



## Media Release

Embargoed until Friday May 16 2025

### Catholic Education Awards showcase exceptional educators inspiring the next generation

Adelaide: An unwavering commitment to their roles, a dedication to the students they interact with and a drive to go above and beyond are the common threads among the 11 award recipients of the Catholic Education Awards.

Last night (Thursday May 15) staff from across Catholic Education South Australia's (CESA) 101 schools, along with dignitaries and special guests, gathered in Adelaide to celebrate the recipients of the annual Catholic Education Awards.

Now in its fourth year the Awards – which are celebrated as part of Catholic Education Week (May 12 – 18 2025) - recognise the outstanding achievements and contributions of staff and volunteers ranging in categories from Leadership Excellence to Early Career Teacher and Religious Educator to Volunteer.

Among those honoured in the awards are:

- **Isabelle Roberts**, Loreto College, Marryatville recognised for her *Leadership Excellence* through a career spanning 46 years in Catholic education.
- **Nicholas Hauschild**, from Saint Ignatius' College, Athelstone and Norwood who is the recipient of the *Laudato Si'* Award. Nicholas demonstrates an unwavering commitment to the principle of Caring for our Common Home spearheading numerous initiatives to enhance the College's sustainability and environmental responsibility.
- **Joel Head**, an *Education Support Officer*, from St Mark's College, Port Pirie who has been instrumental in the development of the College's Agricultural Centre which has built strong relationships with the agricultural communities and opened up future pathway opportunities for many students.

- **Natasha Smith** an *Experienced Teacher* at Sacred Heart College, Somerton Park who has had a transformative impact on the Mathematics faculty delivering exceptional results in the classroom and providing invaluable mentorship to early career staff.
- **Erin Coppins**, who as *Religious Education Teacher* at Tenison Woods Catholic School, Richmond has found innovative ways through storytelling, music, song and hands on materials to engage her students in daily prayer and the Religious Education curriculum.
- **Leslie Nesbitt (Mr)**, a *Volunteer* with over 20 years of service to Kildare College, Holden Hill who has made an indelible impact on the school community through the establishment of a fully equipped laboratory and tissue culture room. Under his guidance, students have acquired scientific skills and ecological knowledge well beyond what is typically offered at a secondary school level.

A new category has been introduced this year to recognise the outstanding work in Inclusive Education. The recipient of this inaugural award was **Compass Catholic Community**, a school for 17-25 year olds in Davoren Park, which is committed to helping young people complete their education within an inclusive, supportive and caring environment.

**St Raphael's School, Parkside** was recognised for its innovative *Reading Revolution* program which offers a contemporary approach to early literacy by bridging the gap between early learning and primary education and proactively engaging with families, educators, local kindergartens and the wider community.

The nominees were across eleven award categories:

- Religious Education Teacher
- Early Career Teacher (less than five years) Primary and Secondary
- Experienced Teacher (more than six years) Primary and Secondary
- Education Support
- Volunteer
- Innovative Program
- Leadership Excellence
- Laudato Si'
- Inclusive Education

The awards ceremony was held at Hilton Adelaide on May 15, 2025, attended by The Honourable Blair Boyer MP, Minister for Education, Training and Skills; Jacinta Collins, Executive Director for the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC); Dr Neil McGoran, Executive Director for Catholic Education SA; and John Neate, Chair of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS), following a Mass at St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, Wakefield Street led by Archbishop Patrick O'Regan.

Jess Adamson, a well-known face on South Australian television screens, was Host for the evening and the event was proudly sponsored by NGS Super, Australian Catholic University, Association of Principals of Catholic Secondary Schools, SA Catholic Primary Principals Association, Catholic School Parents SA, Secondary Schools Deputy Principals & Senior Leaders Association, Switch Education and The Southern Cross.

Commenting on the Awards, **Dr Neil McGoran, Executive Director, CESA** said:

"The Catholic Education Awards event is an integral part of our calendar created to celebrate all that is good about what we do, and why we do it. The Awards provide us with the opportunity to properly recognise the contribution and commitment of our most exceptional people.

"This year, we acknowledge and thank just a few of those many thousands of exceptional people who, every day, come together in faith communities to support each other and to give life to the mission of Catholic education.

"This year we received many nominations from across South Australia within the eleven award categories. I wish to acknowledge each nominee for their tireless commitment and significant contribution to Catholic Education in South Australia."

**Nichii Mardon, Director, Catholic Education Diocese of Port Pirie** added:

"Across all categories, the calibre of entries this year has been exceptionally high, reflecting the dedication and passion of the leaders, educators and volunteers teaching in Catholic schools across South Australia. It is unmistakable that their daily contributions have a profound impact on school communities, as they consistently go above and beyond in their roles. Recognising and celebrating these educators' achievements is crucial, as they play such a pivotal role in the lives of our students.

“With the unwavering support of these committed educators, I am confident that our students are poised to graduate as the best versions of themselves, offering hope for a bright future.”

**A full list of Awardees follows – detailed profiles of the awardees, interviews and photographs are available on request.**

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### ***11 Award Recipients:***

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<b>Religious Education Teacher</b>	<b>ERIN COPPINS</b>
	Tenison Woods Catholic School, Richmond
<b>Early Career Teacher (Primary)</b>	<b>NICOLE MANNING</b>
	Caritas College, Port Augusta
<b>Early Career Teacher (Secondary)</b>	<b>DANIEL OVERELLE</b>
	Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College, Enfield
<b>Experienced Teacher (Primary)</b>	<b>JENNA WARREN</b>
	Samaritan College, Whyalla
<b>Experienced Teacher (Secondary)</b>	<b>NATASHA SMITH</b>
	Sacred Heart College, Somerton Park
<b>Volunteer</b>	<b>LESLIE NESBITT (MR)</b>
	Kildare College, Holden Hill
<b>Education Support</b>	<b>JOEL HEAD</b>
	St Mark's College, Port Pirie
<b>Innovative Program</b>	<b>THE READING REVOLUTION PROGRAM</b>
	St Raphael's School, Parkside
<b>Laudato Si</b>	<b>NICHOLAS HAUSCHILD</b>

Saint Ignatius' College, Athelstone

**Leadership Excellence**

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**ISABELLE ROBERTS**

Loreto College, Marryatville

**Inclusive Education**

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**COMPASS CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**

Compass Catholic Community, Davoren Park