



*We proclaim a crucified Christ*

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4 October 2018

Very Rev Denis Stanley  
Episcopal Vicar  
Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations  
Cardinal Knox Centre  
383 Albert Street,  
EAST MELBOURNE Vic 3002

Mr Stephen Elder OAM  
Executive Director  
Catholic Education Melbourne  
James Goold House  
228 Victoria Parade  
EAST MELBOURNE Vic 3002

Dear Father Stanley and Mr Elder,

On 18 December 2015, my predecessor, Archbishop Denis Hart, wrote to both of you endorsing the proposal to develop guidelines for interfaith education in Catholic schools.

I understand that Catholic Education Melbourne (particularly the Catholic Identity Leadership Group and the Wellbeing team) has been working with the Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission of the Archdiocese to prepare these guidelines in the years since.

I have now received from the Chair of the Commission, Reverend Dr Cameron Forbes, the resulting document "Welcoming Each Other: Guidelines for Interfaith Education in the Schools of the Archdiocese of Melbourne".

The mission of Catholic Education Melbourne is to serve those in Catholic educational communities and contribute to the achievement of excellence and equity in schooling. The source and inspiration of this mission is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Today this mission is carried out in Melbourne in a context that is both multicultural and multifaith. The presence of students of other faith traditions in our schools has implications in a variety of situations in the school setting. These new guidelines are intended to ensure that school staff are prepared for and skilled in this diversity, while at the same time keeping the witness to Christ at the centre of their educational mission.

**Most Rev Peter A Comensoli**  
Archbishop of Melbourne





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Furthermore, they are intended to assist staff to help Catholic students deepen their Christian commitment and identity through their encounter with different faith traditions.

The Church has not failed to provide rich teaching and guidance in this endeavour. The Second Vatican Council urges us to “recognise, preserve and promote what is true and holy in other religions’ without ever ceasing to “proclaim Christ ‘the Way, the Truth and the Life’ (John 14:6), in whom may be found the fullness of religious life, and in whom God has reconciled all things to Himself” (Nostra Aetate §2). These guidelines also contain many resources of the Church’s magisterium for further study.

So with confidence in the mission of our Lord Jesus Christ, I now approve and endorse “Welcoming Each Other: Guidelines for Interfaith Education in the Schools of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne”, and establish these guidelines alongside the previously published guidelines for agencies and parishes of the Archdiocese, “Promoting Interfaith Relations” (2009).

I also ask that these guidelines be actively implemented in the schools of the Archdiocese, and further ask that Catholic Education Melbourne draw upon the expertise and assistance of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission in this implementation.

I request that a review and evaluation of the Guidelines be undertaken in two years’ time.

I ask this particularly in regards to staff formation. Thus, “Welcoming Each Other” should be integrated into those professional development and formation structures that presently exist and, if necessary, new avenues of formation be explored to ensure that these guidelines are implemented.

Trusting you will both take the necessary steps for this implementation,

With every grace and blessing, I remain,

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli  
Archbishop of Melbourne