

Thanks go to the Senior Management Committee of the La Salle Academy for their encouragement of the Colloquium. Appreciation is extended to Reverend Father Anthony Casamento CSMA - ACU Vice President, for his official opening, and to Dr Dan White and Rev Dr Kevin Lenehan who gave significant keynote addresses in support of our themes. The complementary voices of students, staff and parents through the respective presentations of Dr Anthony Cleary, Ms Diana Alteri, and Ms Carmel Nash also generated awareness and served to identify challenges and possibilities. Further, the breadth and quality of workshop presentations offered much wisdom and experience in support of *Ways Forward in Religious Education* within Catholic schools across Australia.

Gratitude is also expressed to our Executive Deans of the Faculties of Education and Arts, and Philosophy and Theology, for their support and attendance; to our Planning Team¹ and Liturgists for their perseverance and quality of preparation and reflections; and the ACU community of Canberra under the leadership of Associate Professor Patrick McArdle. The generosity and skills of many were superb, with the process and outcomes reflecting commitment to a shared purpose and reinforcing hope and insight in a mission and ministry integral to the life of the Catholic Church in Australia.

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¹The report acknowledges the contribution of Edeltraud Gaus to the Planning Team activities during the Colloquium. Edeltraud Gaus is a visiting scholar, a Lecturer and Research Assistant at University of Tübingen, Germany.

Executive Summary

The Colloquium sought to engage, dialogue, discern, and present considerations for advancing Religious Education in Catholic schools across Australia. The contributions are collated in two documents: This Report and a Companion Document that contains appendices indicative of planning, professional input, communications, and primary data sources. The Report is being circulated widely, the Companion Document is available on request from the La Salle Academy.

The timing of the Colloquium recognised the critical role for Religious Education in Australian Catholic schools. School community profiles reflect multi-cultural, multi-faith, limited or no faith affiliations and invite a new imagination for Religious Education. It is an imagination that seeks to be responsive to diversity, founded in the Traditions and culture of Catholic schooling while grounded in dialogue and respectful of school and system renewal initiatives. In addition, changes in community and parent expectations, pedagogy, curriculum and technology situate Religious Education in a challenging context which highlights the advantages of collaborative partnerships, collective reflection and strategic intention in service and communion of a common mission.

The Colloquium brought together 57 scholars and practitioners, representing ACU and 19 Catholic education authorities across Australia.

The process was grounded in prayer and supported by five keynote and short presentations, 20 elective workshops, three mixed and three focus group discussions, three individual and group reporting sessions and eight short reports. Moreover, social and informal professional opportunities allowed for considerable exchanges, rich discussion and the continuing development of trust, confidence and interdependence among participants.

Considerations emphasised five integral components to *Ways Forward in Religious Education: Formation, Pedagogy, Curriculum, Research and Partnerships*.

Within each of these components, participants offered perspectives as to Foundations in Faith; Main Ideas and Integrating Principles; and, Strategies for continuing renewal.

FOUNDATIONS IN FAITH

Foundations in faith were highlighted as shaping and guiding each of the components to Religious Education.

Formation

Centred in Christ, Church Tradition, Mission, and the journeys of individuals and communities.

Pedagogy

Processes evidenced in discipleship, dialogue, inquiry, and witness.

Curriculum

Learning that is inclusive, founded on encounter, aligned with identity, relevant and creative.

Research

Generation of data and provision of analysis in support of renewal, accountability, and community engagement.

Partnerships

Providing a 'space' where the Spirit of God is experienced and shared.

MAIN IDEAS AND INTEGRATING PRINCIPLES

The collective participant input on each component to Religious Education was summarised through discourse analysis. Main Ideas and Integrating Principles associated with each of the five components of Religious Education are summarised as:

Formation

Main Ideas: Technology, Collaboration, Faith life integration, Mandated guidelines, Parish connection, and Leadership.

Integrating Principle: Advancing formation for personal and school identity through interdependence in support and delivery.

Pedagogy

Main Ideas: Educational principles, Action research, Sustainability, Graduate expectations, Strategic engagement, Partnerships, and Digitalisation

Integrating Principle: Advancing an inquiring, experiential, encounter-based pedagogy.

An imagination that seeks to be **responsive to diversity**, founded in the Traditions and culture of Catholic schooling while grounded in dialogue and respectful of school and system renewal initiatives.



Curriculum

Main Ideas: Exemplars of good practice, Evidence based practice, Multi-faith and multi-cultural engagement.

Integrating Principle: Advancing a faith based liberating curriculum which is inclusive, relevant, inquiring, and life-giving.

Partnerships²

Main Ideas: Honouring contributions, Inclusion, Family and community connections.

Integrating Principle: Advancing 'lighthouse' practices which engage and include.

Research

Main Ideas: Planning, Accountability, Best practice, Resourcing support, Centre for research, Publications.

Integrating Principle: Advancing research which identifies needs, informs and monitors practice.

STRATEGIES

Recognising the responsibilities of the respective participant authorities, perspectives on strategically advancing Religious Education included the following.

Formation

Confirming forums for sharing and networking; and, integrating faith experience and Theology.

Pedagogy

Dialogue in promoting RE method; and nurturing teacher dispositions of Moderator, Specialist, and Witness.

Curriculum

Engaging formation for a diverse population of staff and students; and, including school-based leaders of RE at future Colloquiums.

Partnerships

Strengthening communication between ACU and Catholic Education authorities and including partners who collaborate with schools, particularly parents, parishes, spiritual movements and associations, and dioceses.

Research

Gathering quality data, learning from and applying the lessons; and, ensuring meaning, and communications are critical to on-going effective learning.

SUMMARY

The overall components for *Ways Forward in Religious Education* reflect the re-contextualisation of Catholic schools; a creative and authentic response to a changed and changing profile and the associated needs and aspirations of the contemporary Catholic school community. For some authorities and participants, the 'fruits' of the Colloquium may offer expanded horizons, while for others, established and familiar pathways are validated. What can be confirmed with clarity and consensus is the commitment of participants to the Mission of the Catholic school expressed within the learning domain of Religious Education.

The overall components for *Ways Forward in Religious Education* reflect the re-contextualisation of Catholic schools; a creative and authentic response to a changed and changing profile and the associated needs and aspirations of the contemporary Catholic school community.

² Main Ideas and Integrating Principles for the themes and main ideas for Partnerships and Research reflect the narrative of participants and are included based on their independence of other thematic concepts.

Overview

AUDIENCE, INITIATION, PURPOSE AND PROCESS

This report is offered to Colloquium participants, ACU colleagues, Catholic schools, Catholic school authorities and Catholic school governance personnel for their consideration and action as appropriate.

Ways Forward in Religious Education, a national Colloquium on Religious Education was held in November, 12-14, 2018. As an initiative of the ACU La Salle Academy, it was intended to provide a 'space and place' for dialogue among educators and academics seeking to advance the 'why', 'what', and 'how' of Religious Education into the future. It was an opportunity for ACU staff and Catholic partners to present their achievements and ideas and so engage in a process that was considered to advance the collective effort in this challenging and critical area of the Catholic school curriculum.

The purpose of the Colloquium was to dialogue on the challenges, responses and collaborative possibilities for advancing Religious Education in Catholic schools across Australia. The overall theme was *Ways Forward in Religious Education*, with sub-themes of *identifying challenges and future directions; embracing opportunities; and, imagining possibilities*.

Invitations were extended to ACU academics teaching in courses that accredit graduates to teach Religious Education and to Catholic partners with responsibilities in this same area (Appendix 1). Encouragement was given to each Arch/diocese to consider sending two or three people to the Colloquium. The invitation also included the Executive Directors and Senior Officers of Religious Institutes and those who have responsibility for the governance of Catholic schools. In addition, invitations included members of the National Catholic Education Commission, Faith Formation and Religious Education Committee. All invitees were asked to consider delivering a 30-minute presentation in response to the purpose and themes of the Colloquium (Appendices 2 & 3).

Each day of the Colloquium commenced with prayer and involved a mix of keynote presentations with associated workshops and group discussions. Special events included a shared Eucharist presided by Rev Tony Percy (Vicar General - Archdiocese of Canberra/Goulburn), and a La Salle reception which incorporated the launch of a work on the centrality of Christ to the Catholic school.³ An overview of the shared process inputs and the structure of the continuing dialogue is shown in Figure 1.

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³ The text was by William Sultmann, 2018, *Cornerstone: Advancing the Spirit of Christ in the Catholic School*, published by Coventry Press, Melbourne.

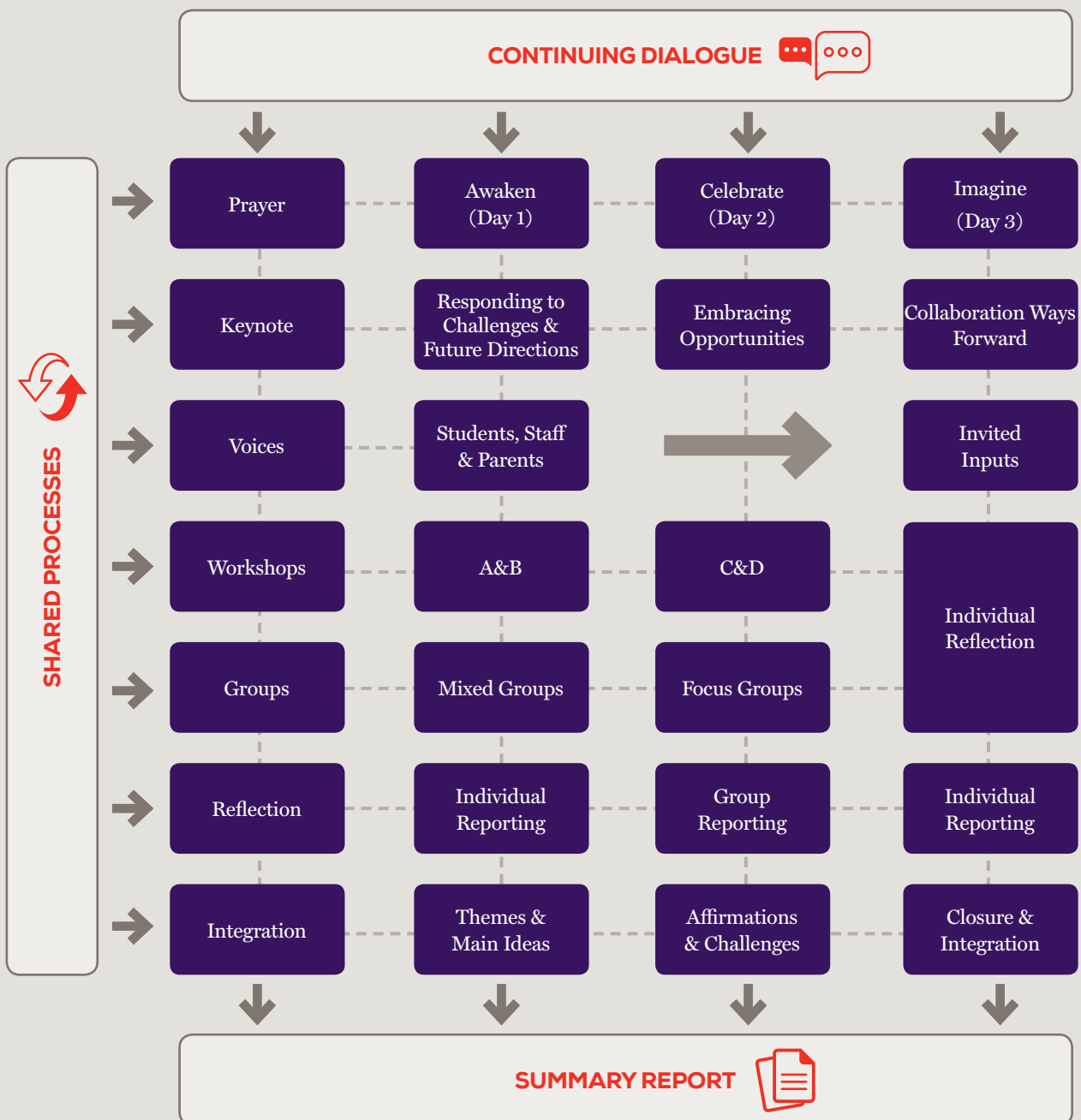


Figure 1. Overview of Colloquium Process

Day 1: Awaken

Responding to Challenges and Future Directions

INTRODUCTION: PROFESSOR BR DAVID HALL FMS

The Colloquium was convened under the leadership and facilitation of Professor Br David Hall FMS. In the introduction, Professor Hall advanced the value of collaboration and dialogue within and beyond Australian Catholic University (ACU) and noted that “While much has been achieved in Religious Education over many decades, we find ourselves unsettled about our current predicament. We are not sure if what we are doing is really hitting the mark.” He added that the RE Colloquium brings together academics, Catholic Education personnel, Campus Ministry, and leaders of Religious Institutes who all bring ‘a piece of the wisdom.’ The challenge of the Colloquium was therefore one of dialogue, respectful listening, networking and learning in advancing *Ways Forward in Religious Education*. The challenge was offered “We have a role to play but what will our role be? Where is the refreshment and where is Religious Education that imparts life and meaning to our students?”

Students who will live as disciples of Jesus well beyond their time as students in a Catholic school.”

OPENING: REVEREND FR ANTHONY CASAMENTO CSMA

Fr Anthony Casamento CSMA (Vice President) identified new evangelisation as a foundation imperative for dialogue within a new cultural context. Drawing on the exhortations of Pope Francis and the most recent literature from the Congregation of Catholic Education, Father Anthony spoke of the Church’s call to ‘integral humanism,’ ‘building a civilisation of love,’ ‘a flourishing humanity,’ and the ‘formation of the human person.’ Evangelisation challenges teachers and graduates to be ‘salt and light’ in the world and to pursue and speak their truth in the Spirit of faith. In summary, Father Casamento concluded “All of us are invited to consider and enact the exhortation of Pope Francis ‘to give a soul to the world.’”

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: DR DAN WHITE

Dr White introduced seven challenges through the image of ‘the Jewish temple and its seven Courts’ (Appendix 4). The first Court (*Court of the Gentiles*) explored faith as both contained and invitational. The second (*Women and their Families*) involved meeting people where they are at. Court three (*Israelites*) confirmed knowledge and experience as foundational. The fourth Court (*Levites*) nominated those involved in ministry as being the ‘critical mass’ who share the story. The fifth Court (*Altar of Sacrifice*) revealed pivotal moments in faith where the recognition of God is experienced more fully. The sixth Court (*Holy Place*), the Court of the priest, invoked the challenge to see the Divine within the human. The seventh Court (*Holy of Holies*) is the full embracing of Mystery and the challenge to immerse oneself in God. In summary, Dr White spoke of the Christian journey of discipleship as one of mystery, with and towards a God who is Mystery.

“We have a role to play but what will our role be? Where is the refreshment and where is **Religious Education that imparts life and meaning** to our students?”



VOICES: STUDENTS, STAFF AND PARENTS

The ‘voices’ of students, staff and parents were heard in the presentations of Dr Cleary, Ms Alteri and Ms Nash. Each presentation conveyed an informative and challenging body of information, a summary of which is provided in Appendix 5 of the Companion Document. The presentations did not seek to be a comprehensive precis of factors significant to Religious Education but entailed a glimpse into issues emerging through diocesan initiatives and personal experience.

Student Perspectives: Dr Anthony Cleary

Dr Cleary invited participants to ‘listen to the voices of the young’ and reinforced the value and responses of longitudinal reflections. In 2018, as was the case in the previous five years, all systemic Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney participated in the *Survey of Religious Attitudes and Practices*. This survey involved students in Years 5, 7, 9 & 11 and sought to gain a deeper understanding of the ‘religiosity’ of young people and thus enlighten approaches to and models of youth ministry. The survey included ‘like’ questions from other examples of similar empirical research thereby enabling comparisons with different population samples.

Staff Perspectives: Ms Diana Alteri

Ms Alteri’s presentation discussed the faith journey of teacher personal and group characteristics and what constituted the challenges for Religious Education. The details of the presentation drew from the commissioned *Painted Dog Research* and identified several approaches to understanding faith and faith formation. Two key instruments were applied within the research project; the *Religious Commitment Inventory* and the *Christian Faith Practices Scale*. Diana’s initial presentation was augmented by a question and answer session and an elective workshop presentation which allowed for processing of research findings.

Parent Perspectives: Ms Carmel Nash

Ms Nash’s presentation continued the challenge from complementary voices as to Religious Education. In Carmel’s words, parents tell us “Don’t differentiate RE as separate from the rest of the curriculum; programs in Prep to 10 are good but in Years 11-12 there are questions; curriculum expectations in supporting Tertiary Entrance are causing increasing demands and in some places are displacing the focus on RE; and, sacramental programs are more suited to a school context.” The imperatives of Harvard researcher Karen Mapp (e.g., RE as being linked to learning; relationships; collaboration; development; and, normative behaviours) were argued as significant.

WORKSHOPS A & B: RESPONDING TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Ten workshops were presented on themes and the goals of Day 1: Responding to challenges and future directions (Appendix 6). Workshops also provided an opportunity for consideration of keynote and complementary voice presentations (students, staff and parents) offered within the morning sessions of the Colloquium. A summary of workshop presentations (A & B) are listed with the themes and leaders shown in Table 1.



“All of us are invited to consider and enact the exhortation of Pope Francis ‘to give a soul to the world.’”



Table 1. Workshop presentations on challenges and future directions in Religious Education

MONDAY, 12 NOVEMBER, DAY ONE - WORKSHOP A	
TITLE	PRESENTER
Educating with a Mission Lens ⁴	Mr Ken Bryant, Ms Jo Kenny and Mr Luke Tobin
Reconceptualising the role of the RE teacher in a secular and pluralist context: Challenges and future directions	Assoc Prof Michael Buchanan and Dr Adrian Lacey
Challenges in teaching Scripture: Do we want our students to be able to interpret Scripture for themselves?	Dr Margaret Carswell
Self-efficacy in teachers' preparing to teach Religious Education	Dr Mary Nosedá
Witness, Specialist, Moderator: Reconceiving the role of the teacher in Religious Education	Assoc Prof Robyn Horner and Ms Teresa Brown
MONDAY, 12 NOVEMBER, DAY ONE - WORKSHOP B	
TITLE	PRESENTER
Constants in Mission and Formative Dialogue (<i>Voices and Visions: Catholic schools in conversation</i>) a resource in support of mission	Prof Br David Hall FMS and Assoc Prof William Sultmann
Building Cultures of School Improvement and Performance on Evidence-Based Decisions	Dr Liz Dowling
Do RE teachers believe they can do the job they have been given? A psychological study of 300 RE teachers	Dr Greg Elliott
Beyond the Upper Room: RE and the Modern Secondary Heart	Dr Leigh Stower
The Theological Formation of Students, Teachers and Leaders in the Education System. Challenges and Frameworks	Dr Joel Hodge and Dr Maeve Heaney

⁴ The workshop developed the alignment between the mission of the Catholic school and the content and process of Religious Education and curriculum more broadly.

INTEGRATION OF NARRATIVES

The integration of the combined input and reflections of Day 1 involved three steps.




Step One: Individual reflection on three promptings: ‘existing and emerging challenges;’ ‘new awakenings and future directions;’ and, ‘other comments.’

Step Two: Participants were invited to offer a brief comment to the wider group and to share their more detailed written responses with the planning group. 38 individual responses were collected and collated (Appendix 7 of the Companion Document).

Step Three: All members of the Colloquium planning team and an invited consultant examined the 38 shared responses. Through a random allocation of individual written responses, each reviewer examined responses and recorded themes of interest. Themes were subsequently aggregated and shared as a summary of the overall data. In addition, clarificatory statements were extracted from individual submissions as illustrative of the themes that were reported (Table 2).

Four dominant challenges were identified: formation; pedagogy and curriculum; parents, parish partnerships; and, research. Each challenge possessed aspects of uniqueness and interdependence with a total of 20 themes being articulated across the four challenges: formation (seven), pedagogy and curriculum (seven), parents/parish/partnerships (three), and research (three). Commentary associated with these themes illustrated the nature of the challenges, most of which were optimistic and forthright in their narration.

Table 2. Collated list of summaries from individual participant responses

DOMAINS	THEMES	STATEMENTS
		
FORMATION	Teacher evangelisation (including RE teachers)	Invitation - proposing not imposing; the critical need to differentiate the faith encounter. RE teachers need to be supported in their intrinsic spirituality and their self-efficacy.
	Undergraduate formation priority	We need to awaken the witness factor in our younger RE teachers and undergraduate RE students.
	Witness	It's not good enough to have well meaning, 'generally spiritual' people in the Religious Education space when we are trying to draw secondary school students into experiences where they can encounter Christ.
	Holistic engagement	What form of RE curriculum/pedagogy is responsive to our context and equips young people to dialogue with a pluralist/secular society?
	Critical mass	We need a critical mass of staff who passionately engage and promote Catholic identity of the school.
	Catholic identity	How do we ensure RE enhances the identity of everyone in our schools - 'fullness of life' for all?
	Embracing the Mystery	Recognising that we do God's work and that union with God is critical in the work of Religious Education.
PEDAGOGY AND CURRICULUM	Senior schooling	More experiential and inquiry approach to RE ... reconsideration of what we do in senior RE.
	Consensus on purpose of RE	What exactly is expected of an RE teacher in a RE classroom in a Catholic school today, both primary and secondary?
	Professional learning	Formation of our teachers and parents in Catholic Education is key. Celebrate and share our successes more overtly and encourage best practice.
	Community for all	We need to model the radical inclusion of Jesus and ensure everyone can find a place of comfort, solace, compassion, understanding, forgiveness and mercy when they are part of Catholic Education.

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Table 2. Collated list of summaries from individual participant responses

DOMAINS	THEMES	STATEMENTS
PEDAGOGY AND CURRICULUM	Voices of youth	The vital importance of RE teachers being able to sensitively listen to students and engage them with inquiry into ‘the big questions’ with sophistication in drawing upon/connection with the Tradition.
	National curriculum and resourcing	There are so many points of congruence between us, along with some significant and productive collaboration but we have never achieved a National RE curriculum. This continues to result in duplication and inefficient use of resources. This matter is still worth pursuing.
	RE and Catholic school identity	Embedding a Catholic world view across the curriculum; improve quality classroom teaching of religion; and encourage an encounter with Jesus in the religious life of the school.
PARENTS / PARISH / PARTNERSHIPS	School as mechanism for engagement	Catholic schools have something to offer Catholics (the Church) and potentially many others (who send their children), and the broader society.
	Parent framework of engagement	Listen to parents and their opinions (families are the most important influence). Increase our efforts in the formation of parents.
	Parish relationship and ongoing dialogue	The importance of parish life in renewing/refashioning to engage with people’s lives and respect the agency of all the baptised.
RESEARCH	ACU partnerships	The La Salle Academy will be important in supporting the identification of areas for new research and providing personnel and resources to advance this cause.
	Quality practice in Religious Education	While some useful research has been undertaken more work needs to be done on what makes for effective faith formation of students in Catholic schools.
	Development of quality resources needed	An effective and efficient way of collaborating will be the development of contemporary resources that support the teaching of Religious Education. This needs to be well informed by research aligned to contemporary pedagogies.

Day 2: Celebrate Embracing Opportunities

A summary of the challenges and themes of Day 1 were provided to participants at the start of Day 2. These were nominated as 'starting points' for the continuing conversation focus on the sub-theme, 'embracing opportunities.'

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: REV DR KEVIN LENEHAN

Father Lenehan explored the depth and creativity necessary for Religious Education, specifically within a new context of community pluralisation, digitalisation, and personalism (Appendix 4). Dialogue was argued as foundational and based on a shift from 'I know,' to 'we share and see.' The challenge of the shift was argued to reside in peacefully accepting difference, not being afraid, and letting the 'other be the other.' It was said to incorporate a sense of belonging and respectful dialogue; new learning, deep learning, and digitalisation; a call to the teacher to be specialist (knowledge and skills); moderator (making meaning), and witness (coach and sign). The address invited participants to consider "Is RE at the forefront of learning as it communicates growth through respectful relationships within Catholic schools as the host Tradition?" and, "What next and in what ways do we move forward?"

WORKSHOPS C & D: CELEBRATE EMBRACING OPPORTUNITIES

Workshops C & D provided a further focus on embracing opportunities (Appendix 6). A summary of presentations (Workshops C & D) are listed in the Companion Document with the themes and presenters summarised in Table 3.



Dialogue was argued as foundational;
based on a shift from 'I know,' to 'we share
and see.'

Table 3. Workshop presentations on embracing opportunities in Religious Education

TUESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER, DAY TWO - WORKSHOP C	
TITLE	PRESENTER
Responding to challenges and future directions future directions: re-imagining senior school Religious Education	Ms Sharon O'Keeffe and Dr Sally Towns
Do we teach for Capabilities and Dispositions in Religious Education? SA's dialogue with this question in CESA's current redesign of RE curriculum	Mr Michael Vial
The development and effectiveness of two new teacher formation programs at ACU La Salle Academy	Mr Peter Woods
The centrality of liturgical celebration in the life of the Catholic school	Prof Clare Johnson
<i>Gaudete Et Exsultate</i> #41 and #43: Implications for Religious Education	Dr Sandra Carroll

TUESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER, DAY TWO - WORKSHOP D	
TITLE	PRESENTER
Embracing Opportunities: building on the NCEC Religious Education Framing Paper	Mr John McGrath
Partners for life – reimagining Parish – School partnership	Dr Peter Ivers
Lighting the Path: A journey of pedagogical and curriculum changes in Religious Education in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn	Mr Patrick McGrath and Ms Bernadette Scott
A Quiet Revolution: Learning in a Formative Space	Prof Br David Hall FMS and Assoc Prof William Sultmann
Hermeneutics in the middle: Catholic identity on the frontier	Dr Paul Sharkey

INTEGRATION OF NARRATIVES

Participants were invited to consider the the challenges that were emerging in view of the workshops, the keynote presentation and the continuing dialogue within the Colloquium (Appendix 8). The process entailed three steps:

Step 1. Nomination of participation and commitment to a focus group discussion on one of the components of interest to Religious Education: Formation; Pedagogy and Curriculum; Parents, Parish, Partnerships; Research.

Step 2. Engage in a focus group discussion of the nominated interest by responding to three questions: “What is working well? What remains a challenge? What might be emerging in a wider vision?”

Step 3. Recording and sharing personal and group deliberations.

Each focus group reported on its proceedings. In some instances, multiple reports were submitted as individual participants were invited to ‘hand in’ their initial reflections.

The analysis of reports was undertaken by two reviewers. The process entailed a review of each workshop response; provision of a summary of the full set of responses; and categorising comments in accord with “What is working well; What remains a challenge; and, What is emerging as part of a wider vision?” In addition, given the breadth of responses from the pedagogy and curriculum groups, the separation of comments into domains of pedagogy and curriculum was performed.⁵

As well, a selection of general comments was included to illustrate the nature of interest and emphasis in addressing the questions (see Tables 4 to 8).

⁵Data pertaining to pedagogy was defined as processes of instruction; and the concept of curriculum defined as the learning standards, lessons, assessment, and materials used within the classroom.

Table 4: Collated list of commentary from formation focus group discussion

FORMATION		
WHAT IS WORKING WELL?	WHAT REMAINS A CHALLENGE?	EMERGING IN A WIDER VISION?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. System recognition of staff interest in formation. 2. Partnerships among organisations that have currently been developed. 3. Excellence of <i>Leading the New Evangelisation</i> and <i>Signum Fidei</i>. 4. Recognition of the liturgical life of the school. 5. RE Colloquium: dialogue & networking. 6. La Salle Academy and the emphasis on formation alongside and within academic programs. 7. The time and energy organisations give to addressing concerns. 8. ACU graduates - credible faith models and positive attitude towards Church. 9. Faith experiences - pilgrimages, international projects. 10. Mandated levels of academic formation of teachers and leaders. 11. Formation viewed as integral to mission. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishing realistic goals with formation. 2. Priority for formation of RE teachers. 3. Clarity of Catholic identity. 4. Collaboration within and beyond systems. 5. Shared practice across Australia. 6. Capacity building of formators. 7. The disconnect of spiritual life and liturgical life in schools. 8. Integrating theology / faith formation with RE. 9. Engaging middle leaders in developing Catholic identity. 10. Avoid piecemeal approaches - seek to be more strategic. 11. Formation for all - students who aren't Catholic, staff who aren't Catholic. 12. Developing a consistent, contemporary language: formation, witness, dialogue, identity. 13. Quality control of formation. 14. Sharing formation: perhaps establish a National Formation Institute. 15. Competing priorities. 16. Image of 'Church:' 'official, distant, rules, out of touch.' 17. Public dismissal of religious worldview. 18. Theological formation with new efforts in spiritual/faith and ecclesial formation. 19. Faith experiences and good spiritual direction. 20. Integration and collaboration of schools with the broader Australian and global Church. 21. Purpose of RE. 22. Formation: individual focus - meeting people where they are. 23. Differentiation of formation for staff - how do we do this well? 24. Using ECSI data appropriately. 25. Dialogue: not surface listening. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Liturgical formation. 2. Technology: delivery and collaboration. 3. Reflecting on context and content. 4. Keep grounded in firsthand experience. 5. Collaboration and cohesiveness in formation initiatives. 6. Short courses. 7. Initiatives beyond current engagement levels and established practices. 8. Curriculum which identifies, targets and supports teachers needed for Catholic schools. 9. Full implementation of <i>Signum Fidei</i>. 10. Engagement, community service, justice into all learning experiences. 11. Parent engagement initiatives that build on current practice. 12. Build upon existing capacity. 13. Resourcing leadership teams. 14. Place and importance of dialogue. 15. Evangelising digital culture. 16. Encourage parish involvement of teachers and leaders (e.g. Sydney). 17. Support core function of parish.

General Comments

- Staff are searching and hungry for formation.
- Passionate educators in our schools do the best they can with what they know.
- *Signum Fidei* - great and insightful sharing and feedback from undergraduates.
- Is a conservative mindset going to hinder how we work more effectively to bring about more effective practice?
- There is a positive 'attitude for formation' across many systems.
- Ability to deliver formation within the constraints of other priorities.
- Core pillars for success of Catholic Education: pedagogy and curriculum; maintaining distinctive identity.
- Catholic Faith Formation is equipping people with ability to deliver the curriculum.
- Don't leave 'hands' out of 'head, heart and ...'.
- Leaders in CEOs and schools seeing the need for more formation for staff including theological formation and prayer / liturgy / spirituality.
- Face-to-face learning contexts (rather than primarily online).
- Deeper collaboration between institutions and faculties (ACU).
- Forum for sharing about faith / theological formation.
- Systematic and ongoing formation: link with/lead to a eucharistic community that is vibrant and nourishing?

Table 5: Collated list of commentary from pedagogy focus group discussion

PEDAGOGY		
WHAT IS WORKING WELL?	WHAT REMAINS A CHALLENGE?	EMERGING IN A WIDER VISION?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research base informing pedagogical practice. 2. National conversation forums: ACU/NCEC. 3. The gift and potential of teachers - avoid a deficit approach. 4. Teachers assisted to think about RE differently. 5. Differentiate experiences: student voice, inquiry pedagogies, visible learning. 6. Professional accreditation for 'specialist' RE. 7. Evaluating RE including ways of listening to students and parents. 8. Responding to pluralised context - 'dialogical interplay'. 9. 'Pedagogy of Encounter' and dialogical re-contextualising process for seeking truth, making meaning and living story. 10. ECSI data: theoretical and pedagogical frame to enhance Catholic identity. 11. Integration of head, heart, hands not just as a framework for learning but as an entry point to encounter Christ. 12. Engagement of learners: critical authentic dialogue and post-critical engagement while 'preferencing' the Catholic tradition - pedagogy of inquiry. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work on 'witness capabilities': articulate what this looks like. 2. Skills: how to use tools, activities for re-contextualising. 3. Accreditation for 'professional' practice 4. Distance between expectations and classroom practices. 5. Religion that promotes personal identity. 6. Dialogue in the RE classroom and the skills of teacher as moderator, specialist and witness. 7. Co-created learning space, listening and engagement with students. 8. Nexus: quality pedagogy, curriculum content, assessment, and reporting. 9. Share good practice ... processes, communication, opportunities to celebrate. 10. Hold 'diversity' and identity as paradox, enabling new ways of understanding 'being'. 11. Professional learning: rural and remote dioceses. 12. Research on religious profiles. 13. Students: space to encounter God/the Holy Spirit when lives are Snapchat, Instagram etc. What is God's #? 14. Confidence of teachers and leaders to articulate identity. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educationally sound principles while enabling flexibility and innovation. 2. Sustainable professional learning community with opportunity for face-to-face wider gathering for dialogue and action research. 3. Focus on pedagogy rather than a focus on curriculum. 4. 'Digitisation' to assist teachers in roles (specialist, witness, moderator). 5. Graduate expectations / attributes / framework - a 'distinctive' Catholic graduate. 6. RE teachers who animate learning where whole person is educated - head, heart, body and will. 7. Greater listening with students, parents, teachers, Church, CEOs. 8. Context matters - working in a hermeneutic space where life, culture and faith meet. 9. Commonalities of pedagogy. 10. Evidence and data. What does this look like? 11. Schools, CEOs and universities: partnership to support educators and educational leaders in nurturing and/or encountering a relationship with Christ in a way that helps them to confidently give public witness.

General Comments

- Teachers as specialist, moderator, witness authentic dialogue in Religion classroom and promotion of post-critical belief strengthening of a re-contextualised Catholic identity.
- If RE emphasises a pedagogical approach that is student centred, filled with curiosity and recognises each learner as an individual, then deep learning will happen/occur.
- Switch the focus from 'content' to 'pedagogy'.



Table 6: Collated list of commentary from curriculum focus group discussion

CURRICULUM		
WHAT IS WORKING WELL?	WHAT REMAINS A CHALLENGE?	EMERGING IN A WIDER VISION?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sponsorship to enable educators to become qualified RE teachers. 2. Tertiary offerings for teachers and leaders of RE. 3. Skills in the National Curriculum reflect essentials in RE literacy. 4. Understanding ECSI/Catholic Identity is developing. 5. Responding to our contexts ... taking the culture and traditions seriously. 6. New Initiatives in 'witness' formation with pre-service teachers (e.g. <i>Signum Fidei</i>). 7. Access to curriculum 'content' via the various frameworks. 8. NCEC Religious Education Framing Paper eloquently proposes the 'how' of RE. 9. CESA work on capabilities and dispositions enriches the conversation about how RE can develop learners. 10. Melbourne's work on RE 'Pedagogy of Encounter' responds to the need for dialogical re-contextualising process for seeking truth, making meaning and living story. 11. Catholic Schools Youth Ministry Australia (CSYMA): opportunity for students who want/choose formation, to receive that in the classroom context. 12. Tertiary offerings that enable students to become qualified teachers and leaders of RE. 13. Skills in the National Curriculum as critically reflecting RE literacy. 14. RE programs to engage senior students in RE (e.g. Dioceses of Toowoomba and Cairns). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Systematic attention to formation for mission. 2. Witness capabilities. 3. Religion that promotes development of each learner's identity. 4. Well-developed Primary / Secondary curriculum with digital resources accessible to teachers. 5. A co-created learning space, listening and engagement by design, with students. 6. Concept of general capabilities with the distinctiveness of the Catholic Christian story ... human formation for thriving persons, capable learners and leaders for the world God desires. 7. A study of religion that supports the identity formation of all students. 8. Resources and frameworks to supplement existing curriculum. 9. Coordinated development of digital learning resources. 10. Professional learning for teachers of RE - particularly in rural and remote dioceses. 11. RE that translates into life-long learning (utilising Religious capabilities). 12. Adults who can manage their spiritual well-being and witness to the Gospel. 13. Different understandings about the purpose and approach to RE. 14. The diverse religious profiles of students. 15. Student agency in RE. 16. Breaking open the RE curriculum as a place of authentic formation and evangelisation. 17. 'Who are we?' Christ at centre. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RE starting the process of listening to parents. 2. RE - a voice contributing to and leading the learning agenda. 3. An exciting time for RE in Australia: re-contextualising the curriculum to promote meaning, transformation and being dialogical. 4. Listening to our student voices to guide 'where to ... what do our students want RE to be?' 5. Evidence and data? What does this look like? 6. Assessment and collation of evidence in RE. 7. Responding to pluralised context through 'dialogical interplay' 8. RE has a role in enhancing the 'identity of all'.
<p>General Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A corollary of the commonalities that are working well is that there remains a question as to whether there is a desire for a national RE curriculum that specifies agreed knowledge and understanding. Rather, there seems to be more energy for further collaboration on how students learn in RE. 		

Table 7: Collated list of commentary from parents, parish and partnerships focus group discussion

PARENTS, PARISH, PARTNERSHIPS		
WHAT IS WORKING WELL?	WHAT REMAINS A CHALLENGE?	EMERGING IN A WIDER VISION?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interesting initiatives in some Dioceses. 2. Parish sacramental programs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A common language across the stakeholder groups. 2. A shared understanding of the role of family, school, parish. 3. Parent involvement. 4. Imbalance of resourcing. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A practical approach that honours the contributions each stakeholder can make. 2. An inclusive approach and much broader than 'Father' and 'Principal'.
<p>General Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than ever, Catholic schools have a role to play in evangelising and re-evangelising parents and seeking to connect families with a Church beyond the school. 		

Table 8: Collated list of commentary from research focus group discussion

RESEARCH		
WHAT IS WORKING WELL?	WHAT REMAINS A CHALLENGE?	EMERGING IN A WIDER VISION?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Starting point - the actual questions of the students and teachers 'being attentive to reality is the first formative step'. 2. Research projects undertaken in various dioceses, including collaboration with ACU. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Linking RE/theology as an academic exercise plus faith experience and formation. 2. An evidentiary platform for what to research. 3. Access to digital platform. 4. A national resource bank. 5. Appropriate budget allocation to this area. 6. Understanding faith within a scientific revolution. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long-term planning. 2. Theological formation of teachers. 3. Theological framework for Catholic organisations. 4. Accountability mechanism and a research focus. 5. Digital connections (knowing and relating). 6. Best practice lighthouses. 7. Philanthropic and entity support for research funding. 8. Centre for Academic Research (RE, Formation, Pedagogy, Theology, Education). 9. Publication/s as attractive for academic interest and career progression.
<p>General Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research in Theology engages a theology of faith - <i>Fides Quae</i> (context) and <i>Fides Qua</i> (person) on which it should shed light. • Enhancing Catholic School Identity Project is making a sound contribution in the research space but we need other research data. • Birth of a new journal. • 'Welcome is the intersection point between practice, questions and study'. • While there has been some research that has given insights into the effectiveness of Religious Education much more work needs to be undertaken in this area. 		

A discourse analysis technique, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), was applied to the data within Tables 4 to 6 as these domains generated most commentary. IPA typically begins with small group discussion, transcribed notations, broad research questions and subsequent data interrogation. It is based on three discrete and unfolding

stages of analysis: recording of key data; generating theme titles; and integration of themes through assignment of a key principle. Within the commentary on Formation, Pedagogy, and Curriculum, IPA was performed by the report writers operating independently. Where differences existed with assigning themes and principles, a process

of conversation provided the necessary consensus. For purposes of detailed examination, the focus group reflections were nominated as 'Affirmations' for 'what is working well'; 'Challenges' for 'what remains a challenge'; and, 'Vision' for 'what is emerging in a wider vision' (Tables 9, 10 and 11).

Table 9. IPA analysis of formation themes and integrating principle







AFFIRMATIONS	CHALLENGES	VISION
		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Priority of RE within curriculum 2. Partnerships in provision 3. Dialogue as foundational process 4. Credibility of witness of formators 5. Integral to school mission 6. Critical time 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarification of identity 2. Disconnection of faith and life 3. Goals and strategies articulation 4. Capacity building of formators 5. Personal Integration 6. Quality of resourcing 7. Diversity of faiths and faith experience 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technology 2. Collaboration 3. Faith life integration 4. Mandated guidelines 5. Parish connection 6. Leadership
<p>Principle: Advancing formation for personal identity and school mission through interdependence in support and delivery.</p>		

Table 10. IPA analysis of pedagogy themes and integrating principle

AFFIRMATIONS	CHALLENGES	VISION
		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research importance 2. Accreditation 3. Specialisation recognition 4. Multi-faith context 5. Pedagogy of Encounter 6. Rich dialogue 7. Encounter with Christ 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Witness capabilities 2. Skills of RE teachers 3. Accreditation 4. Nexus among pedagogy, assessment, content, and reporting 5. Sharing good practice 6. Catering for diversity within Tradition 7. Professional learning 8. Encounter 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educational principles 2. Action research 3. Sustainable professional learning 4. Graduate expectations 5. Strategic engagement 6. Partnerships 7. Digitalisation
<p>Principle: Advancing an inquiring, experiential, encounter-based pedagogy.</p>		

Table 11. IPA analysis of curriculum themes and integrating principle

AFFIRMATIONS	CHALLENGES	VISION
		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding ECSI data 2. Curriculum and context awareness 3. Best practice emerging 4. Creativity with Senior RE 5. Teacher preparation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formation for mission 2. Catering for diversity within Tradition 3. Professional learning 4. Personal identity 5. Purpose of RE 6. Witness 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exemplars of good practice 2. Evidence based practice 3. Multi-faith and multi-cultural context
<p>Principle: Advancing a faith based liberating curriculum which is inclusive, relevant, inquiring, and life-giving.</p>		

Day 3: Imagine Collaborate on Agreed Directions

INVITED COMMENTARIES: FIELD EXPERIENCES

Workshop presentations and continuing informal dialogue revealed the value of ‘whole group’ sharing on some initiatives. In view of comments “This is of value to the whole group,” an adjustment to the program was made and the themes of some workshops were offered to the whole group. Presentations were not accompanied by questions or group processing. They were however, a valuable part of the Colloquium in that they reinforced Workshop offerings and served as a further basis for deliberations and conclusions.

Angela Travers – Toowoomba Catholic Education

Parents are seeking an alternative in the senior schooling years arising from Tertiary Entrance expectations. A program of Service Learning supported through shared praxis methods is under consideration with elements of Scripture and Church Tradition being embedded with student voices and community links.

Ken Bryant – Wollongong Catholic Education

The imperative of Bishop Peter Ingham to provide ‘worthwhile framework to live their lives’ was a framing statement to building stronger links between pedagogy, curriculum, and formation. The call to ‘missionary discipleship’ was adopted with the theme of ‘educating with a mission lens,’ recognising that ‘mission includes everything.’

Paul Sharkey – Catholic Education Melbourne

A brief report on 10 years of hermeneutic analysis of Leuven research identified challenges of a more explicit engagement with the Catholic faith and being responsive to diversity. The resultant pedagogy is one of ‘an inquiry approach’ which engages Scripture, involves encounter in Christian Meditation, discernment in the *Examen*, pilgrimage and outreach experiences which touch into the Interior and the Exterior life of students and staff.

Michael Buchanan – ACU (Faculty of Education and Arts)

Commentary was offered on international projects and the publication of the second edition of *Global Perspectives on Catholic Religious Education*, inclusive of 55 papers. The text speaks to formation, pedagogy, and parish relationships and has special inclusions and relevance to Religious Education within Australia.

Michael Callinan FMS – ACU (Campus Ministry)

The goal of ACU Campus Ministry in walking pastorally with students and staff was developed through an emphasis on ‘being with people’ and preparation for such. The focus of the pastoral team entailed the 4 B’s of Belonging, Becoming, Believing, and Being supportive.

Joel Hodge – ACU (Faculty of Theology and Philosophy)

Working in collaboration with the Xavier Centre, proactive effort is being given to short courses with all Catholic agencies in areas such as Catholic Social Teaching, Theology and Scripture.

David Hall FMS – ACU (La Salle Academy)

Publication of *Voices and Visions: Catholic Schools in Conversation* is complete and has been produced to assist all those involved in Catholic education to better understand their vocation as staff member, leader or governor. The resource is a practical link to Magisterium literature and is grounded with image and story appropriate to small group reflections.

Doug Ashleigh – Brisbane Catholic Education

A meta approach to emerging themes was introduced. Beginning with the concept ‘what we can learn from others,’ the model of the new and developing global company of LinkedIn was outlined. Focus principles included: keeping the inspiration alive; paying forward; learning from the experts; and engaging. The concept of SIMPLEXITY – combining the simple and the complex was explored within the challenges observed within the Colloquium. The essence of Values, Gospel and People was reported.



PARTICIPANT REFLECTIONS: INSPIRATIONS AND QUESTIONS

Participants engaged in a process of personal reflection on the overall Colloquium experience. The task was to reflect on the three days of conversation and identify ‘what most inspired.’ A second task was to attach to the words that inspired a question: ‘How this might be advanced?’ All participants shared the ‘words’ that inspired and the ‘question’ as to how the inspiration might be advanced. The collated input from 33 participants is provided in Appendix 9 in the Companion Document.

OVERALL INTEGRATION

Three data sources were used to inform *Ways Forward in Religious Education*. These included the interpretative analysis of areas of interest and principles from Days 1 and 2; the summative considerations of participants as to what inspired on Day 3; and, evaluation responses which identified what was most significant to content and process.

Interpretative Analysis

An interpretation of dialogue across the first two days of the Colloquium was pursued through a discourse process based on the presentation of individual respondent and group data. A summary of Main Ideas and Integrating Principles arising from the analysis of challenges, affirmations, and imagination for Religious Education were provided for each of the core constituents of Religious Education.

Inspirations and Questions

The second body of information relevant to *Ways Forward in Religious Education* arose from the responses to ‘what words or concepts inspire’ the theory and practice of Religious Education. While the responses were presumed as core assumptions, the confirmation by participants of ‘Faith Foundations’ served to confirm the basis for the combined formal and informal processes of the Colloquium.

The Faith Foundations for Religious Education, while presumed as a ‘given,’ was powerfully confirmed by participants. The centrality of Catholic faith within Catholic schools was abundantly clear with key elements of Formation being centred in Christ, Tradition, Mission and Faith Journey; Pedagogy situated in terms of discipleship, dialogue, inquiry, and witness; Curriculum as inclusive, founded on encounter and identity, re-contextualised and creative; Research as underpinning awareness and basis for change and accountability; and Partnerships as imperative in enabling a space for the Spirit of God to flourish and be experienced.

Evaluative Reflections

The third ‘window’ into overall Colloquium directions was extracted from the evaluative reports. While the responses were overwhelmingly positive and appreciative, there existed within the commentary an emphasis on what was most meaningful from the experience. Aspects of note were the quality and variety of inputs, prayer, planning, facilitation and opportunities to dialogue and share best practice. In addition, importance was given to strategic intentions in advancing *Ways Forward in Religious Education*, specifically in relation to the emerging themes of interest. Relevant comments are presented in Appendix 10.

Colloquium in Context and Where to From Here?

Context limits

The Religious Education Colloquium sought to support awareness of best practice in a context of challenges, affirmations and opportunities. It was not a Conference in the traditional sense, but a process of dialogue that showcased and enabled Catholic educators to meet, dialogue and imagine *Ways Forward in Religious Education* (Appendix 11).

The process was shaped by its intentions and the experience, wisdom and generosity of those who accepted the invitation to attend. Notwithstanding these parameters, the overall planning and purpose of the Colloquium, together with the profile of participants, enabled substantial expertise to be applied to advancing *Ways Forward in Religious Education*.

Ways Forward in Religious Education

The outcomes of the experience reflect the breadth of participant engagement, experience and wisdom. Considerations do not seek to extend or imply strategies for implementation in multiple Catholic Education jurisdictions. Rather, what is offered are the outcomes of dialogue and the analysis of reflections by a group of educators within a defined experience. While not comprehensive, prescriptive or definitive, the process and content of the Colloquium provided a basis for the following.

FOUNDATIONS IN FAITH

Within the five key components identified as integral to Religious Education, the following foundational concepts were highlighted.

Formation

Centred in Christ, Church Tradition, Mission, and the journeys of individuals and communities.

Pedagogy

Processes evidenced in discipleship, dialogue, inquiry, and witness.

Curriculum

Learning that is inclusive, founded on encounter, aligned with identity, relevant and creative.

Research

Generation of data and provision of analysis in support of renewal, accountability, and community engagement.

Partnerships

Providing a 'space' where the Spirit of God is experienced and shared.

MAIN IDEAS AND INTEGRATING PRINCIPLES

Each of the five components central to Religious Education were revealed through a multiplicity of input, reflection, and presentation. The collective input for each component was summarised through discourse analysis which generated Main Ideas across the multiple 'affirmations, challenges and visions' commented upon by participants. Main Ideas within the 'vision' elements of the commentary on each component were then summarised by an Integrating Principle that offered an overall vision as to *Ways Forward in Religious Education*.

The Main Ideas and Integrating Principles associated with each of the five characteristics of Religious Education are summarised as:

Formation

Main Ideas: Technology, Collaboration, Faith/life integration, Mandated guidelines, Parish connection, and Leadership.

Integrating Principle: Advancing formation for personal and school identity through interdependence in support and delivery.

Pedagogy

Main Ideas: Educational principles, Action research, Sustainability, Graduate expectations, Strategic engagement, Partnerships, and Digitalisation

Integrating Principle: Advancing an inquiring, experiential, encounter-based pedagogy.

Curriculum

Main Ideas: Exemplars of good practice, Evidence based practice, Multi-faith and multi-cultural engagement.

Integrating Principle: Advancing a faith based liberating curriculum which is inclusive, relevant, inquiring, and life-giving.

Partnerships⁶

Main Ideas: Honouring contributions, Inclusion, Family and community connections

Integrating Principle: Advancing 'lighthouse' practices which engage and include.

Research

Main Ideas: Planning, Accountability, Best practice, Resourcing support, Centre for research, Publications.

Integrating Principle: Advancing research which identifies needs, informs and monitors practice.

⁶Main Ideas and Integrating Principles for the themes and main ideas for Partnerships and Research reflect the narrative of participants and are included based on their independence of other thematic concepts.

STRATEGIES

Participants voiced practical strategies to the Main Ideas and Integrating Principles for advancing Religious Education. With due recognition to responsibilities of the respective participant authorities, commentary included:

Formation

Confirming forums for sharing and networking; and, integrating faith experience and Theology.

Pedagogy

Dialogue in promoting RE method; and nurturing teacher dispositions of Moderator, Specialist, Witness.

Curriculum

Engaging formation for a diverse population of staff and students; and, including school-based leaders of RE at future Colloquiums.

Partnerships

Strengthening communication between ACU and Catholic Education authorities and including partners who collaborate with schools (e.g. parents, parishes, spiritual movements and associations, and dioceses).

Research

Gathering quality data, learning from and applying the lessons; and, ensuring meaning, and communications are critical to on-going effective learning.



This report will complement and support the continuing dialogue and creativity that constitutes Religious Education and will shape ACU endeavours in continuing to develop teachers and leaders for Catholic schools.

Conclusion

The Colloquium, *Ways Forward in Religious Education*, reflects the re-contextualisation of Catholic schools within the mission of the Church in Australia. For some authorities and participants, the ‘fruits’ of the Colloquium may offer expanded horizons, while for others, established and familiar pathways are validated. In this regard the Colloquium experience was one of mutual sharing in the advancement of mission.

The exhortation of Pope Francis ‘to educate as an act of love’⁷ situates the purpose, process and outcomes of the Colloquium as an experience of the whole self: to think, feel and act in ways that support the development of the human person within a context of nurturing a ‘civilisation of love.’⁸ Religious Education is integral to this experience and the process of the Colloquium as incorporating respectful dialogue within a context of inclusion, creativity and mutuality in mission was a privilege shared by many.

This Report is just one indication of the quality of Religious Education renewal within the mission and ministry of the Catholic school. It will complement and support the continuing dialogue and creativity that constitutes Religious Catholic Education within Catholic schools and systems, and will shape ACU endeavours in continuing to develop teachers and leaders for Catholic schools. The Report will also form the basis for the next Religious Education Colloquium in 2020.

To educate is an act of love ... the educator in Catholic schools must be, first and foremost, competent and qualified but, at the same time, someone who is rich in humanity and capable of being with young people in a style of pedagogy that promotes human and spiritual growth.



⁷ Drawn from the address of Pope Francis to the Congregation for Catholic Education, 13 February 2014.

⁸ The most recent Congregation for Catholic Education document, 2017, refers to the goal of educating to fraternal humanism in building a civilisation of love.



About the La Salle Academy

ESTABLISHMENT

The La Salle Academy (LSA) is an initiative of Australian Catholic University (ACU) sponsored by its President and Vice Chancellor in consultation with the Bishops of Australia and Catholic Education employing authorities.

LSA was established in 2015 under the patronage of St John Baptiste de La Salle, French priest, educational pioneer, and founder of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. The rationale for the Academy shares the University's commitment to Australian Catholic Education through enhancing partnerships in mission as well as in the promotion of Catholic Identity.

VISION AND MISSION

The vision of LSA is to Live by the Spirit of Faith (*Vive Spiritu Fidei*). LSA prepares teachers and leaders for Catholic schools, supporting them in their commitment to the mission of Jesus and its expression in the contemporary Church, particularly the Catholic school. The Academy embraces formative learning dynamics in its promotion of Catholic school identity and mission, particularly in the areas of:

1. Religious Education
2. Faith Formation
3. Educational Leadership

The Academy embraces formative learning dynamics in its promotion of Catholic school identity and mission.

UNIVERSITY RELATIONSHIPS AND GOVERNANCE

The 2017 Review of Continuing University Directions and Academy Responsibilities situated the Academy within the Vice-Presidential Portfolio of Identity and Mission. The decision demonstrates the University's intentions in Mission, through initiatives in Religious Education, Faith Formation, and Educational Leadership. Integral to this mission is the continuing partnership of the Academy with Catholic employing authorities and Faculties within the University, particularly Theology and Education.

The Academy's governance is exercised through the leadership of its Dean, supported by a Senior Management Committee (SMC) constituted by a representative of the Australian Catholic Bishops; the Vice President - Identity and Mission; the Executive Deans of Education and Arts and Theology and Philosophy; and a nominee of the Vice Chancellor.

MEMBERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

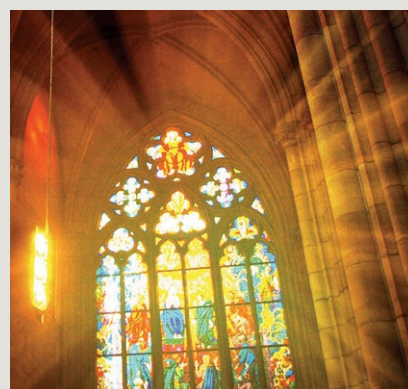
Membership of the La Salle Academy includes ACU academics who engage in Catholic school Mission and Identity, Faith Formation, Religious Education and Educational Leadership. Ministry principles central to this shared mission incorporate:

Engagement

Responding to the readiness of participants and the strategic and operational priorities of leadership and participant schools and entities.

Tradition

Supporting the vocation and ministry of teaching through the provision of learning that is spiritually centred and educationally contextualised within the mission of Jesus.



Creative Pedagogy

Integrating teaching with experiential learning, and enhancing capabilities (knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions) in nurturing human growth.

Community

Encouraging a 'community of learners' through collegial relationships supported by shared practice partnerships.

Research

Support for professional learning, projects and initiatives of partner entities.

Outcomes

Supporting the development of the whole person within respectful communities through processes that integrate faith, life and culture.

RESOURCING

The Academy is funded within the Vice-Presidential Portfolio of Identity and Mission. The employment, operational and administrative funding for most Academy members reside within Faculty infrastructures. Staff supported within Identity and Mission include the Dean, Deputy Dean, the Director of Catholic Educational Leadership, Director of Catholic Teacher Formation, and the Academy's Project Support Officers.



Vive Spiritu Fidei
Live by the Spirit of Faith

Ways Forward in Religious Education

Religious Education
Colloquium
ACU Canberra
12-14 November 2018

Report on Proceedings

Professor Br David Hall FMS
Associate Professor
William Sultmann