

# NEWSLETTER FOR NEW ZEALAND CATHOLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES, KINDERGARTENS, PLAYGROUPS AND INTERESTED PARTIES AUGUST 2014

## 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.

## Recent Publication by NZCBC on Catholic Early Childhood Services

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference has developed Guidelines for Catholic Early Childhood Services. We are including a copy of the guidelines with this newsletter. If you'd like to know more about any aspects, do ask your diocesan Catholic education office.

## Congratulations: a new preschool is opened

We warmly congratulate Kelly O'Halloran and Jill Van Amsterdam, the centre managers of Our Place Preschool in Frankton, which opened on 3 February 2014 alongside St Columba's Church and school in Frankton, Hamilton.. (Their email with their news update arrived just too late for including in the last newsletter – apologies.) They say: 'Our roll is ¾ full and the centre is thriving, full of fun and faith. The school and parish communities have offered so much support and our children feel very much part of a loving and spiritual community.' They expect that 90% of the children will go on to St Columba's School.



## Congratulations received from our Friends in CECEAA

It was delightful to see in the May CECEAA newsletter (Christian Early Childhood Education Association of Aotearoa) that Trudi Lynch and the team at the Marian Centre, Panmure were congratulated on graduating from the inaugural Certificate in Catholic Early Childhood

Education. Congratulations also went to “The Catholic Education folk who developed such an excellent curriculum integrating Te Whāriki and Christian teachings and delivered through a Catholic perspective.” (i.e. congratulations to all those involved in the development of the Catholic early childhood curriculum and all those who developed and taught the Certificate papers). Thank you to Thelma Chapman for those kind words – it’s good to have our MOU with CECEEA, and Thelma’s support and friendship.

Here is an interesting extract from a recent CECEEA newsletter:

*Where there is no name for Art* is a book by Bruce Hucko, an art coach who lives and works among the Tewa people of the Hopi Nation. “Through painting and drawing a child’s work of imagination and feeling becomes visible.” The Tewa pueblo people have no word for art. It is not separated from everyday life as life is interconnected. It’s about community, continuity, reciprocity, identity and doing, nurturing the child holistically and not separating life into compartments. What a reminder for us when we consider how much compartmentalising is happening in ECE today.’... ‘The priceless gift that we as teachers can give to children is, as Hucko suggests, to have someone who is interested in them, who listens to them, talks patiently with them and invests time in them.’

### **CECEEA Conference 29-31 August, Willow Park Christian Camp, Auckland**

I have been reading about the coming annual CECEEA conference, ‘Connecting through Stories Ma nga paki ka hono’. Registrations will close on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2014, so if you are interested in attending, register at [www.ceceea.com](http://www.ceceea.com) as quickly as possible.

### **Prayer for Young Children**

Some of you are very well schooled in the work of Maria Montessori. For others, however, the following may be of considerable interest. It is drawn from an article titled Prayer and Young Children by Dr Gerard Shea in Kairos volume 24, issue 12. (accessed online.)

Maria Montessori claimed, from her observations of small children, that “from the ages of three to six years they seem to be in a natural ‘sensitive’ period for religious faith... they have a deep interest in the concrete aspects of religion... They are fascinated with all of creation and are capable of taking in a vast amount through their senses... All of this interest... brings forth a kind of wonder, a joy and serenity that is hard to explain, but observers of young children have seen it on their faces many times... How easy it is to get them to pray. It consists of one simple question: ‘What would you like to thank God for?’ This simple question unlocks a floodgate... The starting point for prayer is in fact the gratitude they feel for being in a beautiful world... By natural degrees, it will lead further – the God who is thanked can also be praised, then asked for other good things and so forth.”

(Dr O’Shea is a senior lecturer in religious education at the John Paul II Institute for Marriage and the Family. Recently he has worked with children as a catechist with Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Victoria.)

### **A final snippet from CECEEA**

A Lakota Sioux Christian, Kent Norburn, wrote in his book *The Wolf at Twilight*: “...children give us enthusiasm and hope. They give us dreams when we get weary and they fill the future with promise... We do not look at our children as full grown-ups waiting to be. We see them as special beings who bring us the freshness of wonder. They keep our hearts soft and our hands gentle. They keep us from thinking only about ourselves! And they give the elders a reason to live, because we entrust the elders with the shaping of their hearts and with setting their feet straight upon the path of life.”

**Finally**

Reminder: do share this newsletter around, and do send us news of your service, to share in the next newsletter.

May your lives be filled with the enthusiasm and hope, the freshness of wonder, that the children you work with bring you.

Susan Apáthy  
Deputy CEO, NZCEO

New Zealand Association of Catholic Early Childcare Organisations  
C/- New Zealand Catholic Education Office  
PO Box 12 307  
Wellington 6144  
Phone 04 496-1739, fax 04 496-1734  
[www.nzceo.org.nz](http://www.nzceo.org.nz)  
Email [nzceooffice@nzceo.org.nz](mailto:nzceooffice@nzceo.org.nz) or [s.apathy@nzceo.org.nz](mailto:s.apathy@nzceo.org.nz)

Catholic curriculum: Anne Kennedy, National Centre for Religious Studies (NCRS)  
PO Box 6144  
Wellington 6144  
[www.ncrs.org.nz](http://www.ncrs.org.nz)  
Email: [ncrs@catholicinstitute.ac.nz](mailto:ncrs@catholicinstitute.ac.nz)  
Anne Kennedy – early childhood



Our Place Preschool, Frankton