



Catholic Diocese of Sale

Bishop of Sale

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26th June 2017

2017
Diocese of Sale
130 Years

To: All Clergy; Primary and Secondary Principals and Staff; Staff of the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Sale; Chancery Staff

Re: Announcement for Change of Governance of Catholic Education, Diocese of Sale

From: Bishop Patrick O'Regan

It is with great pleasure I write to you all to formally announce that, in close consultation with all the Clergy of the Sale Diocese and the Catholic Education Office, the decision has been taken to commence a change of governance process for Catholic Primary and Secondary Schools. The proposal for this change, put to a meeting of Diocesan Clergy on 31 May, 2017, received unanimous support from the Parish Priests and Canonical Administrators with responsibility for the Schools in the Diocese.

This changed governance model means that Parish Priests will no longer be the employer of staff or manager of school properties in Catholic Schools in the Diocese. It has been agreed that a Company Limited by Guarantee (The Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited) will be established and a Board of Directors appointed to take over the management of all aspects of Catholic Education. The Board will report directly to me as the Bishop of the Diocese and Member of the Company. Day to day management of the schools will be delegated to the Director of Catholic Education supported by staff of the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Sale. Please note that Catholic College Sale is currently co-governed by the Diocese and Marist Schools Australia, and Lavalla College is governed by Marist Schools Australia, on behalf of the Diocese. These arrangements will continue for the time being.

This new model of governance, more evolutionary than revolutionary, will allow Parish Priests to focus on the pastoral, spiritual and faith formation aspects of their important roles in Schools and Parishes, without having to deal with complex management and legislative compliance issues. It will also alleviate them of the responsibility and personal legal liability in relation to the management of schools.

While this is a new direction for Catholic Education in Victoria, it is important to note that this decision has not been prompted by the recent Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse. Possible changes to the governance structure of Catholic schools in the Sale Diocese have been discussed at a senior level for some 10 years.

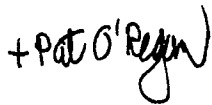
Since arriving in the Diocese two and one half years ago, I believe that I have had the opportunity to get the 'measure of things' and quickly realised that the Diocese of Sale is certainly unique within the Catholic Church and has few similar Dioceses in Australia. Our challenges are as profound as they are hopeful.

The decision to pursue this matter, then, has been taken after much discussion, personal prayer and discernment and a growing understanding of the need to care for the Clergy of our Diocese so as to ensure sustainability of their pastoral, faith formation and spiritual engagement with the Catholic community. I believe that this will lead to new, exciting and challenging opportunities for us all as we negotiate the need for changed relationships in the shift of accountability and responsibility.

So while in the day-to-day running of our Schools not much will change, I do believe that the strong partnership that has always existed in Australia between our Catholic Parishes and their Schools will only be enhanced by this decision.

With the combined skill, competencies and good-will which characterise all engaged in Catholic Education in our expanding Diocese, I feel sure that this will be a model for the future.

In Domino



Bishop Patrick O'Regan
Bishop of Sale

*Cc: Bishop Terence Curtin (Chair CECV)
Archbishop Denis Hart, Archdiocese of Melbourne
Bishop Paul Bird, Diocese of Ballarat
Bishop Leslie Tomlinson, Diocese of Sandhurst*