The Federal Budget!

Michelle Green, says, “The Federal Budget has confirmed that the Government is committed to continuing the present funding arrangements for non-government schools until 2017-18 so schools can have some confidence in their financial planning, at least until then.”

The Minister for Education, Mr Pyne, has said the Government is providing ‘record recurrent school funding of $64.5 billion over four years’ which is largely the ‘Gonski’ follow-up commitments. Budget papers show that funding for Government schools is to increase from $4.8 billion in 2013-14 to $6.9 billion in 2017-18 and for non-government schools from $8.8 billion in 2013-14 to $11.3 billion in 2017-18.

And after that? To quote the Budget Papers: State Governments have primary responsibility for running and funding of public hospitals and schools. The extent of existing Commonwealth funding to public hospitals and schools blurs these accountabilities and is unaffordable. The Government is addressing this unsustainable situation by moving to more realistic funding arrangements. In this Budget the Government is adopting sensible indexation arrangements for schools from 2018. Budget Overview, p 7.

The ‘sensible indexation arrangement’ is set out in Budget Paper 3 and it states that for the purpose of the Budget, an estimated CPI of 2.5 per cent has been used in formulating the 2018 student funding estimate. If this figure is used, it is likely to cause a significant shortfall in funding.

Michelle Green has said in a media release that she hopes that this will be recognised when the Commonwealth negotiates with states and territories on school funding and the White Papers covering Federation reform and Australia’s tax system are developed.

The negotiations are driven by the Government’s determination to make State and Territory Governments largely responsible for school (and hospital) funding. As the Budget papers say, ‘states, territories and school systems are responsible for the operation and management of their schools, including determining the distribution of funding to their schools; and that the Federal Government does not run schools or hospitals, so it is not best placed to drive efficiency’.

The Treasurer, Mr Hockey, has repeated this forcibly in media interviews and briefings saying that ‘over the next 18 months we will work with State and Territory Governments to strengthen the Federation and ensure that the overlap between the layers of Government is reduced or removed’.

Michelle Green will be making representations to the Federal and State Governments, and offering to work with them, saying we do not want the negotiations to stretch out to once again cause delays in funding for the non-government sector.

As Ms Green has often stated in the media: Too often in recent years certainty of school funding has been a mirage.

Acknowledgement: Independent Schools Victoria CEO Michelle Green
175 years of Lutheran Schooling—1839 to 2014.

The first Lutheran School opened in Australia in 1839. Over the next 60 years, Lutheran Schools continued to develop so that by the turn of the century, there were about 50 schools in South Australia, approximately 15 in Western Victoria and southern New South Wales as well as several in Queensland. The pattern seemed to be that wherever a Lutheran congregation was established, a school would follow soon after.

Lutherans historically placed a great emphasis on education. This was, in large part, due to Martin Luther’s influence and commitment to translating the Bible into the common language of the day, and presupposed widespread literacy among the people. This literacy depended heavily on the education usually provided by church schools. To Luther, it was critical that people could read and understand the Bible for themselves.

By the middle of the Nineteenth Century only half of the children in the colony of Australia were receiving an education. At this time, schools were housed in poor quality buildings, little or no formal training for teachers and excessive corporal punishment was used regularly. In 1848, education operated under two separate boards; the National Schools Board and the Denominational Schools Board (the students in Years 5 & 6 from St John’s and GLC would have experienced these different school systems at Sovereign Hill with the Red Hill National School and St Peter’s Denominational School). By 1862 these school boards were merged into one, the Common Board of Education.

Much heated debate continued at this time concerning school funding and, believe it or not, whether education should actually be provided for everyone at all!

By the time the Education Act of 1872 was passed in Victoria, the Government now assumed all responsibility for providing education to all children for free. It was compulsory and secular.

State schooling now became the

The College Administration team, with great excitement and eagerness, moved into the new Admin building during the first week of the Term One holidays. It was certainly a relief to be able to move into a bigger space with areas for the different Administration responsibilities, a staff room and a dedicated student reception area.

The old administration building will undergo a facelift and minor renovation during the Term Two break in preparation for 2015 to accommodate the two prep classes the College has planned.

The Resource (Library) construction continues to be ‘on track’ and should be completed by the first weekend of the second term vacation allowing us to move into these facilities during that time.

The College has also received advice that we have been successful in gain notional approval for a Block Grant Authority grant to construct some further classrooms during 2015 to cater for the growth in classes required from the beginning of 2016.

Exciting times ahead!
predominant system of schooling in Victoria. Private schooling did continue though and still specialised in higher education where it provided an alternative for the privileged or the religious.

During these years, where the church persisted in providing their own schooling, it needed to be driven by strong commitment necessitating their own financial support and relied completely for patronage from people willing to pay for schooling that was available free elsewhere. Needless to say, it became more and more difficult to sustain.

By the end of the 19th Century there were about fifty Lutheran schools in South Australia, fifteen in western Victoria and southern New South Wales and several in Queensland. By the time of the Great War in 1914 there were no Lutheran schools in Queensland and anti-German sentiment in the south caused the closure of all but a couple of secondary colleges in South Australia.

This period was followed by low Lutheran School activity during the depression years and between the wars. However, in the second half of the twentieth century, Government assistance for private education renewed and resulted in a gradual resurgence of independent schools, contributing to the Lutheran School boom in Australia during the last thirty years of the twentieth century. By the year 2000, there were 78 Lutheran Schools at primary and secondary level, employing in excess of 1,500 teachers and were educating over 25,000 students.

Today, there are over 39,000 students in 86 Lutheran schools and 57 Early Childhood Centres across Australia with 3,199 teaching staff.


On Saturday, June 21st Geelong Lutheran College and St John’s Lutheran School will celebrate 175 years of Lutheran Schooling in Australia with a celebration dinner to be held at The Pier in Geelong. Of course, this year also marks the 160th year since the first Lutheran School opened in Grovedale in 1854 as part of St Pauls’ Lutheran Church in Heyers Rd, Grovedale.

The Executive Director of Lutheran Education in Australia, Mr Stephen Rudolph, will be guest speaker at this event as we bring together members of the Lutheran community in Geelong, staff of our Lutheran Schools and Kindergartens and parents of these communities to commemorate this significant milestone of Lutheran Schooling.

Mr Rudolph will give us an overview of the history of Lutheran Schooling and give us some sense of what it means to be a part of the Lutheran school system. Mr Andrew Pobjoy, an ex-student of St John’s, (Yr 6 in the early 90’s) will provide background music during the evening.

The Lutheran churches are holding a combined worship service of thanks and celebration at the College on Sunday morning from 9:30 am. You are most welcome to join us.

On 19th and 20th June, the College will present our inaugural drama production of ‘James and the Giant Peach’ at Courthouse ARTS Theatre. Students from Years 7 to 12 have been rehearsing for the performance since Term One and have demonstrated a variety of hidden talents in the process. In this musical play, Roald Dahl’s classic story is faithfully re-told by James (Paddy Pretlove) and the insect characters – Miss Spider (Lotti Moroney), Old-Green-Grasshopper (Kasnya Turner), Centipede (Chantelle Langdon), Ladybird (Isabella Tognon) and Earthworm (Lotti Moroney).

The audience is welcomed to Central Park, New York, where James and his friends are living in a giant peach stone, having travelled across the Atlantic to escape James’s cruel aunts, Sponge (Harry Brown) and Spiker (Harrison Oldaker). A tour guide (Rebecca Welsh) brings a party of tourists to see this major attraction, and James and his friends tell the story of how they came to live in New York.

The epic journey of the peach is acted out with live action, singing, dancing, puppetry and storytelling. This is an entertaining and enjoyable story for audience members of all ages.

Michelle Vendy, Drama Teacher
Ascension Day

In the December of 2009, my wife Libby and I had the privilege of spending 4 weeks in the occupied territories of Palestine staying at the International Centre of Bethlehem, which is part of the Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem.

On the 21st December (yes, we were in Bethlehem for Christmas!) we visited the Church of the Ascension. All that remains however, of the several churches built to celebrate the Ascension is a small octagonal structure on a property that is now part of a mosque. Plain and unadorned, the Dome of the Ascension stands in a walled compound on the top of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. The location is just north of the Church of Pater Noster — which is built over a cave that the first Christians used as a more secluded place to commemorate the Ascension.

The last church on the site was captured by the Muslim sultan Saladin when he defeated the Crusaders in 1187. Since Muslims also believe in the Ascension of Jesus it was converted into a mosque. An unusual feature of the tiny building is that it contains what has been traditionally regarded as the last impression of Jesus’ right foot on earth before he ascended into heaven.

The first church on the Mount of Olives was funded by Poemenia, a wealthy Roman woman who was a member of the imperial family around AD 380. Known as the Imbomon (Greek for “on the hill”), it was a rotunda, open to the sky, surrounded by circular porticos and arches. In the centre of the stone floor was a rock on which it was believed Jesus’ final footprints could be seen in the dust. By 670 the original structure had been destroyed and rebuilt but the English pilgrim Arculf reported to his countrymen that the footprints were still to be seen in the dust of its floor.

In the 12th century the Crusaders rebuilt an octagonal chapel, set within a fortified monastery. From this strategic position on the crest of the Mount of Olives, the Crusaders controlled the road between Jericho and Jerusalem. The footprints were still venerated, but now they were reported to be carved into the face of the rock.

Part of this rock remains today in the Dome of the Ascension. They took the section bearing the left footprint to the Al-Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount, where it was placed behind the pulpit there.

The Muslims also walled in the open spaces between the columns and put a dome over the opening in the roof. The ornately carved capitals on top of the columns are well preserved. The designs depict foliage and fabulous animals.

The various Christian communities are permitted to hold celebrations here on their Ascension feast days. To the right of the entrance to the Dome of the Ascension is a small mosque built in 1620. Two other churches on the Mount of Olives commemorate the Ascension. At the summit is the Russian Orthodox Church of the Ascension, dating from the late 19th century. Its tall tower is one of Jerusalem’s most prominent landmarks. On the north side is the German Lutheran Church of the Ascension (also known as Augusta Victoria), dating from the early 20th century.

Acts 1:8-9 and Luke 24:44-53 give us the account of Jesus being ‘taken up before their very eyes’ from the Mount of Olives. Many people are surprised that the disciples were ‘filled with joy’ when Jesus left them, but there was great comfort for the disciples in the meaning of the ascension for them. First of all, he promised to remain with them in Spirit — that he would be with them in worship: when they gather together in prayer; in the Lord’s supper; and just to accompany them.

Secondly, the ascension of Jesus was a strong and powerful event giving proof to the disciples that their going to heaven and their resurrection was vividly real, it was definitely for them and they would be reunited with him when the time came.

To me, this blessed assurance of ascending into heaven to be with him and with those who have gone before us is the most exciting and wonderful comfort of all.

Reference: http://www.seetheholyland.net/dome-of-the-ascension/

CONTACT
GLC: 03 5264 1038
or visit www.glc.vic.edu.au
St John’s: 03 5221 5221
or visit www.stjohns.vic.edu.au