



Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide a report to the Parish AGM. I am sorry that I am unable to attend in person, however this time of year is my husband Sean's anniversary and I will be in Melbourne with my daughters.

The Catholic School Advisory Council is a parent and community representative group that has been a part of Catholic schools formally known as the School Board. At OLG we have had Father Mark, Father Richard Smith and Father Hyginus attend all of our CSAC meetings and since 2019 Daniel Kiely and Marc Tattersall attended our CSAC meetings as the OLG Parish Representative. The role is to be a conduit between school and Parish and an indication of the importance the school places on its relationship with the Parish.

As Principal I report to the CSAC on how we are living our Strategic Plan to deepen our relationship with the Parish. Sister Helen has been a strong link with the Parish in her role over 3 years as Liturgist and this year we introduced our Assistant of Religious Education, Mr Andrew De Maio, as an addition to the team that works with the parish. I would like to acknowledge Mrs Pafumi and Mrs Fanchi for their role in supporting our school parish communication over the year.

I am very grateful for the opportunities provided by Father Hyginus, Clare Broad and Vince Thompson from the St Vincent De Paul Chapter for our school community to be a valuable part of the Sacramental Program and St Vincent De Paul Society. This year, in addition to these elements of Parish life, OLG has also communicated weekly events through the Credo and invited Parishioners to Stations of The Cross, Grandparents Day, our Andrew Chin Concert and our Pre-Primary Christmas Nativity Assembly. The Thanksgiving Mass led by OLG students was the third time we have had the opportunity to be invited to lead a Parish weekend Mass. Thank you to Marilyn Lobo and Louisa Merry who make the events a great social event with their child friendly suppers.

This year the Archdiocesan Family based, Parish led and School supported Sacramental Program has seen over 300 children from the school and Parish program make their Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation. It is a particularly important part of Parish and family life and my gratitude to Clare Broad for her wonderful passion and organisation of the program. We welcome students and families to our school for the PREP program, including invitations to our Sacrament Retreats each year. The PREP children who return over three Sacrament retreats are warmly welcomed as friends of the school. This year Christian Service was instigated as a part of the Sacramental program. This was a Parish suggestion, and the school wholeheartedly supported this introduction. It has been delightful to see so many more families at Mass over the weekends, I am sure the new kneelers will help them stay! Father Hyginus is an important part of the Sacramental Program and his introduction to parents at the first meeting and attendance at all the Workshops and Retreats is a wonderful way for our children to get to know Father more. Thank you, Clare and Father.

The House System at OLG is one way we make our large school smaller by growing and developing House Families instead of traditional factions. The Sisters of The Holy Family of Nazareth have given each House a Virtue (Charity, Faithfulness, Simplicity and Family) and throughout the year we work with Vince to find out what the St Vinnies Chapter needs and tailor our charity drives to meet that specific virtue. This year, in addition to the weekly contribution of classes to the food bank at the Parish, OLG Families have donated hundreds of Easter Eggs for the Easter Hampers, over 700 individual toiletries, canned and dried food and are currently collecting for the Christmas Hampers. The Christmas Hampers are packed by our Year 6 Ministry Leaders and school Parent Volunteers. This



generosity is in addition to the contribution made by our families to the Archbishop's LifeLink Drive which is also run through the Parish. The links between the St Vincent Chapter and the Sacramental Program Coordinator have grown stronger and stronger. Thank you, Clare and Vince.

Over the past couple of years our school choir has helped out with Christmas Carols, and this year marks the third year that our children are invited to sing and be a part of the Christmas Carols. This year's event is bigger than ever and many of our families have been donating the toys to be sold at the Holly Jolly Christmas event. Even though school breaks up before the Christmas Carol event we are fortunate that our enthusiastic children and families arrive to sing and support the Parish. Thanks to Mrs Armstrong for her organisation and invitation to this event. As always, our chairs and benches will be made available to the parish for our Easter and Christmas services. Thank you to the volunteers who help move those from the school to the Church.

Thank you also to Joan Burke who assists us with changing the banners in our Multi-Purpose Area to match the Liturgical Calendar. With the new interior decoration of the Church in 2020 the traditional appliqué banners were no longer usable in the Church, however OLG School was delighted to be able to dress our MPA with the banners. As most of our Masses are celebrated in the MPA, due to numbers of children, we are more than grateful for these art pieces. Thank you to Joan who makes sure we are following the Liturgical calendar & helping educate our children and families on these important changes.

Deacon Paul and Father Hyginus have celebrated 7 Whole School Masses this year in our MPA, in addition to Liturgies of The Word at our Retreats and special blessings at our Mother's Day, Father's Day and Grandparents' Day events. Each year we invite Deacon Paul and Father to celebrate our staff Christmas lunch with us and we are grateful that they are an active part of our school community.

Next year we will be 70 years old and look forward to sharing our school birthday with parishioners. This is also a year where we will develop a new strategic plan and I look forward to the Parish Council and general parish community being a part of that consultative process.

Our Lady of Grace School has grown from 500 student to over 700 students in 2025. We have worked hard to create a dynamic Catholic school community that is accessible to all families. We don't have much money, but we do have buildings and as Principal and steward of those buildings I will continue to offer them to the many groups that operate within our parish of an evening. I look forward to continuing to work with the Parish in the current established ways and in the future in new and innovative ways of sharing God's mission.

Thank You
Gabrielle Doyle