



25 November 2009

Dear supporters of Chaplaincy in state schools

On Saturday, 20 November 2009 the Prime Minister, Mr Rudd, announced his strong support for Chaplaincy by extending National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP) funding to December 2011. The National School Chaplaincy Association (NSCA) is thrilled about Mr Rudd's public declaration in support for the work Chaplains are doing.

Mr Rudd confirmed that the Government would continue with the NSCP by injecting a further \$42.8 million into the program. This additional investment will allow over 2, 500 government and non-government schools across the country that presently employ chaplains under the NSCP, to continue to do so for another two years. (The first batch of chaplains' contracts issued under the NSCP was due to end at the end of this year).

In extending funding for the Program, the Prime Minister and the Deputy PM Julia Gillard both recognised the long term value and significant contribution of this program in which school chaplains offer pastoral care to school communities across the country. The Prime Minister recently stated in Parliament that 'chaplains do a fantastic job and in many school communities ... they are actually providing the glue which keeps school communities going.'

Prior to Saturday's announcement, talks around the continuation of the NSCP gained momentum and the Australian community united towards Chaplaincy, making their voices heard and supporting the valuable long term impact the program is making within their schools and the wider community.

You, as an important stakeholder, assisted us to raise the profile of Chaplaincy across the Country by passionately sharing your stories on how chaplains helped to build the sense of community within your school, how they were pro-active and non-judgmental pastoral care providers who supported the school ethos and assisted with the integration of potentially 'at risk' students, including recent immigrants and Aboriginal students.

Thank you for uniting towards this worthy cause that impacts on the lives of thousands of students, their families and the school communities within Australia - be it within your school, at public gatherings such as 'Chaplatons' or passionately vocalising your support in Parliamentary Debates!

All of these actions culminated in the extension of the program, confirming that it is a winning formula.

In the months ahead, the NSCA and its member organisations along with Government, will be seeking to engage with you to examine the best way to support future pastoral care initiatives.

Let us go into the Season of Celebration with joy.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stanley Jeyaraj'.

Stanley Jeyaraj
National Convenor: National School Chaplaincy Association



NSCA Member organisations: ACCESS Ministries(VIC); GENR8(NSW); Scripture Union (QLD); Scripture Union (TAS); Scripture Union (ACT); SMG(SA) and YouthCARE (WA).