

Forming Hearts

MACS Faith Formation Framework



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



**Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools (MACS)
values each member of our
community and believes
every person plays an
essential part in our mission.**

MACS encourages all members to discern a personal response to Jesus' invitation to come and see (John 1: 39), and His invitation to everyone He encounters to follow Him (Matt 4:19). In faith, we hope for each person to flourish and to discover their role as an active participant in the evangelising mission of the church.

This framework illuminates MACS' commitment to accompany each member as they explore their vocation in the light of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, it aims to inform faith formation activities and programs including school closure days, pilgrimages and enrichment programs, faith leadership initiatives, and all opportunities in which MACS cultivates a growth in faith, hope and love.

The framework offers clarity and direction for the development and delivery of high-quality faith formation programs and resources specific to need.

Finally, the MACS vision summarised in the Statement of Mission and in the MACS2030 Strategic Plan recognises that none of us can succeed in our objectives on our own. This framework is situated in the context of the Archdiocesan family of Melbourne, and our task of working together in mission with parishes and parish clergy. It also provides clear expectations for MACS partners as they discern their role in our shared mission.

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'
(Luke 4:18)

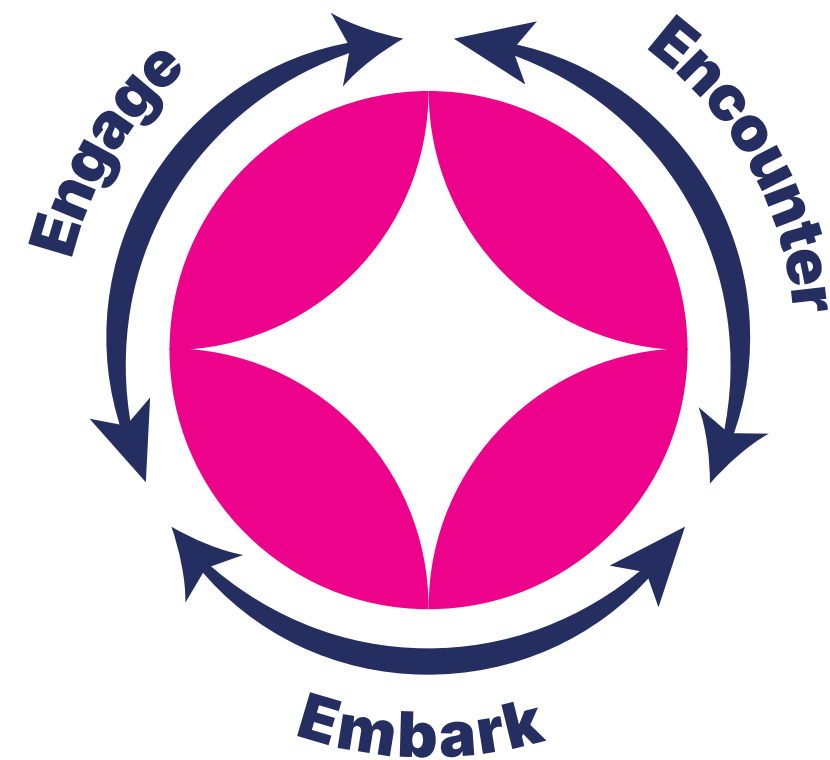


Context

Through MACS’ mission to form lives of faith, hope, and love in the light of Jesus Christ, MACS prioritises the formation of missionary disciples by offering comprehensive education that nurtures the whole person.

MACS schools integrate academic excellence with the explicit proclamation of the Gospel, serving as vital contributors to the evangelisation of culture (MACS Statement of Mission and Working Together in Mission).

Evangelisation is an ongoing process that deepens our relationship with God through word, service, prayer, and witness, aiming for continued conversion and growth. At its core is the kerygma, the initial proclamation of God's unconditional love demonstrated through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection (Evangelii Gaudium 164), which serves as the foundation for all evangelising activities (Christus Vivit 213). In the evangelising mission of the Church, Catholic schools play a vital role, partnering with local parishes and the wider church, with the parish priest acting as the custodian of the mission (CCC 905 and NCEC, 2022). This collaborative effort ensures that the central message of God's unconditional love is effectively communicated and lived out in various contexts, fostering a deeper connection with God and promoting continuous spiritual growth.



In their local mission, Catholic school leaders recognise the Archbishop as the primary teacher within the Archdiocese of Melbourne. As the local successor to the Apostles, the Archbishop is the lead evangeliser, and Catholic educators collaborate with him in this entrusted responsibility. School leaders share a particular closeness to the local and universal Church (especially with a prayerful heart for the Holy Father and his intentions), and commit to the mission of the Church among all who are in need, especially the poor and those on the peripheries.

Recognising the vast number* of members including 115,000 students, 100,000 families, 11,000 teachers, 8,000 staff and 3,000 principals and senior leaders, the MACS framework identifies the commitment to support the formation of each member of every cohort as an active participant in the evangelising mission of the Church.

'It is only by starting from the heart that our communities will succeed in uniting and reconciling differing minds and wills.'

(Pope Francis
Dilexit Nos #24)

The framework aligns with the Archdiocesan approach to missionary discipleship; to encounter, engage, and embark.

MACS aims to inspire members to encounter Christ, to engage them through equipping them on their journey, and to empower them to embark as active participants in the Church's mission. MACS recognises the diverse paths of its members and stipulates its commitment to accompany each member of every cohort:



Students and Families



Recognising parents as the first educators of children, the primary objectives of the formation for students and families are:

- 1. to inspire them to seek and recognise God's unique calling on their lives,
- 2. to equip them to explore their journey of faith,
- 3. to empower and encourage each family member to actively participate in the mission of the Church.



Principals and Senior Leaders



The primary objectives of the formation of principals and senior leaders are:

- 1. to inspire them to lead authentically,
- 2. to equip them to cultivate prayerful discipleship communities,
- 3. to empower them to be the primary evangelisers in the school community.



Teachers



The primary objectives of the formation of all teachers are:

- 1. to inspire them on their own faith journey,
- 2. to equip them to accompany students and their families on their faith journey,
- 3. to empower them to be living witnesses to the gospel.



Staff



The primary objectives of the formation of all staff are:

- 1. to inspire them to explore their personal vocation,
- 2. to equip them to develop their uniquely God-given gifts and talents,
- 3. to empower them with prayer to fulfil their roles in Catholic education.



MACS Board and Executive Leaders



The primary objectives of the formation of MACS Board members and Executive Leaders are:

- 1. To inspire them to cooperate humbly with the Holy Spirit and to grow in knowledge and love for Christ,
- 2. To equip them to direct faith-filled strategies and operations that align with the MACS Statement of Mission,
- 3. To empower them to apply God's wisdom faithfully, prudently and courageously.

The aim of the objectives is to realise an overall increase in active participation in faith formation programs and spiritual awareness, an uplift in theological understanding, and vocational motivation and a growth in mission capabilities and service in the Church and the world (NCEC, 2017).



Selection Criteria

All faith formation follows the pattern of the Apostles; spending time with Jesus, getting to know Him, and understand Him.

It is an intentional, ongoing, and reflective process that focuses on the growth of individuals and communities from their lived experiences (NCEC, 2017). To ensure these commitments result in flourishing learners, all MACS' faith formation programs and resources are designed to meet accreditation requirements and are:

- are Christ-centred
- are Trinitarian
- are underpinned by the evangelising mission of the Church
- support the Catholic vision of the human person
- cultivate prayerful discipleship communities that reflect God's love and mercy, through service and social justice
- assist the development of a profound knowledge and love for the Scriptures, Tradition, Our Lady, and the lives of Saints
- ensure theological depth and
- reflect the local charism when relevant.



Supporting Documents:

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Burns & Oates, London, 1999.

National Catholic Education Commission, *A Framework for Formation for Mission in Catholic Education*, 2017.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Rome, 2013.

Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Rome, 2019.

Pope Francis, *Dilexit Nos*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Rome, 2024.

Statement of Mission, Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools, 2024.

Working Together in Mission, Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools, Melbourne, 2024.

**Based on data from February 2024 Survey*



'One doesn't begin to be a Christian because of an ethical decision or a great idea, but rather because of an encounter with an event, with a Person, who gives new horizons to life, and with that, a decisive orientation.'

- Pope Benedict XVI

