



Important Dates

First Day of Term 1
2023

Tuesday 31 January

Catholic Education
Week starts

Monday 15 May

End of Year Message

At the beginning of the year I asked you to hold onto the roller coaster of Term 1. To hold tight, to navigate the ups, downs, turns, loops and get to the end.

Well good work. You made it. You got to the finish line.

I have had many parents reach out to me with the same thought “Where did that year go?” “How is it Christmas already?”. However, if we take a step back, and think back on the year that was, with every event, challenge, test, hurdle that we squeezed in, it is hard to imagine how it has only been twelve months.

As Executive Officer of CSPSA, I have been fortunate to have been in this role for over 12 months now. The role and organisation have grown more than my reception child’s feet in just 12 months, and to reflect on this growth has been a blessing.

It was only 12 months ago we started the year with masks, PCRS, close contacts and home schooling for the majority of our students. The year started different. We always knew that this wasn’t the start to the school year that we were used to. Whilst it was different, there was something to be gained from what has been achieved through this time.

I reminded myself and my family of this, as we’ve side stepped our way through the first four weeks of the schooling year. With the juggle of home learning, dropping our reception child off at the school gates only and the need to continue to work through the temporary new way of life.

Yes, it was different, but we embraced this difference. Our little loves grew independence, we connected online in ways which we had not before, and if you were like me, you may have re-learnt year 5 maths in home schooling.

The year then became a catch up. A race. A race to squeeze in all we felt we missed out when the world was shut. There were holidays that needed to be taken, work conferences that had to be attended and sporting events that needed to resume. All this was done on a

half-filled tank.

The world, life, events, functions, parties all came back after a 2-year rest. A 2-year breather. But you took on this challenge, half exhausted, without that breather. Well done You.

The establishment of the CSPSA website and social media has enabled the organisation to connect with families, communities, and schools across the South Australia regional and metropolitan areas. School visits and presentations have seen us cross paths with many different parent bodies, to which we have learnt and gained valuable insight from.

I have been fortunate to begin to visit school communities, including regional visits, and I look forward to connecting further in 2023 with your communities.

The importance of providing a parent voice has been valued within CSPSA. As the Executive Officer, having an active role on various committees and strategy groups within Catholic Education South Australia – including Catholic Identity, political strategy and regional and remote working groups has enabled this voice to be heard.

Connecting with the National body, Catholic School Parents Australia through quarterly council meetings has provided mentoring, guidance and education, which has been invaluable in the development of the Organisation. Attendance at the National Catholic Education Commission Conference (NCEC) in September was a highlight to engage, learn and connect.

Thank you for your support over the last 12 months. It has been an exciting stage of growth and development of the organisation and I look forward to connecting in the new year.

I wish you and your families a safe, blessed, and wonderful Christmas and New Year.

Go well,
Trish Jarvis

What CSPSA does

As an organisation we offer a range of resources to assist you in feeling confident to lead your children through their years and establishing their catholic identity. These resources will range from interactive workshops, forums, and other events for parents to attend and become involved.

School Visits

We can come to your school and discuss CSPSA has to offer, listen to opinions of parents on various topics and provide solution to governance issues.

Skills Presentation

We can facilitate workshops and presentations to assist parents develop skills they need to guide their children towards.

Regular workshops will be posted on the CSPSA website and promoted through our Social Media Channels.

Grievance

When an issue arrives, it can be helpful for an independent person to assist with issues to enable a positive schooling environment and relationship. We can offer a listening ear in these circumstances and lead you towards the right direction to arrive at a positive outcome.

Parent Engagement Sessions



Engaging with Parents has been our main goal this year. We want to help you guide your family, children and loved ones onto the path that helps you all.

We have been fortunate to have held two events with established and respected speakers, Madhavi Nawana Parker and Mark Le Messurier. Through both events, we have connected with over 500 families online and in person.

These events have had the opportunity to connect online to the event if they cannot attend in person ensuring accessibility for all.

The engagement sessions are recorded to allow families and communities to access the sessions in the future. Whether is through a P&F evening, or rewatching with the family to ensure all parts were covered, the resource can be accessed at any time. Recordings of the events can be accessed on our [Let's Talk About](#) page.

A calendar of events for 2023 will be released in January 2023 to pencil in the diary for the topics which suit you.

News Archives:

Subscribe to our news page to access our articles on life, parenting, education and current issues. We aim to connect with you on all issues - and relate to the good, the ugly and outright messy times.

Parenthood has no manual. If it did, people would continue to have an opinion on the content of the manual. If you've wondered how that perfect parent seems to do it all, they probably don't.

Children are not perfect. So parenthood doesn't need to be either. Sometimes, it's wonderful, sometimes not so much.

Click to see all [CSPSA News](#).

16.12.22

I see you



The start of the year began with fresh hair cuts, uniforms that fit and shiny shoes. The end of the year has finished with wearing your brother's uniform as yours has lost a button, an afro of curls and odd socks.

You are holding it all together. Kind of on the countdown to school holidays and Christmas, kind of not.

As you are tired. Exhausted. And not quite sure how to gather the energy for the holidays.

And I hear you.

But remember – this year started different. You didn't start on a full tank. Only our littlest and biggest went to school. And even then, you only went to the gate. You had to stay home, work and help with online learning. The term was filled with masks, Covid, forms, reporting, PCRS, Rat tests, isolation time changes.

Remember trying to work out if you were a close contact?

That was just this year team. We hadn't even hit Easter yet.

The year then became a catch up. A race. A race to squeeze in all we felt we missed out when the world was shut. There were holidays that needed to be taken, work conferences that had to be attended and sporting events that needed to resume. All this was done on a half-filled tank.

The world, life, events, functions, parties all came back after a 2-year rest. A 2-year breather. But we didn't have that breather. But we still went to each one.

So, if you are feeling like you are limping towards the finish line, you likely are.

But for a moment, I ask you to look back through your phone. Check the pictures from the start of the year. Check the fresh faced excited little ones with uniforms too big. Look at those faces.

Then look at your phones and think back to last week's Christmas Concert or the last assembly. Those faces were still there. As happy, as fresh, and as excited as day one.

You all did that. You held that together. You made that happen.

Their faces from Day One were as happy as Day 201 (or what feels like Day 501).

Now Team – You made it. Well done you.

Find that energy for the holidays.... And as a tip... use the 5678 art masterpieces that will have started coming home as Xmas wrapping paper!

PS - Book your child in for a hair cut.

I was tested. And it made me stronger.



I'm 42 years old.

My mum passed away when I was 26. My dad passed away when I was 31. I would be lying if I would say to you that I did not question my faith during these years.

I grew up surrounded by faith. My dad came from an Irish Catholic home. My mum was raised by Catholic parents who valued Sunday Mass. She taught Sunday School every weekend. As children, we would attend mass every weekend. My brother was an altar boy, I soon followed his footsteps.

We did our sacraments, chose our Confirmation sponsors and counted down the days until we could try Communion. Every Christmas we would join in the Nativity Play – every year I would play Angel Gabriel, never getting the coveted Mother Mary role. Clearly, this is still a sore point.

As we grew older and went through Primary and High School, us children would continue our faith journey with our parents. My mum had such strong faith that she would always instil in me. There was always a common theme that faith was at the core of our being. That faith was there to celebrate the good times and be thankful for the gifts God gave.

And faith was there to carry us through the hard times when we could not walk alone. The parable "Footprints" always hung in my room. Whatever path we led as children, mum and dad would always confirm in their own subtle way that faith led us there.

So, when mum got sick, I immediately questioned this faith. Here was a woman who was the most selfless person you would find. She volunteered at Church, she worked two jobs so we could attend our sporting endeavours.

She prayed every night. I heard her. She prayed not just for our family, but for strangers, for nature, for everyone.

She never put herself first.

And here she was. Sick, with no cure, and so young.

I remember my mum telling me not to blame anybody and to keep my faith because she could see that it was fading away. But there were many times that I sat at night while she was sick in the hospital room, wondering what God's plan in all of this was. My parish priest told me "strong people need to deal with strong adversity." I didn't believe this.

Then Dad got sick. And my faith again got tested.

When dad passed away, I felt more cheated. What kind of lesson was I trying to be taught during this time?

Since my parents have passed away, I have healed. But healing does not mean it did not happen. I've healed and I have also learnt lessons. That it's OK to question your faith. It's OK to find and to seek meaning. And ultimately your strength in your faith will come back - even though you may not have felt faith at the hardest of times.

I've bargained with God; I've pleaded with God. I've asked him so many times why this happened to me and my family. And now as the years have passed, I feel confidence. I feel strength and I feel my faith in the fact that God has led me back to believing.

I feel I have been put through a test to see if I still believe. And I feel this has made my faith stronger. I certainly could have gone a different way and not come back. However, there was always a lingering part thinking there has to be a reason for this

So Yes - I questioned my faith in very difficult periods. And I think that's OK to do so.

Because if we don't question, we don't fully have an understanding and take time to think of what we are questioning. If we just believe in what we've been taught, without taking a moment to feel or see what it truly might mean in times of adversity, then what are we believing?

Our Faith journey is that. It is a journey. Like journeys, there are forks in the road, dead ends and long straight pathways. On the journey, you may stop. You may try and go off road, but you may not get far if there is no path. You'll be met with choices to take, and you can choose which one suits you.

It is a journey that you may take. I hope for you reading this, that you aren't tested in this way. But if you are, I hope you see that every person's journey's may change. A journey will evolve and it is ok to question. And you hopefully come out stronger at the other side.

I am a strong believer you need to question things, not cruise along in life if you want to believe. Faith that grows out of questioning can be stronger than faith that is developed from practices and blind acceptance.

So Dad, I hope you are still doing the collection up there with your church mates.

And Mum, I didn't lose it. It just came back - stronger.

The letter I wish I wrote to my parents



As I sign the Enrolment forms for my eldest child to move to High School in 2024, I am starting to feel all the feels.

Whilst this step is still 18 months away for our family, all the emotions as a parent are right there. To be honest, I'd be happy for time to stand still, but I know there are adventures that are just around the corner for my son.

So here is the letter I wish I wrote to my Mum and Dad....

"Dear Mum and Dad – Thank you.

Soon, it will be time for me to leave Primary School. It's time for my next step. I want you with me to hold my hand – but I think I need to do part of this on my own. But before I do that, I need to thank you.

Thank you for choosing this school when you weren't given a rule book on what I needed, what would suit me, what I would love. Thank you for allowing me to try every single school sport – only to stick to just one. I now know you spent hundreds of dollars on each different uniform that I was potentially going to go represent Australia in....

I'm sorry you didn't realise that when you bought that new Mazda Station Wagon, it came with a taxi licence. That the licence was compulsory. To drive me and my friends to every sporting event, play date and party.

You know, the lunches you made me every single day were really appreciated. I know it didn't look like it when I brought it home, uneaten and half moudly.

I have a secret too... I probably did lose my jumper – or it was left in my tray. I really don't know where it is, and I am totally freezing without it, but I wont tell you that.

When I ignored you when you were in the tuck shop, I secretly loved you were there. You knew that didn't you?

You must be a little sad too. But you aren't showing it. I know you feel like a part of your life is moving on. I know the friends you have made won't stop as I am leaving school. I've seen the way you act with them... the mums nights, the concerts, the bowls clubs chats. Those friends are like your family too – and always will be there.

I'm scared and excited Mum and Dad. Of the next step. I know I have a few friends coming with me – but I am scared. Scared of what I don't know. Excited what I will learn, who I will meet, what new sport will be my new Olympic dream.

But Mum and Dad – thank you – as you have given me such a good base to start this next step. And I didn't thank you enough. I should have. You were working, you were tired, you may been stressed. But you didn't show it.

Thank you, Mum and Dad.

Let's find that next adventure. And maybe you can volunteer in the Tuckshop....just once... so I know you are there.

Love 12 year old Trish”

11.03.22

What no-one told me I would gain...



There are things people don't tell you before your child starts school.

What you do know, is that as a parent, you will get to see your children grow, learn, and develop into little people in front of you.

What no-one tells you – is what you, as a parent, will gain too. How important that is. And how much you will treasure, and value it.

What you were not told is that you will find a new Squad. A new group. A new family. You will find and meet other parents and look back and wonder how you got through the years without them.

Your school community will become your new circle.

You will spend Saturday mornings together on the sport side lines without makeup, post gym, cheering your kids on – maybe even watching a minute of the game between talking. You will learn a whole new set of children and parents' names. Your phone will now feature names such as "Max's Mum Kristen". Good luck ever being able to call her just "Kristen" for the next 5 years.

You may get sick, and your new friends will be the ones you call. You may lose a parent, and your new school community will be in the back rows of the church to support you. You may get a new job, and your new family will be the ones you celebrate with.

It will soon stop being a concern if your children still play together or go to different high schools. As you realise this won't change your Squad.

As we see the restrictions from last 2 years beginning to ease, we are starting to see more events, more functions, and more opportunities to gather in our school communities return. There are class play dates, parents' nights and 80's theme quiz nights creeping back in.

If you are new to your school community, take the time to try to go to these – you won't look back. It is daunting to begin with and may be hard to make the first step, but trust me, it's worth it. Building your new circle from your new school community is such an important task.

If you are old to this game, get prepared to return... and start thinking of quiz night tables and outfits.

So, thank you. To my new family. My new squad. I didn't know that you came with school deal. And I am so glad you did.

Contact us

t: +61 8 8301 6896

e: trish.jarvis@cspca.catholic.edu.au

w: cspca.catholic.edu.au



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season filled with **PEACE, JOY & LOVE!**