



PRIME MINISTER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

BICENTENARY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

To the Catholic schools, early learning centres and universities of Australia, congratulations on 200 wonderful years of teaching and learning! I'm delighted to join you in celebrating this milestone.

Two hundred years ago, Fr John Therry answered the call to educate the youth of Parramatta. From that small beginning of 31 students began a great work that now spans 1,755 schools, 100,000 staff and 777,000 school students.

From Xavier Catholic College, Wurrumiyanga in our most north; to Sacred Heart Catholic School, Geeveston in our south; to St Mary's Star of the Sea, Carnarvon in the west; to St Finbarr's, Byron Bay in the east; and to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College, Alice Springs in our red centre, Australia's Catholic Schools cover the breadth of our country.

Over 200 years, your schools, preschools and now universities, have transformed Australia through the millions of lives you have influenced.

I recognise the contribution of Catholic Education to Australian life and I join you celebrating this anniversary.

On this anniversary, we remember all who have been part of this heritage, including Fr Therry and Australia's first saint, Mary of the Cross. We recall on this anniversary, the good days and the bad, the successes and disappointments; joys and sufferings; as well as the faith and community that has enabled Catholic Education to make this significant contribution to our national life.

In doing so, we also recognise the clergy, religious, lay men and women, parents and parishes who have contributed so much.

I send my best wishes to everyone celebrating this bicentenary.

God bless.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Scott Morrison', written in a cursive style.

The Hon Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister of Australia

May 2021