

# Mater Christi

## History

The Catholic Order of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan was founded in Sydney in 1857 following a decision of Australia's first Catholic Archbishop, John Bede Polding, to establish a new congregation of religious women, the first to be founded on Australian soil. From the very beginning, commitment to women and the education of young people &ndash; girls in particular &ndash; has been at the heart of the congregation's mission. They opened their first school in 1861 and today own and operate ten schools in Australia and one school in Japan.

Throughout their history, the contemporary challenges and needs of the church and society have determined the activities of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan. Mater Christi College was established in its present location overlooking Belgrave in 1963. The College is situated in a green mountain landscape in the Dandenong Ranges, its superb location a catalyst for environmental education projects and for developing students' awareness of the beauty of creation and the need for all to treasure the earth's resources.

Though originally conceived as a small school, rapid population growth in Melbourne's eastern suburbs and its reputation for excellence has seen Mater Christi grow far beyond that envisioned by its founders. Today the College enrolment exceeds 900 students and includes students for several Asia-Pacific countries.

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