

St. Declan's Parish

24th March 2017

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Dear Parishioner/Weekly Giving Envelope Contributor,

As you know, we were recently advised by the Archdiocese that effective 1 January 2017 people who make contributions through the Weekly Giving Envelope would no longer be entitled to claim a Tax Deduction in their Annual Tax Return. We would like to take some time to clarify this situation, the changes to the tax deductibility apply to the School Building Fund portion of the Weekly Giving Envelope and are due to changes in the NSW Education Act. The real issue at stake is the Government Funding provided to the systemic Catholic Schools. The Catholic Education Office and the Archbishop, being very conscious of the importance of the Government Funding, believe that the decision, based on legal advice obtained by them, had to be made to protect the funding. The decision is fundamentally to do with the use of funds rebated back to Parishes from School Building Fund donations and has arisen following the publicised position of a school at Greenacre and also brings NSW into line with other dioceses across the Country. Whilst not all Parishes receive rebates from the CEO, though a good number do, the change in legislation prompted the CEO and the Archbishop to seek legal advice, following which they made the decision to protect the Government funding.

One of the positives to come from this decision is that the Parish no longer has a financial liability for the School as all Principal and Interest payments will now be taken over by the CEO, as will insurance costs of the School. It also, as it happens, reduces the complexity for the Parish of managing Parish and School Building funds.

The Parish very much appreciates your financial support in both the collections taken at Sunday Masses and of course with the many other requests for financial support that occur including the 3 CWF appeals per year, the Winter and Christmas St Vincent de Paul appeals and the like.

As a reminder, the contributions made to the Parish from the 1st collection at Sunday Masses are forwarded to the Church Chancery for the living expenses of the clergy of the Archdiocese beginning with priests of our own parish. Any surplus will be used to assist priests in smaller parishes.

The 2nd collection funds including the funds from the envelope contributions are used to pay the running costs of our Parish, costs such as power, water rates, printing and stationery, Church and Sacramental supplies, parish staff wages and superannuation, repairs and maintenance of the Church, Presbytery and the Brothers' House (formerly The Convent).

You are encouraged to continue using the Weekly Giving Envelopes for contributions to the 2nd collection. You may, of course, choose to reduce your contribution to reflect the impact of the loss of the tax deduction of your contribution.

Thank you for your continuing support of our Parish.



Fr Stephen