THE PRESENTATION AND MERCY CHARISMS
Notre Dame Catholic Primary School – a melding of rich traditions

In May 2008, after approval was given by His Grace Archbishop Hickey, feasibility studies on the amalgamation of Holy Name School, Carlisle and Notre Dame School, Cloverdale commenced. In November 2008, the director of CEO Ron Dullard, announced to both communities that in consultation with the Archbishop, it had been decided that the amalgamation would go ahead and that a new school would be built on the Notre Dame site. A decision to keep the name Notre Dame Catholic Primary School was made by Archbishop Hickey in November, 2009.

The communities of Holy Name, Carlisle and Notre Dame, Cloverdale have been bequeathed rich customs and traditions by the orders that have founded each school. Notre Dame School was established in 1961 by the Presentation Sisters and until 2008, when the first lay principal was appointed, the sisters have had a vital presence in the school. Holy Name Convent School was opened in February 1938 by the Sisters of Mercy who administered at the school until the late seventies when, in keeping with the times, a lay principal was appointed.

History of the Presentation Sisters

Nano Nagle was born in Ballygriffin, County Cork, Ireland in 1718. Her ancestors were among the Norman invaders who arrived in Ireland in 1169. The Nagles once owned extensive lands but much was forfeited because they retained their Catholic faith during times of religious persecution. During these times, the Penal Laws forbade Catholics to teach or tutor so Nano was educated at an illegal ‘hedge school’. In her early teens, Nano was smuggled abroad to France where she lived with relatives. Here she attended a Benedictine convent school – her first acquaintance with nuns. Her French relatives were wealthy and Nano enjoyed a busy social life.

Nano returned to Ballygriffin when her father died. Shortly after, she went to live in Dublin with her mother and sister. Here she became aware of the intense poverty in the city and helped the poorer people in whatever way she could. She returned to France intending to become a nun, but she remained in the convent as a novice only for a short while. On her return to Ireland, Nano went to live in Cork with her uncle who was a lawyer. She took up works of charity, caring for the sick and elderly people in their homes. She travelled the city streets with her lantern to light her way at night. It was said that there was not an attic or tenement room in Cork that she did not know.

On her journeys through the city streets Nano became very aware of the plight of the children, particularly the girls. Many were undernourished and forced to do the most menial work to survive. Many too, were ill-treated and abused. Nano secretly rented rooms in various parts of the city and started classes for these children. Her uncle, the lawyer, was appalled when he discovered what she had done, realising the implications if it became known to the authorities. But he agreed with her and helped her financially.

Finding her workload increasingly difficult and anxious for it to continue, she made a plea to the Ursuline Sisters from France for help. The sisters came to Cork at her request and built a convent for themselves with money donated by the Nagle family. However the Ursulines’ rule of enclosure forbade them to work outside the convent and they could not take on the schools or care for the sick and elderly in their homes. Father Moylan, a parish priest and good friend asked her to consider founding her own congregation, without a rule of enclosure.
On Christmas Eve 1775, Nano and three companions founded the Society for Charitable Instruction of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. They lived in a cottage near the Ursuline’s convent. They began to build a convent nearby and in 1780, moved in. When seeking approbation for their rule they were advised to change their name, and in honour of the Virgin Mary’s presentation of herself for service in the Temple of Jerusalem, they chose the title ‘Presentation Sisters’.

On 26 April 1784, Nano Nagle collapsed on a Cork street while doing her rounds. She died soon afterwards, aged 66.

**Presentation Sisters in Western Australia**

The first Presentation Sisters arrived at Geraldton on 6 July 1891 in response to a call from Bishop Gibney. The nine members of the Presentation party accompanied by Father Patrick Horgan sailed from Cork on 21 May 1891 and took up residence in the Mercy and Josephite Convents that had already been established. Branch houses were soon established over a wide area of the North West with the sisters answering calls of assistance from many isolated communities. Between 1902 - 1970 twenty branch houses had been opened in the mining and pastoral regions of the North West.

In 1900, five sisters answered a call to come to the south west of Western Australia from Hay in New South Wales. These sisters came to Southern Cross in 1900, Collie in 1902, Cottesloe in 1905 and to Mosman Park in 1907. Bishop Gibney who was then the Bishop of Perth, remarked that the site in Mosman Park, situated on a rise with the Swan River on one side and the ocean on the other, reminded him of the isle of Iona, and he hoped that this, too, would become a centre of learning and a centre from which the Gospel would be spread. As one of the founding sisters was Sister Columba, it was decided an appropriate name for the College would be Iona. Mother Angela Treacey, much loved by her community, was appointed head of the new foundation, and on the day the Sisters took up residence at Iona, the Bishop signed a statement authorizing Iona as the Mother House for the Presentation Sisters.

**Presentation Sisters Today**

Today, there are over 3500 sisters ministering in five continents and many other countries of the world including many underdeveloped countries. The sisters are committed to justice and to standing with the poor in answering the needs of our times, particularly according to the geographical areas in which the sisters are ministering.
History of the Mercy Sisters

Catherine McAuley was born in Dublin, Ireland, in September, 1778 to a prosperous Catholic family. Though her father, James McAuley, died in 1783 when Catherine was just five years old, his compassion for the poor, especially children and families who lived nearby, was a lifelong example for his eldest daughter.

Fifteen years after her father's death, Catherine was orphaned in 1798 and chose to live in the home of relatives, some of whom were non-Catholic and had little tolerance for her pious practices. In 1803 Catherine was invited to live in the home of William and Catherine Callaghan as a companion to Mrs. Callaghan. The Callaghans were childless and upon Mr. Callaghan's death in 1822, Catherine inherited their fortune: about £25,000, their estate, "furniture and plate."

In 1824, Catherine used her inheritance to lease property on Baggot Street, a fashionable neighbourhood in Dublin, for the purpose of building a large house for religious, educational and social services for women and children. Other women, intrigued by the house and the work for which it was intended, were attracted to Catherine and began to join her preparations for the ministry she planned.

On September 24, 1827, the Feast of our Lady of Mercy, the first residents came to live in the house they called the House of Mercy in honour of the day and two years later the Chapel was dedicated. Between late 1829 and 1830, after prayerful deliberation and consultation, Catherine and her associates agreed to found a new religious congregation. Though this was not her original intention, Catherine began the founding of a new religious congregation of women dedicated to service to the poor.

Catherine and two of her associates entered the Convent of the Presentation Sisters in Dublin on Sept. 8, 1830, to begin formal preparation for founding the Sisters of Mercy. Fifteen months later the trio pronounced vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and to persevere until death in "the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy." Thus the new community was founded on Dec. 12, 1831.

Catherine's concept of a Religious Institute included ministry not typical of that time. Called to serve Christ as the complex social needs demanded, and encouraged by the Archbishop, Catherine and her companions took as their special works the instruction of poor girls, visitation of the sick and the protection of distressed women of good character.

Without the confines of strict enclosure, the "walking nuns", as they were called, became part of many dioceses, inspiring local young women to see and meet local needs, enabling the new order to spread rapidly.

Catherine lived only ten years as a Sister of Mercy but in that time she established nine additional autonomous foundations in Ireland and England, and two branch houses near Dublin. When she died in 1841 there were 150 Sisters of Mercy. Shortly thereafter, small groups of sisters left Ireland at the invitation of bishops in Newfoundland, New Zealand, the United States, Argentina and Australia.
Mercy Sisters in Western Australia

The first group of sisters, led by Ursula Frayne, came from Dublin settled in Victoria Square, Perth, Australia in 1846. Catherine McAuley, a wealthy heiress, had founded the Congregation of Sisters of Mercy barely fifteen years earlier in 1831. In faith, Catherine had devoted herself and all her resources to bringing hope to the lives of the poor and destitute in her country, through education.

A chance to extend this work came when Bishop John Brady, visiting Dublin to recruit missionaries for the fledgling colony, requested that Catherine send a group of sisters to assist him in his work there. Thus it happened that, after a long and arduous journey by sea, the small band of sisters under the leadership of Mother Ursula Frayne, arrived in the Swan River Colony on 8 January, 1846.

After initial difficulties in finding accommodation, Ursula and her community moved into a small cottage on what is now St George’s Terrace, near Victoria Avenue. On 2 February of that same year, the Sisters opened their first school with one student! By the end of that historic day, however, five more students had joined them. Undaunted, the Sisters went out into the community and canvassed for pupils. By the end of 1846 there were one hundred children in the school, which had by that time moved up to the present Victoria Square site.

Those early years were a time of great struggle as well as sadness for the Sisters, as one of their original community had died six months after their arrival in the Colony. Her grave is situated among those of other pioneer Sisters in the garden below the Chapel on the Convent property.

In the period that followed the founding of the first school, the diocese found itself in severe financial difficulty with Bishop Brady unable to provide any real support for the school as well as the sisters’ other works of mercy among the poor and sick. In order to see them through these early financial troubles, the sisters were forced to use money sent from Dublin which had originally been set aside for them to return home, together with two hundred pounds given by the father of one of them on her profession. This money was used to build the first Convent of Mercy in Australia. The building now known as Holy Cross, with its Foundation Stone dating from 1847, is still in use today and stands as a testimony to those dedicated pioneers whose love and faith in God inspired them to continue God’s work. Two years later, in 1849, the sisters began what was the first secondary school in Western Australia – the school now proudly known as Mercedes College. The name Mercedes is Spanish for Mercy.

Mother Ursula Frayne died in 1885. She is remembered as an outstanding educator of great vision and a warm, caring Sister of Mercy. Her work, and that of those early pioneers, has had a profound and lasting effect on the history of Catholic Education in this State. Today we take pride in this history and we continue to commit ourselves to that same sense of vision that inspired Catherine.

Mercy Sisters Today

Throughout rural and urban Australia, in Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, East Timor, Sudan, Peru, Cambodia, Kenya, New Zealand, England, Ireland, Scotland and the USA, Sisters of Mercy of the Australian Institute are:

- Advocating for people with no voice and for those seeking justice at home and in developing countries;
- Sharing time, energy and resources so that people can have quality of life through the ministry of the sisters various organisations, e.g. hospitals, aged care facilities and social services;
- Continuing to minister in creative ways in education, health and aged care and welfare;
- Enabling women and men to experience fullness of life through a range of pastoral and spiritual ministries, e.g. counselling, retreats and spiritual direction.

Sisters of Mercy of Australia are educators, theologians, scripture scholars, writers and publishers, researchers, archivists, historians, musicians, artists, bioethicists, ecumenists, canon lawyers and lawyers. The Sisters of Mercy, through their vowed commitment, are compelled to respond to global issues and address issues of injustice with a profound belief in the dignity and equality of all people.
THE FORMATION OF
NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Notre Dame Catholic Primary School (2010) was founded through the amalgamation of two small parish schools, Notre Dame School, Cloverdale and Holy Name School, Carlisle. With urban development and renewal happening in the Rivervale/Cloverdale area a need for a two stream school that could accommodate the growing, younger population was perceived by CEO. The Notre Dame site, with its large, grassed playing area was deemed to best suit the construction of this new, state of the art school.

It must be remembered that although a ‘new’ school, Notre Dame Catholic Primary School has been built on and imbued with the rich histories of both Holy Name School and Notre Dame School. These histories have shaped the formation and direction of the ‘new’ Notre Dame Catholic Primary School.

Holy Name School (Carlisle Campus 2010)

Holy Name Convent School, Carlisle opened in February 1938 under the auspices of the Sisters of Mercy with about 40 students. To encourage enrolments, the sisters would visit Catholic families in the area to encourage them to enrol their children. The response was good and the school population increased yearly. Piano lessons were given at recess and lunch time, and after school to State School children. This tuition was an essential supplement to the school fees. Sister Enda and Sister Romuald travelled daily from the Victoria Park Convent to teach and administer at the school. These were bleak times. The world had just come out of a Great Depression followed by the uncertainty of a difficult war and post war years. Transport was a problem, with the sisters having a long journey by foot and bus to reach the school. On very wet days, the sisters were allowed the ‘exorbitant’ option of taking the tram.

At this date, the Parish was an adjunct of St Anne’s Belmont Parish. Several priests lived in the Parish during the years 1938 – 1952, but the two who gave most extended service were Father Ahern and Father Power. Father Ahern was the Parish Priest at Belmont and said a Sunday Mass each week at Carlisle and visited the school once a week. Father Power was appointed Parish Priest of Carlisle around 1950 and lived initially on the school premises.

Great tribute must be given to the early parishioners of Carlisle who built the Church and were determined to respond to their own faith development and to have their children advantaged by the principles of a Catholic faith combined with academic achievement. Each Friday, the dividing doors were opened and the area organised for Sunday Mass. These parents were tireless in their support for the school having euchre parties, bazaars and raffles to provide money for the ‘extras’ needed as the school progressed.

The Mercy tradition lives on at Holy Name. Just as Catherine McAuley recognised the needs of those who were marginalised and oppressed by unjust social attitudes and practices of the day so, too, does the school today provide educational services to a large number of migrant, refugee and disadvantaged families.
The Chi Rho was adopted as the emblem for Holy Name School. The Chi Rho is one of the earliest forms of christogram, and is used by Christians. It is formed by superimposing the first two letters in the Greek spelling of the word Christ, χι = χ and ρ = ρ, in such a way to produce the monogram ☧. Although not technically a cross, the Chi Rho invokes the crucifixion of Jesus as well as symbolizing his status as the Christ.

**Notre Dame School (Cloverdale Campus 2010)**

The Parish of Cloverdale was inaugurated 20 March, 1960 after an increase in the population of the area warranted a new parish. In April 1960, a decision was made to build a Church/school on land secured by Archbishop Prendiville. On 11 April 1960 the Parish was placed under the patronage of Our Lady and named Notre Dame. The new school building was completed in November. Notre Dame School was officially opened and blessed by Archbishop Prendiville on the 11 December, 1960.

From the time the Parish was established, Notre Dame School was overseen by the Presentation Sisters. The school opened in January, 1960 with an initial school population of 60 children. In December 1964, due to expansion in the area there became a need for more classrooms and it was decided to build two classrooms, a tuckshop and a staff room. Due to lack of funds, members of the parish were asked to contribute their skills in the building of the extension.

By 1968 enrolment numbers fluctuated between 220 – 240 which included girls up to Year 6 and boys up to Year 5. During this period, Sr Stanislaus, Sr Aloysius, Sr Raphael, Sr Angela, Sr Scholastica, Sr Eugene, Sr Clement, Sr John, Sr Pius and Sr Immaculata administered and taught at the school. As with every Parish, the Religious teacher crisis was felt here in 1967 so when the children came back to school in Feb, 1968, Notre Dame had engaged its first lay teacher, Mrs R Smith.

Bishop Quinn blessed and opened new extensions to the school in September, 1975. These extensions consisted of two new classrooms, an administration block, toilets and a demountable classroom to be used for teaching migrants. Sister Immaculata who had been principal of Notre Dame for many years left the Parish at the end of 1978 and was replaced by Sister Eugene who had been a teacher at Notre Dame in earlier years. Sister Immaculata, with the help of the School Board had done much to upgrade the school which included the establishment of a Library and Resource Centre. This was blessed and opened on the 24 June, 1979. Costs of the project were met equally by Government subsidy and parents’ contributions. Sister Immaculata returned to the school.
as Principal in 1981. At the beginning of the 1984 school year the school had an enrolment of 267 pupils. The staff comprised of 2 religious, 7 lay-teachers, 2 teacher assistants, 1 part-time teacher, 1 teacher librarian and 2 library assistants.

In 1985 Notre Dame Parish celebrated the Silver Jubilee of the opening of the Parish School. Bishop Healy concelebrated a special thanksgiving mass assisted by several priests who had previously served in the Parish. A new crest and the motto *Wisdom Sought is Wisdom Found* was adopted at this time. During this period, the school was actively involved in sport and music programmes, successfully participating in music eisteddfods and festivals and competing in district netball, soccer and football competitions.

The next major phase was the establishment of a Pre-Primary centre in 1993 under the principalship of Sister Catherine Ryan. A Kindergarten programme followed in 1996. In 1997 plans were developed for the refurbishment of the school. This project was completed by the beginning of the 1998.

In 2008 the Presentation Sisters, who had administered the school since its foundation, were farewelled by the Notre Dame community. Sister Catherine Warner became the last Religious Principal of the school. After consultation with both communities, a decision was made by the Catholic Education Office to amalgamate Holy Name in Carlisle with Notre Dame and the school’s first lay principal, Mr Paul Hille, was appointed in 2009 to oversee the amalgamation and building of the new school. In November, 2009 a decision was made by Archbishop Barry Hickey to retain the name *Notre Dame Catholic Primary School*. 
CARRYING ON OUR HISTORY: NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

In 2010 Notre Dame Catholic Primary School became ‘one school- two campuses’ as the onerous task of amalgamating two schools with such rich histories and charisms began. From the outset, it was clearly stated that a new school, Notre Dame Catholic Primary School would evolve from the amalgamation of Notre Dame School and Holy Name Carlisle – not simply a closure and takeover of Holy Name by Notre Dame. Transportable City became a reality for the staff, parents and students of the Cloverdale Campus as the demolition of the old school and construction of the new school began.

The new school buildings were completed in January, 2011, with the 2011 school year having students from Pre-Primary to Year 6 housed in the new buildings. The Kindergarten was completed by the end of Semester One, 2011.

With exciting times ahead we are most grateful for the Commonwealth grants received, the availability of the State Government Low Interest Loans, the dedication and commitment of the School Board and the tremendous support and enthusiasm offered by the staff, parents and community. The total cost of the build was $10.4 million.

We fondly remember the past, we celebrate the present and we continue to look forward to the future of Notre Dame Catholic Primary School.
2010

A New Beginning
NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL TODAY

Situated in Cloverdale, Western Australia the school caters for over 470 students from Pre-Kindergarten to Year 6.

In keeping with the traditions of both schools, Notre Dame Catholic Primary School provides a quality education for the whole person within a Catholic community.

Our community and Christian values underpin our school and our children are provided with every opportunity to develop their spirituality and sense of belonging.

Notre Dame Catholic Primary School goals are:

- To foster faith formation through word and example.
- To provide an atmosphere that promotes dignity and respect for all.
- To provide a supportive environment that encourages each child to develop as a confident, independent learner.
- To nurture the spiritual, social, physical, intellectual and emotional needs of the child.
- To promote appreciation of, and respect for, all creation.
- To encourage each member of the school community to approach life with confidence and optimism.

Notre Dame Catholic Primary School has been designed to accommodate the growing needs of the current and future students of the area.

NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL FACILITIES

- Notre Dame Church, located on the combined school/parish site, is a vital and valuable asset for the liturgical life of the school.
- A large Multi-Purpose Hall.
- A well-resourced school including a one-one laptop programme for Year 4, 5 and 6 students.
- Heated/air-conditioned classrooms.
- Access to Information technology in classrooms and library.
- Netball/tennis courts.
- Grassed play areas.
- Disabled access to all areas of the school.
- A Library/Resource Centre.
- Interactive Whiteboards or TVs in all classrooms and the Library/Resource Centre.
NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

COLOURS

Navy Blue

Religious Symbolism
The colour blue is associated in Christianity generally and Catholicism in particular, with the Virgin Mary. Symbolically, blue represents life, purity and cleansing.

Universal Symbolism
The colour blue carries with it the symbolism of peace, intelligence, loyalty, strength, security, stability, wisdom and unity. These qualities are critical to the formation and ongoing development of Notre Dame Catholic Primary School.

Navy blue was chosen as a symbolic colour to connect the two schools of Notre Dame, Cloverdale and Holy Name, Carlisle as the colour blue is represented in both the old logos and uniforms of the two schools. Navy, as the predominant colour, connects the old with the new.

White

Religious Symbolism
In Christianity, a white lily represents the Madonna, our Mother Mary, who is patron saint of Notre Dame Catholic Primary School. In the New Testament, white represents the colour of light (Christ) and symbolises the divine. In Baptism, white represents a ‘new beginning’ and belonging to the Christian faith.

Universal Symbolism
White universally signifies peace, an indication that an agreement between two parties has been reached. White is associated with goodness, innocence and clarity. It is considered to be the colour of perfection.

The colour white was chosen because it projects purity, cleanliness and neutrality – a very important aspect in the amalgamation of the two schools.

Red

Religious Symbolism
In our Catholic faith traditions, red is the colour that symbolises the presence of God and is considered the colour of the Church. It is the liturgical colour of Pentecost, the celebration that marks the birth of the Christian church. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles – the same Spirit which we call upon to guide us on our journey at Notre Dame Catholic Primary School.

Universal Symbolism
Red, in its most positive sense, is the colour for courage, strength and pioneering spirit. Red signifies energy, liveliness and love. It evokes confidence and determination as well as leadership.

The colour red was chosen because it adds life and vitality to the dominant colours of navy blue and white. The colour red is vibrant, eye-catching and powerful and is linked to the soul of every individual at Notre Dame Catholic Primary School. The strength and pioneering spirit of the school and each individual is reflected through this colour.
The Shield
Heraldry has been adopted for thousands of years as a way of ‘family identification’. This shield symbolises our connection to this tradition. It identifies us as part of the Notre Dame Catholic Primary School family and allows us to be recognised as such in the wider community.

Historically, the shape of shields changed over the centuries at the discretion of the artisans and heralds who crafted them. The lack of symmetry in this shield gives this design a more modern look – a mixing of the old with the new, the traditional with the contemporary.

The Cross
The cross is one of the earliest and most widely used Christian symbols. In the broadest sense, it symbolizes the religion of Christianity. More specifically, it represents and memorialises Christ’s death.

The cross is central to the crest as it is to our Catholic faith. The colour red symbolises the love Christ showed to all humanity in dying for us so we could be re-united with God. One arm of the cross lies under the crest reminding us that Christ is present within our school while the cross extends outside the crest symbolising our faith reaching out into the wider community.

The Chi Rho
The Chi Rho is one of the most ancient ‘sacred monograms’ of Christ. The symbol was developed by the early Christians as a secret sign of their faith. This monogram is composed of the two Greek letters of the word ‘Christ. It was later adopted by the Roman Emperor Constantine on his conversion to Christianity and became the symbol of the Church.

The Chi Rho connects us with part of our story. It reminds us that Notre Dame Catholic Primary School was founded on the traditions of two schools - Holy Name Carlisle and Notre Dame School Cloverdale. The Chi Rho was a visible sign of Christ’s presence at Holy Name School. It was integral to the school crest and its presence in the crest of Notre Dame Catholic Primary School will remind future generations of this connection.

The Fleur-De-Lys
The English translation of ‘fleur-de-lys’ is ‘flower of the lily’. Traditionally, it has been used to represent French royalty and in that sense, it is said to signify perfection, light and life. The Church has ascribed the lily, a symbol of purity, as the special emblem of the Virgin Mary.
The fleur-de-lys connects the old ‘Notre Dame School’ with the new ‘Notre Dame Catholic Primary School’. The fleur-de-lys was highlighted on the old school crest, symbolizing that Notre Dame School was under the patronage of Our Lady. Our school name, Notre Dame, which is French for ‘Our Lady’, further raises the significance of the lily as a pivotal symbol to identify this continuing patronage.

**Initials – ND**

Since the first century, devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary has been a major element of the spiritual life of many Catholics. From the council of Ephesus in 431 to Vatican II and Pope John Paul II’s encyclical ‘Redemptoris Mater’, Our Lady has come to be seen not only as Mother of God but also Mother of the Church. Our school name, Notre Dame (Our Lady), continues this tradition.

The initials ‘ND’ complete our ‘family’ story. Out of the Chi Rho and Fleur-de-lys emerges a new entity - a school proud of its heritage but forging a new identity. The initials represent the new, contemporary Notre Dame.

**FACTION NAMES**

As part of the amalgamation of Holy Name, Carlisle and Notre Dame, Cloverdale, a decision was made to rename the school factions to give them some connection to the school story. Community members and students were invited to suggest faction names that would reflect and highlight the connection between the present and the past. The faction names of Notre Dame are as follows:

- **NAGLE** (Blue) – named after Nano Nagle, the foundress of the Presentation Sisters. The Presentation Sisters established the original Notre Dame School in 1961.
- **McAULEY** (Green) – named after the foundress of the Mercy Order, Catherine McAuley.
- **MERCY** (Red) – named after the Mercy Sisters. Holy Name was established by the Mercy Order in 1938.
- **PRENDIVILLE** (Gold) – in honour of Archbishop Prendiville who officiated at the opening and blessing of Notre Dame School in December, 1960.
The primary role of a Catholic school is to support parents in the faith education of their children. Parents play an essential role in the life of the school and can contribute in many positive ways to the education of the faith of their children.

The school’s Evangelisation plan is created from the Bishops’ Mandate for all Catholic Schools. It guides the faith development of the school community and is reviewed regularly.

Religious Education is part of the daily curriculum for all students. The formal religious education lessons are based on the Western Australian Religious Education units of work produced by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia. Topics covered for each year level include Baptism, Eucharist, Penance, Confirmation, Prayer, Bible, Church, Jesus, Lent/Easter and Advent/Christmas. Notices are sent home to parents informing them of the particular unit that is being taught to their child/children. This provides background knowledge and some information as to how they can help their child/children with the concepts and knowledge. Religious Education is included as a learning area in Catholic schools and the knowledge component is assessed and included on the semester reports.

Each term, every year level celebrates either a class mass in Notre Dame Church, adjacent to the school, or a Liturgy of the Word. Class masses and liturgies are held on Wednesday mornings at 8.45am (class masses) and 10.00am (liturgies). Parents, families and parishioners are encouraged to join the class in worship.

Each term there are also whole school masses or liturgies. These are generally for special occasions in the church and the school year, and may include back to school liturgies, Holy Week celebrations, end-of-year school masses, feast days etc.

Parents are encouraged to attend the various masses, liturgies and prayer services that are an integral part of life in a Catholic school. Notices of masses and liturgies are on the term calendar. Upcoming liturgical celebrations are noted in the weekly newsletter.

Class teachers, together with the students, are involved in planning the liturgies. Some students in Year 4–6, also train as altar servers. In continuing to emphasise faith at the school, some Year Six students are also involved in the Liturgy Ministry. They are expected to assist with whole school liturgies and class masses.

The school and the parish support parents in the sacramental and faith development of the children through the parish sacramental programs. Children are prepared for the Sacrament of Penance (Reconciliation) in Year Three, Eucharist (Holy Communion) in Year Four and Confirmation in Year Six. At the commencement of the year, all students and their families attend the Commitment Mass. This is the beginning of the Sacramental preparation. Parent meetings and liturgical celebrations are conducted in collaboration with the parish. This information is presented at the Parent Information Night held for each year level at the beginning of each year.