

E te whānau a te Karaiti, tēnā koutou



### Shine like stars in the world: E tīaho ana koe hei rama i te ao

In celebrating Catholic Schools Day in 2025, I acknowledged over one hundred and eighty years of Catholic education in Aotearoa New Zealand and the faith filled work of those who have served Catholic education over such a long period. This year's Catholic Schools Day also coincides with an important event in our history, the signing of the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act on the 10th October 1975. This Act saved our Catholic schools and allowed our network of schools to rebuild and to continue our mission of "helping to form Christ in the lives of others"<sup>1</sup>. As a result, our Catholic schools have been able to build on, and strengthen, a school system that benefitted from the wonderful contributions of so many religious and lay people in communities across the country over the previous one hundred and eighty years. Thank you to those who are currently serving in our Catholic schools and for your efforts in ensuring our schools are places where God's reign and loving rule are integrated into the life of the school.

Catholic Schools Day 2025 provides another wonderful opportunity to celebrate and showcase our unique identity to both our communities and our wider nation. There are several resources on the website alongside this letter that you are most welcome to use to celebrating Catholic Schools Day on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2025. Celebrations may happen at any stage during that week to suit your school or region.

The team at NZCEO hope that Catholic Schools Day 2025 will be a time of celebration, aroha and hope for the future. Please update us on your activities and send photos, video clips with an outline of your day. Please email to Jerry Sparks at [Jerry@nzceo.org.nz](mailto:Jerry@nzceo.org.nz).

Thank you for your efforts in participating and supporting Catholic education in Aotearoa.

Kia tau ngā manaakitanga o te Ariki ki runga i a koutou

Kevin Shore, CEO

New Zealand Catholic Education Office

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<sup>1</sup> John Paul II, Message to the Catholic educational association of the United States.