

3 June 2021

By email

Dear John,

New *Australian Catholics* website, Education Hub and online Teachers' Networking Forum

It has been our privilege to serve Catholic school communities across Australia over the past 28 years and in particular through the challenges of 2020.

We thank all who have subscribed and signed up to Australian Catholics AC+ database of digital religious education and teaching resources.

With seven dioceses and 400 schools around Australia already subscribed, the *Australian Catholics* archive of digital resources is fast becoming the "go to" place for teachers, Religious Education Co-ordinators, Assistant Principals Religious Identity and Mission, leaders and educators to access resources for religious education, faith and mission formation.

We have, over recent years, listened with interest to the challenges and opportunities within the Catholic education sector.

To coincide with the 200th anniversary of Catholic education in Australia, we are pleased to announce the launch today of the online *Australian Catholics* Education Hub and Teachers' Forum - an exciting new interactive platform for current and new *Australian Catholics* AC+ subscribers, within a new and improved *Australian Catholics* website, also launched today.

New Features

The new *Australian Catholics* Education Hub includes all your favourite AC+ features, presented in a much more engaging user-friendly way, plus:

- a discussion forums for teachers and staff to network and exchange ideas
- a retreat and formation providers directory
- a speakers directory

A Catholic charities directory and jobs board are also planned.

The new Teachers' Forum takes your existing REC network and, for the first time, expands it to Religious Education Co-ordinators, Assistant Principals Religious Identity and Mission and teachers from 400 schools right across Australia. It's a place to engage with the best current thinking and network with and learn from leading educators.

The Teachers' Forum can only be viewed and accessed by teachers and staff at AC+ subscriber schools and Catholic Education Offices – and is accessed by the staff members

“member profile” that staff members can create for themselves within the new AC+ platform.

The archive of AC+ subscriber content and the new directories are also available to the broader subscriber community including parents and students, but the Teachers’ Forum is a dedicated networking forum exclusively for teachers and staff.

The new Education Hub and Teachers’ Forum means that *Australian Catholics* is no longer just about resources. It’s the place teachers, Religious Education Co-ordinators, Assistant Principals Religious Identity and Mission, leaders and educators across Australia can go to and connect with speakers, retreat and formation providers, Catholic Charities and, importantly, with each other.

In addition, the new and improved *Australian Catholics* website is more engaging, easier to log into, quicker to navigate, has a richer variety of content sources and is more visually appealing.

All articles in the AC+ archive continue to be signed off by a diocesan censor and come with a copyright licence to share the content with your school community. At least a quarter of the articles are written by students/ young writers, carrying with them a strong peer to peer element in terms of their exploration of the principles and concepts covered.

Accessing the Teachers’ Forum

The *Australian Catholics* Teachers’ Forum is available to teachers and staff of Catholic schools and Catholic Education Offices who are AC+ subscribers, using their existing login details via the new *Australian Catholics* website.

We invite you to log in, visit the forums, share your ideas, successes and challenges, support each other and collaborate, in a safe environment, with teachers and educators from 400 schools around Australia to build an even more vibrant and collegiate Catholic education sector in this its 200th anniversary year.

Tour of the new online Education Hub and Teachers’ Forum

A tour of the site for new and existing subscribers will take place at 4pm on Tuesday 8 June 2021. You can register for the tour via the following link:
<https://form.jotform.com/211521285601041>

A recording of the tour will be available on the new website after the event and distributed through our regular newsletters and social media channels.

For those who are unable to participate at this time and would like a tour please let us know and we can schedule a time to meet with you and /or your staff to take you through the new Education Hub and Teachers’ Forum. If you have any questions about accessing the site using your exiting AC+ subscription, contact us at: editor@australiancatholics.com.au.

Help spread the word to make the most of your AC+ subscription

Whilst we will be sharing news of the new Education Hub and Teachers’ Forum, we would like to make sure that all subscribers are able to make the best use of their AC+ subscription.

To that end we have developed images and messages for you to share in your staff and REC network bulletins and other communications. Those resources are available for downloading here: <https://www.australiancatholics.com.au/promotional-resources>

Thank you

Finally – we thank you for continuing to put your trust in us to help with the formation and education of students and serve your community. Our mission always has been and continues to be one of service and inspiration. We hope, with your help, to continue that well into the future.

As always, we welcome your feedback and further suggestions and ideas.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'm. McVeigh'.

Michael McVeigh
Senior Editor, Australian Catholics Magazine

A stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'M' and 'L'.

Monika Lancucki
CEO, Jesuit Communications Australia