



MT ST MICHAEL'S COLLEGE

UNDER THE CARE OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY

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Media advisory/photo opportunity

MSM knows 'every family needs a farmer'

Recent rain may have pushed the impact of drought on rural Australia from the minds of many, but Year 8 students at Mt St Michael's College at Ashgrove know better.

They've been gathering up supplies that will be used for 'care packages' distributed to farming families in need, west of the Dividing Range.

On Friday (1 August), Downs and West Appeal Coordinator Sr Christine Henry will visit the students to accept their gifts.

Sr Christine's visit coincides with the college's Mary Aikenhead Day, commemorating the founder of the Sisters of Charity who was devoted to social justice.

Sr Christine said the care packages would be a Godsend for recipients.

"It is comforting for the people on the land to know that they aren't alone but are strongly supported by their neighbours in the cities," said Sr Christine.

"The drought and its implications are far from over. At least one in four farming families has hit the wall and is talking about life after farming. This decision doesn't come easy, especially when the farms have been in the family name for up to four generations. Each farm is the farming family home: it's their livelihood; it is where their children have been raised and where they always return to at the end of the day.

"Tens of thousands of seasonal workers, who've relied on harvests for their livelihood, are without jobs.

"Disbelief, despair and depression are widespread.

"Acts like this, from young women at Mt St Michael's College, helps give hope."

Year 8 teacher Yvette McAlister said her students had embraced the challenge to help.

"Even though family budgets are stretched, it's wonderful to see parents instil in their daughters the value of giving to others without expectation of something in return," Mrs McAlister said.



The Downs and West Drought Appeal team makes fortnightly visits to families and small country towns affected by the drought.

Since May last year, 800 household hampers and four truckloads of stock feed have been among the offerings distributed.

MEDIA for more information about the handover and guest talk by Sr Christine at Mt St Michael's College please phone Yvette McAlister on 38584222.

For more information about the Downs and West Appeal, contact Sr Christine direct on 3891 9431.

Issued by Heather Grant on behalf of Mt St Michael's College: 0412 742 593