



# ST STANISLAUS' COLLEGE

## Celebrating 150 years 1867 - 2017

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From The Head Of College

### Media Statement

In 2017 this College celebrates its Sesquicentenary, 150 years since it was established by the first Bishop of Bathurst, Matthew Quinn.

A number of events will take place:

1. Sesquicentenary Liturgy and Blessing and Opening of Historical Display (21<sup>st</sup> January)
2. Opening of the School Year Mass and Open Day (19<sup>th</sup> February)
3. Sesquicentenary Dinner (11<sup>th</sup> November)

However, in celebrating the good that has occurred since 1867, there are parts of our history which we must acknowledge and apologise for.

When the allegations of sexual abuse against former staff members were first raised nine years ago, the College, under the leadership of the Headmaster, John Edwards, following clear instructions from the Congregation of the Mission (Vincentians), assisted all Police investigations and supported due legal process. This response has continued under my leadership as current Head of College. The College also provided all requested documentation for the Royal Commission in 2013.

The abuse of children and young people was a failure of the College Mission which seeks to open their eyes, minds and hearts to God's loving presence in their lives.

Fr Greg Brett CM, Provincial of the Oceania Province of the Community of the Mission (Vincentians) and I agree that it is timely and important to make a formal public apology to all former students who have suffered as well as their families and friends because of the actions of a few.

*"As Provincial during this past year and before that, as Acting Provincial, I have had the opportunity to meet with former students who have been abused by Vincentians during their time at St Stanislaus College. I have found their stories harrowing and my heart has gone out to them. I have been deeply affected by their story and sense of profound loss in their lives. On each occasion my first response has been compassion. I have offered my deep and heartfelt apology. I continue to do so." Fr Gregory Brett CM, Provincial Oceania.*

The planned public outreach will be in the spirit of a reconciliatory gesture. Our hope and intention is that it may offer one step in the healing process for all victims. We will endeavour to ensure that they and their families as well as current and former members of this College community and the public feel welcome to join us for this. We will provide due notice and communicate widely early in the new school year to ensure that all who wish to attend are able to do so.

We intend to issue a public invitation to victims who may wish to be part of the planning process to make contact so that their thoughts and suggestions can be considered.

We intend to hold this event in Term 2 of our Sesquicentenary year.

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