

GOOD SHEPHERD'S RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

SPIRITUALITY AND CHARISM



Good Shepherd has been placed under the patronage of *Venerable Catherine McAuley*, Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy and therefore draws its charism from the ways of Catherine McAuley. Each year our new staff induction Program focuses on the Mercy traditions and their impact on the school's mission.

Catherine McAuley was the founderess of the Sisters of Mercy, a religious order, initially, dedicated to the education of poor young catholic women of Dublin and is now a worldwide order where the education and rights of all young people are first and foremost in the minds of the educators. Catherine McAuley grew up in Ireland (born 1778) at a time when Catholics, who were approximately 75 – 80% of the population, were amongst the poorest of the poor. Due to family circumstances Catherine was personally spared a life of poverty but her observations of Catholic families living in slums rife with disease and epidemics, lacking in education and full of wide spread begging never left her memory. She commenced her “mercy works” early in life, led by her strong Catholic faith; Catherine always wished to give something to the poor. Catherine soon grew to realise that the way to help the young women of Ireland was through education and refuge. In 1827 the House of Mercy was opened and on the 12 December 1831 the congregation of the Sisters of Mercy was established. Catherine's strong desire to follow in the footsteps of Jesus led to voluntary poverty for all Sisters of Mercy and so Catherine's mission, to be credible with the poor, meant it necessary to live in solidarity with them. Catherine McAuley died on the 11 November 1841 and her legacy lives on through every Mercy school throughout the world.

Catherine's deep faith in God who is Mercy, and her experience of the pain of poverty, shaped her prayer and, in turn, her prayer shaped her ministry. Mercy spirituality is based on this lifelong journey of discovery of the Mercy of God, which is so often found in the lives and struggles of the suffering and the poor. This year being the Jubilee year of Mercy has provided the community with opportunities to focus on the *Works of Mercy* in action. Also, the spiritual journeys of Mary MacKillop was influenced by Jesuit, Passionist, Marist and Celtic, Franciscan spiritualities. Elements of these great traditions formed the foundation of Good Shepherd's prayer and devotion.

HIGHLIGHTING THE CHARISM

To highlight the charism of Good Shepherd, key buildings and walkways have been named which reflect saints and their focus on learning, compassion, sustainability and inclusiveness. These include:

- Catherine McAuley Boulevard
- Mercy Hospitality Centre – (Tuckshop)
- Assisi Exploring Place – Prep
- MacKillop Discovery Place – Years 1
- Nagle Creating Place - Year 2
- Ignatius Designing Place – Years 3 and 4
- Marian Leading Place - Year 5 and 6
- Resource Centre – Samaritan Learning/Resourcing Place
- Undercover Area – (To be named)



Good Shepherd strives to develop through the *Religious Life of the School*, an identity which deepens an understanding of the important role religion plays in society.

GOOD SHEPHERD'S WAY OF BEING COMMUNITY

This has been exemplified through developing the Catholic Identity and culture of the school by focusing on **Good Shepherd's Way of Being Community**, which was developed through the Staff Foundation Induction Program. The ethos and charism of Good Shepherd acknowledges a sense of the sacred as an authentic Christian community that builds quality relationships modeled on the vision and values of Jesus.

GOOD SHEPHERD'S WAY
...of being community

In our community we:

1. Appreciate each other and give thanks and recognition
2. Set clear goals and have time lines for when things need to be decided on and complete
3. Give people time to form opinions and to process ideas
4. Are honest and respectful while acknowledging each other's feelings
5. Build trust to work collaboratively as a team
6. Challenge yourself to try new things, be open minded, review and modify
7. Give feedback in a constructive and positive manner
8. Listen to others and respect everyone's ideas
9. Speak up in a considerate and respectful manner
10. Create a welcoming and positive attitude to all
11. Celebrate!

GOOD SHEPHERD
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
SPRINGFIELD LAKES

MORNING PRAYER GATHERING

This is expressed through the school community gathering in prayer every morning, through prayer gatherings and assemblies, Parish Mass during Catholic Education Week, Mass and/or liturgies to mark significant school and liturgical events (e.g. feast days and days of Holy Obligation); through working for social justice and fundraising activities; through staff and students spiritual development through participating in professional learning and renewal activities. Living out the Charism through engaging with the BCEO spiritual formation framework, especially 'Catching Fire'. In addition, the school's Mission is displayed in all learning places and is explained to families seeking enrolment at Good Shepherd.

Good Shepherd builds **authentic Christian community** through such ways as:

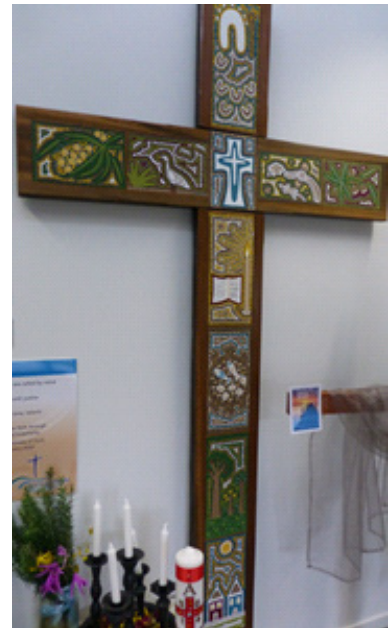
- Celebrating the cultural diversity of the school
- Acknowledging connections with the wider church community
- Welcoming encouraging and supporting participation of families in the life of the school.

Good Shepherd creates and values a **sense of the sacred** through such ways as:

- Establishing and maintaining sacred and reflective spaces in classrooms and around the school
- Providing professional learning for staff on religious art and iconography
- Using the natural environment to enhance a sense of the sacred

Good Shepherd celebrates **liturgy and sacraments** through such ways as:

- Providing formation for staff, students and parents
- Arranging the physical environment and providing resources for full and active participation in liturgy and sacrament
- Providing opportunities for the celebration of the sacraments within the life of the school
- Supporting the parish in the celebrations of significant celebrations.



Good Shepherd recognises and **ritualises the sacredness** of everyday life through such ways as:

- Ritualising life events e.g. rites of passage, beginning and end of year, times of grief and loss
- Including prayer rituals in the day to day procedures and routines of school life
- Inviting parental involvement in prayer rituals
- Participating in significant community celebrations i.e ANZAC Day

Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School is a ministry of the local church and collaborates with the Springfield Parish of Our Lady of the Southern Cross, other Archdiocesan agencies and community/government agencies to serve the Springfield community.

The purpose of the Catholic school is the development of human beings steeped in the profound human values embodied in Jesus Christ.

Catholic schools nurture students' faith and lead them to deepen their relationship with God through prayer and celebration, their growing knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures and Catholic Tradition, and action in the world for peace and justice.

Our goal is to **enhance our Catholic identity**, in a language that reflect and recognises God's presence permeating throughout Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School. We do this by strengthening the integration of faith, life and culture, inviting students to discover God's presence in their daily lives and engaging them in a dialogue between their life experiences and Catholic teaching.

In this way they may grow in understanding of themselves and their world in light of the Gospel and be empowered to take responsibility for themselves and for creating a just society.

Further, our goal is to **build a community of faith and hope**, where we are all inspired by the person and teachings of Jesus Christ and imbued with the Holy Spirit, and work together for the benefit of each member of the school community.

PRAYER AND WORSHIP

Good Shepherd nurtures the **Christian prayer** life of its community through such ways as:

- Teaching and using a variety of traditional prayers and devotions for individual and communal use
- Scheduling time to allow for prayer and worship across the school (School Timetable)
- Immersing students in diverse experiences of prayer e.g. meditation
- Teaching about the charism and prayer life of the saints that their building is named for (e.g. Ignatius Designing Place + The Examen).

EVANGELISATION AND FAITH FORMATION

Good Shepherd fosters the call to **live the gospel** through such ways as:

- Reflecting the life and message of Jesus Christ through routines and practices e.g. hospitality and outreach
- Establishing policies, practices and structures that promote inclusion and a sense of belonging to a Christian community
- Presenting the gospel message in engaging ways



Good Shepherd nurtures the **spiritual formation** of each individual through such ways as:

- Providing faith formation experiences for students, staff and parents
- Providing opportunities to express spiritual awareness through the creative arts
- Celebrating the religious unity and diversity within the school community

Good Shepherd **witnesses to the wider community** through such ways as:

- Building collaborative relationships with the parish and local Church
- Participating in the life of the local community e.g. service organisations, youth ministry, aged-care
- Engaging with students from other schools to give witness to the beliefs and values of the Catholic tradition (Combined school and Parish Mass each year during Catholic Education Week)

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ACTION

Good Shepherd practises **justice within its own community** through such ways as:

- Identifying, implementing and promoting policies, structures and practices that respect the rights and dignity of all members of the school community
- Applying Christian stewardship to the resources and environment of the school
- Establishing just processes of discernment and critical judgement when making decisions

Good Shepherd **acts for justice** through such ways as:

- Implementing policies and practices within the school that nurture a generosity of spirit
- Reviewing and monitoring the complexity and expense of experiences offered by the school in light of catholic social teaching
- Engaging with student initiated and/or local justice projects as part of the curriculum

Good Shepherd consciously **reflects on its action for justice** through such ways as:

- Incorporating practices of review and critique in relation to current actions for justice within the school community
- Building a reflective component into school social justice practices, celebrations of significant events, and prayer life

Good Shepherd's programs, activities and experiences for the classroom learning and teaching of religion and the religious life of the school are responsive to religious diversity, while being faithful to the Catholic Christian identity of the school.

Examples:

- Explicit teaching about prayer - classroom prayer and community prayer
- Explicit teaching about social action and justice - student participation in activities and fundraising to promote Catholic agencies, for example, Project Compassion & Orange Sky Laundry
- Planning mind maps that incorporate both classroom learning and teaching and religious life of the school
- Explicit teaching about church, community and celebrations - student participation in planning Blessing and Opening liturgy