

On Friday, November 26, St Alipius Parish School community blessed and commissioned a significant window that has been placed at the heart of our school - in the Mercy Wing.

The concept for the window emerged after a significant donation made to our community by a past pupil of the St Alipius Boys' School who just asked that we do something that would help us to always remember the boys he went to school with. We sat with that for a while and the plan for a window spoke strongly to us. A window that would give voice to the pain of the past and be a beacon of hope for the future.

We were blessed to be able to commission Janusz and Magda Kuzbicki to bring life to a simple sketch in the form of the stunning artwork that now inspires our community.

In this year when we recognise two hundred years of Catholic Education in Australia I am proud to say that Catholic Education is worth celebrating. It has been, and continues to be, a wonderful gift to tens of thousands of people. I have great cause to celebrate what Catholic Education has been for me.

And, I also acknowledge that it has been flawed.

When Catholic Education has lost its way we have forgotten who we serve. We have failed to see God's face in the vulnerable, the poor, the ones on the margins, the children. We have forgotten to sit with the powerless and be their voice.

We have chosen power and control over self agency, rules and regulations over creating a sense of belonging, following scripts over purposeful learning. We have chosen fear over love.

*Irish poet John O'Donohue...it takes an awful lot of living with the powerless to really understand what it is like to be powerless, to have your voice, thoughts, ideas and concerns count for very little. We, who have been given much, whose voices can be heard, have a great duty and responsibility to make our voices heard with absolute integrity for those who are powerless.*

When we, in Catholic Education, have got it right - we have attended closely to the Gospel. Jesus did, after all, spend an awful lot of his time living with the powerless - he showed us how to listen, how to acknowledge, how to believe, how to forgive - how to love.

The window we blessed was created in acknowledgement of the past and out of a deep commitment to the future.

This window was created out of love and out of hope.

It was created for every member of our community past, present and future - every family - every staff member...

Most importantly, every single child. This window is for you... to remind you that your voice matters in making the world a better place. A place of love.

And that is the truth that will set you free.

*Eileen Rice - Principal*