

Which organisations should schools support?

Catholic schools need to make local decisions as to which organisations will receive support in a particular school year. Schools often have ongoing relationships with religious congregations, local community groups and other charities, and as long as these causes satisfy the criteria outlined in these guidelines, support for these should continue. Beyond this, though, is the need to prioritise Catholic justice, mission, health, welfare and ecological agencies that depend heavily upon Catholic school and parish support.

Schools should give particular support to the following:



Catholic Mission, known internationally as the Pontifical Mission Societies, is the only Catholic charity with a dedicated mission society for the benefit of children globally (Children’s Mission). Information on projects supported by the generosity of Catholics in parishes and schools, and on various teaching resources and programs can be found on their website: www.catholicmission.org.au



Caritas Australia is the Catholic agency for aid and development. They promote sustainable development, respond to emergencies and urge Australians to take action against structures that perpetuate poverty. Project Compassion is their Lenten appeal. In the event of a natural disaster, Caritas will also launch an appeal to provide life-saving supplies. www.caritas.org.au



CatholicCare is the official social services agency of the Church. They work alongside families and individuals in all stages of life, assisting with practical initiatives, life skills and wellbeing strategies to help people sustain positive relationships and cope with complex life transitions. Donations enable the development of new programs and services. www.catholiccare.woll.catholic.org.au



Catholic Earthcare Australia is the official ecological agency of the Australian Bishops. Its mission is to promote understanding among people that creation is sacred and endangered, and must be protected and sustained for present and future generations. CEA conducts research, education, advocacy and outreach programs to support the ecological conversion of the world. www.catholicearthcare.org.au



Religious Congregations work in a range of ministries in health, welfare, mission and justice. Through numerous agencies and individual efforts, religious and lay supporters do great work for the poor and marginalised. Schools may choose to support their local religious tradition or investigate other good works through the Catholic Vocations Ministry Australia website: www.catholiccozvocations.org.au



St Vincent de Paul Society is a lay Catholic organisation that works to combat social injustice and to assist people in need, particularly the homeless and those in extreme poverty. Schools are able to establish their own St Vincent de Paul Conference or Mini-Vinnies program. Their major appeals each year are held in winter and at Christmas to provide resources and support to those most in need. www.vinnies.org.au

"The Church cannot neglect the service of charity any more than she can neglect the Sacraments and the Word . . . for the Church, charity is not a kind of welfare activity which could equally be left to others, but is a part of her nature, an indispensable expression of her very being".

Pope Benedict XVI, Deus Caritas Est, n 20, 25



in action

Advocacy, fund-raising and social action guidelines for Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wollongong

'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

Matthew 25:40

The GUIDELINES FOR FAITH-IN-ACTION have been developed by the Standing Committee for Religious Education to ensure the effective support for Catholic justice, mission and welfare agencies. The guidelines emphasise the need for school communities to engage with local and global issues of social concern and provide direction for assessing which organisations will be beneficiaries of advocacy and fundraising activities.

A message from Bishop Peter Ingham

Catholic schools participate in the Church’s mission “to bring the Good News to the poor” (Luke 4:18). In partnership with parents, parishes and other agencies within the Church and the broader community, Catholic schools are called to give witness to a faith which does justice with love. All have a responsibility to read the signs of the times and to respond with love and compassion, ever seeking to protect human dignity, serve the common good and share resources and privilege.

The Church always seeks to follow the model of Jesus who served those around him with selfless love and a generosity of spirit. Pope Benedict XVI reminds us:

“Love of neighbour, grounded in the love of God, is first and foremost a responsibility for each individual member of the faithful, but it is also a responsibility for the entire ecclesial community at every level: from the local community to the particular Church and to the Church universal in its entirety. As a community, the Church must practice love. Love like this needs to be organized if it is to be an ordered service to the community.”
Pope Benedict XVI, Deus Caritas Est, n 20

The rich tradition of Catholic Social Teaching provides a practical framework within which to consider confronting social issues. It urges Catholics to stand in solidarity with the most vulnerable, the marginalised and those without a voice. The Australian Catholic Bishops offer the Catholic community considered advice on pending matters of local and international concern and they have established a number of ways in which Catholics can garner their resources to be of material assistance to the poor and needy.

I would like to acknowledge and celebrate the wonderful support which Catholic schools have given to various charities and agencies over many years. The support has had a significant impact on the quality of life of individuals and communities, both locally and abroad. It is an achievement to be very proud of. However, Catholic Schools are increasingly being confronted with competing demands from charities and agencies working within and beyond the Church. It is important that schools prioritise their responses and consider their responsibilities to Catholic agencies after a process of prayerful discernment and the seeking of wise counsel. This presents a great opportunity for Catholic schools to use their influence and to share responsibly the many gifts they are graced with.

I heartily endorse the “see-judge-act” methodology and the nine key principles outlined in these ‘Faith-in-Action’ guidelines as a resource for schools to use to assist them in making appropriate policy decisions within the framework of Catholic Social Teaching and a spirituality of stewardship.

In so doing, it is my hope that we can better harness our resources for the greater good of all, and help our young people develop a selfless approach to discipleship that will make them powerful agents for bringing about justice and peace in our world.

Most Rev Peter Ingham DD



Most Rev Peter Ingham DD
BISHOP OF WOLLONGONG

March 2011

Developing a strategic approach to Advocacy, Fundraising and Social Action

It is constitutive of their Catholic identity for schools to become knowledgeable about, engaged with and actively committed to the social mission of the Church. The Church ministers through an incredible array of community services, locally and across the world, to serve the marginalized and forgotten people of the world. The work of many of these Church agencies relies heavily on donations and volunteer support.

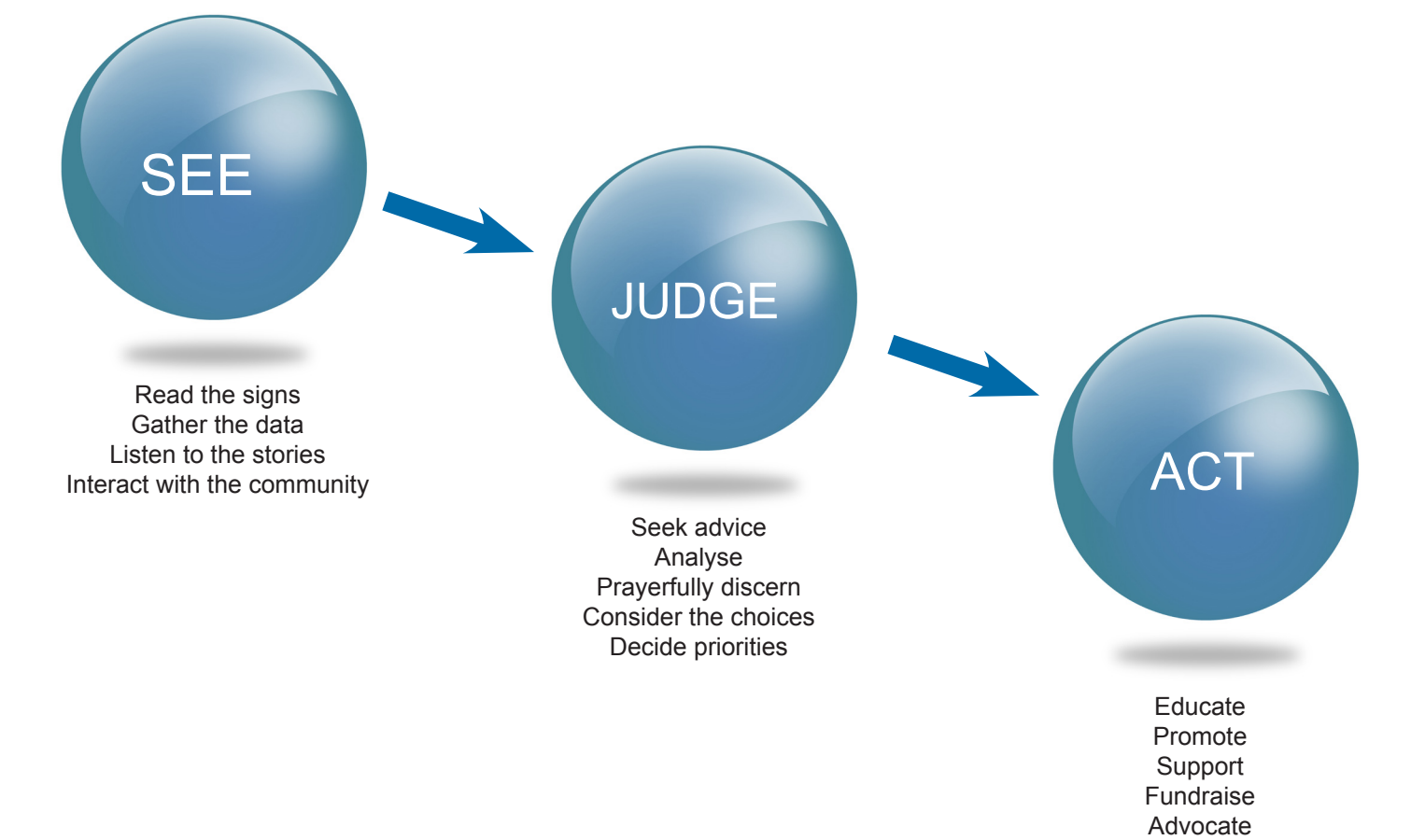
Schools are encouraged to develop a strategic approach to supporting these agencies and for providing staff and students with practical opportunities to be of service to the community. The development of a whole school approach needs to align with School Review and Improvement processes with clear links to:

Key Area 1 Catholic Life and Religious Education
Component 1.3 Catholic Life and Culture

The allocation of appropriate personnel, time and resources should also link to local parish and diocesan initiatives enabling a more collaborative approach.

While on occasions there will be unexpected demands to respond to local or international crises, more effective programs can be implemented as part of a longer term strategic direction. A strategic approach will also alleviate the pressure of responding to all requests for assistance, which will never be possible.

It is recommended that schools use the **SEE-JUDGE-ACT** methodology as a foundation for their planning. It is a simple approach, deeply immersed in the social action tradition of the Catholic Church. *(The ‘See-Judge-Act’ model was created by Cardinal Joseph Cardijn in the early 1900s for the Young Christian Workers movement)*



*"Our love is not to be just words or mere talk
but something real and active"*

1 John 3:18



Guidance For Schools

9 Principles to guide decision making in regard to Catholic School involvement in advocacy, fundraising or other types of social action.

1	CATHOLIC TEACHING	Is the philosophy of the organisation or cause in accord with the Gospel of Jesus and the teachings of the Catholic Church? Some organisations may support ethical positions that contradict the thinking of the Catholic Church or which do not receive endorsement from the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.
2	TRANSPARENCY	Is information about the organisation or cause freely available and clear about its mission, purpose and intentions? A responsible steward will know how donations or advocacy are specifically being used and what programs are being supported, and whether the program or processes are ethically sound.
3	SUSTAINABILITY	Does the organisation or cause intend to build sustainability within the communities where they are working? One-off charitable donations are appropriate in certain circumstances, however, it may be more effective to support programs that will be ongoing long after the initial funding has ceased.
4	ACCOUNTABILTY	Are the accounts and annual reports of the organisation or cause freely available and indicative of their costs? Catholic agencies have a tradition of ensuring very low running costs whilst some organisations have unreasonably high administration costs which means that a less support will reach people most in need.
5	ALTRUISM	Does the organisation or cause inspire a genuine spirit of generosity? Donors need to be encouraged to give without expecting personal reward, even to the point of discomfort or sacrifice. Undue emphasis should not be placed on giving prizes or a commission, as the goal of charity and solidarity is not personal gain.
6	EMPOWERMENT	Does the organisation or cause promote community projects that empower local people in decision making and implementation? Caution should be taken over projects that may place individuals at odds with their community, or which adopt a patronizing attitude that does not respect self-determination.
7	OTHER MEANS OF SUPPORT	Does the organisation or cause receive widespread community or government support that gives them a financial advantage over lesser known bodies? Most Catholic agencies primarily depend upon the generous support of the Catholic community.
8	HOLISTIC	Does the organisation or cause simply fund-raise or does it also promote education and the formation of people? A holistic approach to service and education for social change can make a greater difference than simply giving a donation. The greater goal should always be to create sustainable change.
9	RELIGIOUS FREEDOM	Does the organisation or cause use development and aid projects as a means to converting recipients into a particular faith tradition? Conversion must always be freely sought and not connected to material gain. The provision of charity and welfare conditional upon faith conversion breaches human dignity.

For more information on the principles and practice of Catholic Social teaching visit:

www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au