

PRESS RELEASE

Journey to the Heart is an enthralling book celebrating 50 years of special education and life at Mater Dei. The children on the front cover draw you into their lives and teach you to draw meaning from disability through community.

These healing and heart warming stories are told through the personal experiences of Good Samaritan Sisters, principals, parents, ex-students, teachers and teachers' assistants, social educators, nurses, doctors, researchers, bus drivers and Board members. They tell personal stories of the sisters, the pride of parents, the fight for legislation in Australia to mention a few.

The students at Mater Dei are such a strong witness to a society that too often applauds intelligence, productivity and power. They show us how to 'be' in a world, which emphasises doing; how to forgive and how to accept our own weaknesses and to enjoy life with all our limitations. In this book, Mater Dei becomes the storyteller on behalf of its children. It invites you to make a journey to your own heart and to learn from the children.

Here are some quotes:

'We would like the word "special" removed from our school name so that our school is called Mater Dei School because we don't want to be called special'.

'Tell me I'm beautiful. I don't hear that very often. If you make a mistake, please admit it. It is nice to know I am not alone'.

Journey to the Heart should demonstrate to society, the churches and to education systems that they sustain a tremendous void when they ignore and deny the immeasurable contributions that people with disabilities can make if they are allowed to participate in the social and spiritual development of our world.

Jeanie Heiningers