FRANCISCAN SCHOOLS AUSTRALIA

October 2026 Edition eNewsletter franschools.au

800 Years Later: The Call Continues...

As Franciscan schools and communities mark the 800th anniversary of his death, St Francis' life continues to ask something of us. We are continuously invited to consider how we will carry the charism forward.

"***Rebuild my Church***," - the call Francis heard at San Damiano became a mission extending far beyond the repair of stone walls. Today, it invites us to renew the living Church through our relationships, our choices and our willingness to make the Gospel visible every day.

Franciscan spirituality gives this continuing work a practical shape. In a culture that often measures worth through possessions, achievement and influence, nurturing simplicity and humility can help us recognise what matters. They invite us to practise gratitude, share resources and ensure that belonging never depends on what someone owns or achieves.

Francis's recognition of all creation as family challenges us to care for the earth as our common home. His embrace of those pushed aside asks whose voices are missing from our classrooms, communities and decisions. His devotion to Christ, both human and divine, calls us to honour each person's dignity and remain present when life is painful.

For educators, these commitments take shape in ordinary moments: welcoming an isolated student, responding to conflict with restorative dialogue, making time for prayer, or helping young people connect learning with service. Across Franciscan communities, the same spirit grows through hospitality, listening and faithful companionship.



Mark Stone
FSA Admin

Contemplation sustains this work. Joy gives it warmth. Peace building asks us to keep reaching across differences, especially when reconciliation is difficult.

This anniversary invites each of us to take up the work anew. Every act of compassion, every repaired relationship and every courageous choice for justice, helps rebuild the Church.

Eight hundred years on, the call still reaches us.
What will we rebuild together?



FSA offers Franciscan Formation

Twilights, Spirituality Days, Workshops & Retreats

www.franschools.au/spirituality/formation/

FSA accompanies each community to design a spiritual formation experience for staff that is unique and genuinely reflects your school context.

Scan or CLICK HERE

Book for 2027 staff formation experiences by October 31 for 25% discount

FSA Creative Arts Challenge:

Judging begins...

Judging is now underway in the 2026 FSA Creative Arts Challenge, with entries offering thoughtful and imaginative responses to the Peace Prayer of St Francis.

Marking the 800th anniversary of Francis' death, the challenge invited students and staff to choose an idea from the prayer and interpret it through a creative medium. The resulting works explore what it means to bring love, forgiveness, hope, light and joy into our world today.

From paintings, drawings and video to mosaics and literary work, the submissions reveal a rich variety of approaches. Individual artists and school groups have drawn on their own experiences, concerns and hopes to express a Franciscan vision for today.

The judging panel of Franciscan Friars and Sisters and the FSA National Executive Team is considering creativity, design, originality and the effectiveness of each work's Franciscan message. Accompanying artists' statements provide insight into the inspiration and intention behind the entries.



Our thanks go to every entrant and to the teachers and school communities who encouraged their participation. Their contributions invite us all to consider how Francis' prayer can take shape in our own lives.

We look forward to celebrating the award recipients and sharing these creative expressions of peace with the wider FSA community.

FSA in Schools

Franciscan charism flowed last month at **Nazareth College, Melbourne. FSA** was with the 120 staff facilitating their Spirituality day all about St Francis in this special Jubilee year.

Thanks to Ange and Patrick for adding their specialised Franciscan wisdom, educational experience and energy with Alison. Staff loved the day exploring prayer, presence, place and peace through the eyes of Francis at St Paul's Retreat Centre.



















At an awesome staff day with **St Anthony's School, Launceston**, **FSA** connected with charism and explored some of the values embraced by the Franciscan Family globally.

We encountered Clare together through reading the stories written in the Tavola of St. Clare and Eucharist was celebrated in glorious sunshine

Thanks to Fr Bernie for facilitating and the staff were amazing - engaged and so supportive of one another.

Deep Listening, Truth telling and Joy Filled Fraternity at the Archdiocesan of Brisbane Reconciliation Dinner last month.

It was wonderful for **FSA** to host a table with the MFIC Sisters who have strong, ministry connections with Aboriginal communities over decades. We were honoured to join with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders and families for the launch of the new 2026-2029 Reconciliation Action Plan











FSA was present at **Padua College, Kedron** in October to participate in their Feast of St Francis Mass and witness the Investiture of 2027 Student Leaders.

In his homily Fr Stephen challenged the students and staff to answer the question that could be asked in any school, "What will I give to Padua?"

This question could be asked of any school in the FSA Family. "What will I give back?"

The life of St Francis and the prophet Micah both have the answer: Do justice. Love kindness. Walk humbly with your God.





2027 FSA PILGRIMAGE

14 Days - Mon 20 Sept. - Sat 2 Oct 2027*



Franciscan Spiritual Journey - Rome & Assisi

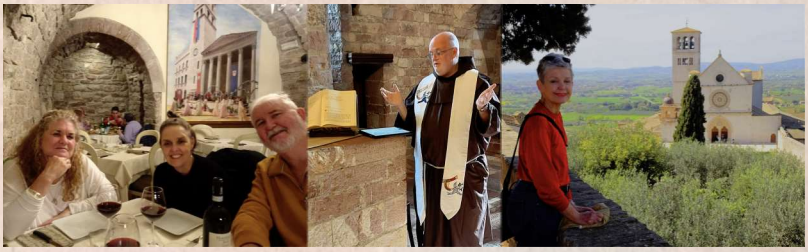
Franciscan Schools Australia invites everyone who is attracted to the evangelical beauty of the Poverello to join us in Rome and Assisi on the 2027 ***Heartbeat and Footsteps*** pilgrimage.



*This transformative experience of spiritual and personal growth invites pilgrims to immerse themselves in the story of Jesus, the Church and the Franciscan tradition. Rich encounters of the early, universal and Franciscan Church unfold in Rome, while in Grecciio and Assisi pilgrims are drawn deeper into the heartbeat of the Franciscan charism. Experience joy, fraternity and goodness on this **FSA Heartbeat and Footsteps** pilgrimage.*

Staff of FSA member schools may apply for a Pilgrimage Scholarship*

*Up to $3000 AUD available to staff who have served in their school community for 12 months or more



Inclusive | Single Room

Land content only

$6,100 AUD*

Add airfare | payment plan

***based on 25 pilgrims**

*** proposed dates**

Total package will include:

- Pre pilgrimage formation experiences x3 (online)
- Franciscan pilgrimage book and prayer kit
- FSA Pilgrim Companion booklet
- 3 qualified, Australian Franciscan pilgrimage leaders – Fr Stephen Bliss OFM, Fr Paul Rout OFM & FSA Animator Alison Stone
- Italian speaking pilgrimage companion
- meals included **most** days; always breakfast
- all entry fees, gratuities, gifts and tips
- accommodation in 3-star religious houses *Casas*
- 5-star coach transfer to sanctuaries & sites
- deep reflection, daily Eucharist, shared learning
- time to enjoy the Italian culture and environs
- continued fraternal connections in Australia

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TO EXPRESS YOUR INTEREST IN THIS SPECIAL EVENT

Register