TO: The Principal
All Schools

FROM: Debra Sayce
Director of Religious Education

SUBJECT: PALMS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

DATE: 12 August 2015

**Palms Australia** started in Sydney in 1956 as the Paulian Association. Groups formed in around 100 communities to identify local issues, reflect on values and take appropriate action to address social inequality and assist people in need.

After identifying that similar issues needed to be addressed globally, in 1961, the program was extended to communities overseas which request the placement of volunteers to assist develop health, education and other facilities. More recently Palms volunteers have been “opening our hands to the world” in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, including communities in Tanzania, East Timor, Papua New Guinea and indigenous Australia.

**Palms** believe that all people contribute to their own development and can contribute to the development of others only when invited to do so. Sustainable development derives from the coordinated and negotiated plans of the local community. **Palms** view partnerships with local communities as part of an on-going and dynamic process of interaction, dialogue and negotiation within a work environment.

**Palms** supports development by preparing qualified and experienced professionals to build the capacity of individuals and institutions within a community. With the main objective being to bring about the transfer of skills and knowledge to communities, Palms volunteers work side by side with the local people to develop the local skills and knowledge necessary for the communities to become self-reliant. All communities served by Palms seek a future without dependence on money and handouts.

Through the global volunteer program, **Palms** can place people with a community who requests particular expertise to help develop the skills of local people. Servicing overseas or in Australia can assist to build the capacity of a local community and advance a sustainable future. Participant’s growth will be even greater.

Please distribute this information and the attachment to staff and the general school community. The Palms website also has useful information for individuals, couples or families who might wish to volunteer [http://www.palms.org.au](http://www.palms.org.au)