

# **NEWSLETTER FOR NEW ZEALAND CATHOLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES, KINDERGARTENS, PLAYGROUPS AND INTERESTED PARTIES JULY 2013**

## **GREETINGS**

**Tēnā koutou katoa, malo e lelei, talofa lava, ni sa bula vinaka, talohani, kia orana, fakalofa lahi atu and blessings and warm greetings to you all.**

As I write, Wellington is undergoing a series of earthquakes – it makes us even more aware that moment by moment we live in the hands of the earth and in the hands of God. It also, of course, makes us even more aware of the ongoing experience of those in Christchurch. I am sure you have all checked your emergency procedures, for your service and for your home. The Ministry of Education website has plenty of useful advice and templates for services to use.

## **News from Lisa Vedder of Jubilee Centre, Hamilton**

Lisa suggests a lovely website to follow up: [www.lambsongs.co.nz](http://www.lambsongs.co.nz) has Free to Print and Use Bible Stories, and sells lovely CDs (with books). Listen to 'Gentle Hands' and 'The Pirate Song'.

Teachers at Jubilee are working through Module 5, Exploring Faith Formation, for their Certificate in Catholic Early Childhood Education, with three modules to go to completion. It has been a wonderful journey and learning experience, thanks to facilitator Margaret Nicholls, Sr Lucille and the other participants involved. The staff look forward to their road trips to Auckland once a term.

(Apologies to Lisa that I held this report over till this newsletter.)

## **What Makes a Catholic Early Childhood Service?**

I was looking in the website [www.nzca.ac.nz](http://www.nzca.ac.nz) (Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa NZ Childcare Association) recently and noticed again, under the Publications heading, two excellent leaflets for parents providing questions to ask about early childhood services. They are worth reading, particularly if you are considering setting up a service.

For a Catholic service or one that wishes to operate by Catholic principles (even if it is not "officially" Catholic) the best possible care and education of children should, of course, be founded on Gospel values and Catholic commitment on the part of the adults. The Catholic Early Childhood Curriculum (request it from [ncrsnz@clear.net.nz](mailto:ncrsnz@clear.net.nz)) provides much assistance in understanding these basic principles.

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference is again looking at the question of what makes a Catholic Early Childhood service, and has asked this office to provide it with advice, which we are doing. We welcome this initiative by the Bishops.

## **Early Childhood Education Participation Rises**

Enrolments in early childhood education services increased by 2,400 between 2011 and 2012, which is good news. However, participation by Māori and Pasifika children is still significantly below the national rate, and places available are unevenly distributed with some areas oversupplied and others undersupplied with places. Those considering opening an early childhood service would do well to consider the needs of communities

with high Māori and Pasifika populations, where there is a real need. South Auckland is one such area.

### **Recent Report from Education Review Office 'Working with Te Whāriki'**

Some of you may not yet have seen the May 2013 national report from the Education Review Office, 'Working with *Te Whāriki*: Priorities for Children's Learning in Early Childhood Services'. The two page summary document is an essential read, and it gives a quick and easy way into the full report. The summary focuses on working with *Te Whāriki* and priorities for children's learning, and provides self-review questions and indicators on these two topics. Go to [www.ero.govt.nz](http://www.ero.govt.nz), National Reports.

### **Microsoft Offer on Surface RT Tablets**

Microsoft New Zealand has recently put out an offer to Catholic schools giving significantly reduced prices on the recently launched Microsoft Surface RT. Services wanting to know more about this should contact Maureen Condliffe at NZCEO ([m.condliffe@nzceo.org.nz](mailto:m.condliffe@nzceo.org.nz)). The offer is available until the end of September.

### **New Endeavours to Start Catholic Early Childhood Services**

It is always a joy to receive inquiries about how to set up a service, and I have had several recently. We wish you all the very best in your endeavours, and welcome you to our network.

### **How Babies Learn to Be Human**

Research by Amanda Woodward, a psychologist at the University of Chicago, has shown that babies learn about intentionality of others by the time they are six months old, and if stimulated, can start acting intentionally themselves from that age. Babies are taught intentional action by the way adults behave with them, it is not simply innate. This has implications for our work with *Te Whāriki*, and our Catholic Early Childhood curriculum.

### **Finally – a Blessing**

May you see in what you do the beauty of your own soul. May the sacredness of your work bring light and renewal to those who work with you and to those who receive your work. May your work release within you wellsprings of refreshment, inspiration and excitement. May you be present in what you do. May the dawn find you awake and alert, approaching your new day with dreams, possibilities and promises. And may evening find you gracious and fulfilled. Amen.

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