

Nurturing Souls in the Centre of Town

St Mary's Primary School on Manchester Street is a hidden gem within the four avenues which surround Christchurch's CBD. One of only four inner-city primary schools, St Mary's remains a beacon radiating the special character of Catholic education.

"As part of our catholic family this wee school has an important role to play in student health and well-being. Growing resilient students is of high importance. Social media, home life, earthquake anxiety and education pressures are amongst the mix which can make life hard to navigate for some of our wee folk (and many of our big folk too!)."

When visiting St Mary's, the Catholic Development Fund (CDF) Team were reassured to find out about the great work taking place to nurture student hearts, minds and souls. With a vision to "Strive to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, walk in his footsteps and be his voice in the community" St Mary's principal David O'Neill is clear about his role and has systems in place to nurture and support student well-being. Mr O'Neill acknowledged

the job at hand stating, "As a principal, I have to undertake a pastoral role, a counselling role... for our students and their families. When we are called to help with grief, self-esteem and anger management, I am grateful to be working in a Catholic school environment as there are systems in place to support our students' well-being." These include:

Morning prayer

This is a beautiful way to start each school day, class prayer offers a safe environment to share gratitude, concerns and dreams. Students learn to have hope, a stronger mindset, gain forgiveness and a better sense of self. Understanding one another's inner thoughts helps for classmates to deal constructively and sensitively with the challenges some may be facing.

Student Health Team

Run by senior students who are committed to improving well-being and mindfulness, healthy eating and nutrition. Working together to identify and address the student voice and develop techniques to educate peers about leading a healthy and spiritual life. A 'Health Forum' is held each term where student health representatives from other schools meet to share initiatives.

Reflecting Journals

Self-awareness gives one the ability to understand our emotions, strengths and weaknesses and most importantly, the impact we have on others. Writing personal thoughts in a journal is a practical way to reflect on one's behaviour, questioning if

Over the past 50 years the CDF has provided significant contributions towards the growth of our Catholic community. In 2019 a distribution of \$1 million was made available to the diocese to help fund the pastoral works of Bishop Paul Martin. The CDF is grateful to each of our 1,000 investors for their continued support of the fund.



Celebrating
50
years
in the Diocese of Christchurch

Great-grandchildren bene

Jim Mitchell believes in the greater good, helping where he can and supporting the work of his beloved Catholic Church. Rockfall from the 2011 earthquake forced Mr Mitchell to leave his home in Sumner. Moving in with his grandson created the unique opportunity for him to be active in his great grandchildren's lives. At the grand age of 91, this Scotsman exemplifies all that family should be: spending time with those we love and sharing what we have.

Several times a week, Mr Mitchell transports Eve (8) and Primo (5) from St Anne's Catholic School in Woolston to swimming lessons and Irish dancing classes. He smiles, saying "I'm fortunate to be able to spend so much time with my great grandchildren. There's always something happening around here...mostly it's fun."

A Scot at heart, Mr Mitchell understands the importance of saving. Opening Catholic Development Fund (CDF) accounts for four of his New Zealand based great-grandchildren gives him the opportunity to teach younger members of his family to save. Birthdays and success in sport or at school are an excuse for Mr Mitchell to gift a wee bonus throughout the year, stating "as teenagers they will

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they are damaging relationships with others and God. Reflecting Journals are an initial stage of the sacrament of reconciliation.

Catholic Social Services (CSS)

Care for those in need is at the heart of the mission of every healthy diocesan community, inspiring every parishioner to live a strong commitment to social justice and to care for those in our community. CSS promotes a holistic approach by offering counselling, social work support, group courses for adults and children, budgeting, advocacy, practical needs advice and assistance.

When professional help is required to support students, David O'Neill contacts CSS. As he states, "Parents often have nowhere to go. It can be



hard to navigate the public health system and it is expensive, so when we realise that a student requires professional intervention such as a counselor, I do not hesitate to call Catholic Social Services. The staff there are professional, supportive and respectful of a family's privacy. They listen to the needs of the student and provide a free service, professional counselors within positive experience and surroundings. With 17 years experience as a principal behind me, I would not hesitate to contact Catholic Social Services for advice, guidance and student referral. After all, our faith is the thing that cements us all together: by working with parents, teachers and Catholic Social Services, we attempt to do what is best for our students."



Catholic Social Services

Matthew Brodie House
Counselling & Family Centre

Catholic Social Services support is available to us all. To find out more or make an appointment with a counsellor simply visit www.cathsocservs.nz.org or contact 03 379 0012.

Open a CDF account and create new opportunities for us to contribute in a significant way to services that are needed in our community.

The Catholic Development Fund (CDF) is proud to support the work undertaken by Catholic Social Services. Investing in the CDF will, in turn enable more opportunities to service the well-being of our catholic community.

fit from kindness

each have a nest egg in case they want to buy their first car or to study."

Mr Mitchell's personal CDF Funeral Savings Account gives peace of mind, knowing money is set aside for funeral expenses, musing, "while waiting for that day, I know that my money is safely invested in the CDF which in turn helps the Church's mission. Bank interest rates are low anyway so I never really think about my personal interest returns. What I like about the CDF is that some of my interest is pooled and reinvested on my behalf... it's good knowing I'm helping Bishop Paul."

It is obvious that relationships are a major reason Mr Mitchell appreciates the CDF. He quite openly admits that CDF Administrator "Mel [Perry] is so welcoming... I couldn't speak more highly of her. She's very helpful and knowledgeable ... for me it's quite important to know the people who are dealing with my accounts."

If you would like to find out more about the CDF, contact Melanie Perry on 0800 40 FUND (0800 40 3863), e-mail cdf@chch.catholic.org.nz or visit www.cdf.org.nz.

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Jim Mitchell with great-grandchildren Eve (8), Primo (5) and CDF Administrator Melanie Perry at the St Anne's Catholic School playground