

## **Supporting Catholic Youth in our Parish**

As Principal of Aquinas College, I wish to indicate our support for relocating a new church and parish centre to the Pyes Pa site.

Traditionally, many Catholic schools both in New Zealand and internationally have the benefit of a Catholic church within their close vicinity. This provides a sacred space for large-scale schoolwide Masses and holy celebrations, a place of comfort and peace when needed. It provides an opportunity for our youth to feel comfortable in their church environment, to develop their spirituality, to make the church an important part of their lives.

The Board of Trustees has incorporated in their 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, a Goal to “foster strong parish/school relationships”. Within this Goal, we have identified strategies to further enhance the relationship between the college and feeder parishes. To have a church and parish centre within our area would provide the opportunity to strengthen a commitment to parish life.

*“We call our students and challenge them to live by, and within our frame of reference which has God and others, not me, at its centre. This is the vision of Catholic education; past, present and future. Human beings are only fully alive when they love the Lord God with all their hearts, all their minds, all their strength and love their neighbour as themselves. It is with this vision of Head, Hand and Heart, a vision rooted in the life of Christ that we move into the future.” Aquinas College Strategic Plan 2015-2020*

Community is an important factor at Aquinas College. Our Touchstones of Service, Scholarship, Family, Prayer, Truth and Joy maintain and strengthen the connection between our Catholic schools and parishes.

We acknowledge the history and sacredness of St Mary Immaculate church. The commitment from the many Catholic families of our area to maintain this holy place is to be commended. Our commitment for a new Catholic church and parish centre at Pyes Pa would be to provide a greater opportunity for our youth to grow into young Catholic men and women of strong faith.



Ray Scott  
PRINCIPAL