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Members newsletter

February 2015 Issue 20



A word from the CEO



Who really runs your super fund? Perhaps the answer could one day be you!

As we start planning for our annual call for member and employer nominations to our Board of Directors, I thought it was a good opportunity to outline some of the more appealing and unique features of the Catholic Super board.

The governance of Catholic Super is quite different from other funds. We are an industry fund that is essentially owned by its members. Our Board of Directors, responsible for the fund through the oversight of the fund management, is made up of five member representatives and five employer representatives.

Directors are elected by our members and employers. In contrast, most other funds have a process where board members are appointed by shareholders or, in the case of industry funds, board members can be selected by unions or employer groups.

The role of the Board is to ensure that Catholic Super is operated and managed in the best interests of members in accordance with its governing rules and superannuation legislation.

Many people have the impression that you need to have extensive qualifications to become a Director. To join the Catholic Super Board, the only pre-requisite is that you are a Catholic Super member or employer. You are not required to have previous experience as a Director. In fact, joining the Board is an excellent opportunity to gain Director experience, because successful candidates are provided with comprehensive professional development and training so they have good governance skills relating to the duties required of a board member. Directors also have access to technical experts for advice, to ensure all decisions are made in the best interests of members.

Moreover, board members receive remuneration for their involvement; and all costs associated with training, insurance and travel are also covered.

The Catholic Super Board has been strongly recognised and lauded as part of its independent review process, which is conducted every three years. The Board is assessed to determine how effectively it is working and executing its responsibilities. In 2014, an independent consultant found that the Catholic Super Board was exemplary:

“The dominant culture of this Board is underpinned by strong values aligned with the ethos of the Catholic Faith. The Board operates with clarity around its purpose and commitment to do the best in a responsible manner for the people it serves.”

– Jackie Knight,
Independent Board Review, 2014

Every year there is an election for one member and one employer representative. Nominations for 2015 open later in the year. If you or someone you know is the type of person that would like to contribute to the direction of your super fund, as well as gain some valuable professional experience, I would invite you to submit a nomination.

You’ll read about each nominee in future editions of this newsletter. Take the time to read about each nominee and make sure you vote for your preferred candidate when the election is held later this year. It’s important that as many members and employers as possible have their say as to who will help set the future of your fund.

Frank Pegan,
CEO, Catholic Super



To vote for your member representative you will need to make sure Catholic Super has your email address.

2014 in review

Investment update, February 2015



By Garrie Lette,
Chief Investment Officer

2014 saw a continuation of the generally favourable investment returns recorded since the low point reached in the immediate aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis in 2009, even if returns did not reach the stellar levels recorded in some of the intervening years. For the 2014 calendar year, our Balanced Option delivered a very solid 8.6% for superannuation members and 9.8% for pension members.

Shares and property generally outperformed cash and fixed interest, so our more return-seeking options (Aggressive, Moderately Aggressive) achieved higher returns and vice versa for our more conservative options.

Although overall returns on our Managed Choice Options were very pleasing, markets faced a number of interesting and surprising developments:

- The US economy strengthened through the year but overall economic growth globally, although reasonable, was below the level expected by most observers and below the level achieved through the years prior to the GFC. In particular, large parts of Europe continue to struggle and economies of key developing countries have softened. Even China recorded its lowest rate of growth for a couple of decades although it remained a key contributor to overall global economic growth and a lower rate of growth is to be expected given that its economy is now much larger.

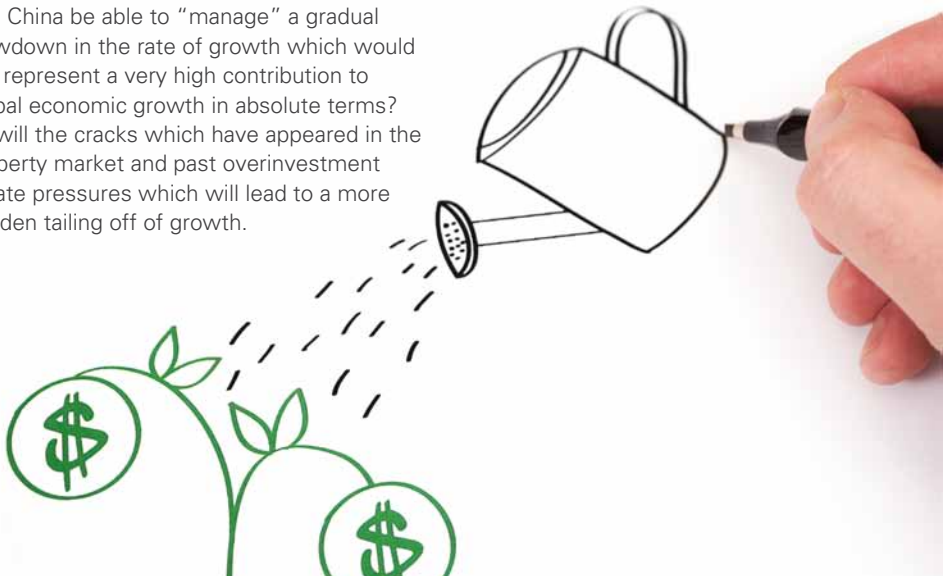
- There was a sharp sell-off in equity and credit markets from mid-September to mid-October, not that occasional sell-offs in an uptrending market are unusual.
- Confounding virtually all predictions, long maturity bond rates fell, even following the end of the US Federal Reserve Bank's so-called quantitative easing program in October.
- Prices for a number of commodities fell, including iron ore and coal, key commodities for Australia. Most spectacularly, the price of oil fell by around 50% over the second half of the year, again confounding virtually all predictions.
- In Australia, the economy was softer as the mining investment boom began to recede and commodity prices fell. The rest of the economy has not yet been able to build up enough steam to offset these factors. Through September/October, the Australian dollar fell sharply against the US\$ however, and this should assist the domestic economy over time, even though the decline against other currencies was more muted.

Outlook for 2015

As we enter 2015, amongst the key issues facing investors are:

- Can the global economy continue on at least a reasonable growth path over coming years? Most observers think that the answer is Yes, but the falls in bond rates and commodity prices seen in 2014 create concern that something more fundamental is amiss.
- How will markets react when the US Fed raises cash rates, now generally expected to occur from around the middle of this year?
- Can Europe pull itself out of its economic stagnation and avoid a plunge into widespread deflation? Indeed, can the break-up of the Eurozone be avoided? At the time of writing, the European Central Bank appears set to announce further measures to support economies of the region.
- Will China be able to “manage” a gradual slowdown in the rate of growth which would still represent a very high contribution to global economic growth in absolute terms? Or will the cracks which have appeared in the property market and past overinvestment create pressures which will lead to a more sudden tailing off of growth.

Of course, investment markets are always afflicted by various worries. At Catholic Super, we believe that the best approach is to focus on the fundamentals and the medium to long term, and maintain well-diversified portfolios. Given the historically low bond returns now available, and the less attractive valuations in equity markets and some alternative asset classes for that matter, we believe that returns will be harder to come by over the next, say, 5 years than has been the case over the last 5 years. For this reason, we reduced our long term investment objectives in 2014. The investment objective for our Balanced Option is now to achieve returns exceeding the increase in the Consumer Price Index by 3% pa over rolling 10 year periods (previously 3.5% pa). We expect to achieve this objective although naturally there will be volatility along the way.



New administration platform for Catholic Super

At Catholic Super, our focus is always on our members and employers and the way we can best support their needs through customer service.

From 1 April 2015, Mercer will provide a new administration platform for Catholic Super.

This partnership will see some changes, such as enhancements to technology that will ultimately benefit members with more services, better convenience and enhanced security.

Catholic Super CEO Frank Pegan said Mercer is an innovative administration partner that will help Catholic Super drive growth and build on its member and employer experience.

"We are very proud of our 44 year history providing excellent service and achieving impressive long term performance and growth. Our partnership with Mercer builds upon our capabilities to best support our future growth plans," he said.

So what does this mean for you?

The partnership will see better security features and more efficient service for members. However, we need to allow time for the transition of member data and transaction information. This will mean some disruptions to our services. For example, our online service Member Online will be unavailable at times during April 2015. You can still take actions such as investment switching or changing personal details – but this will need to be done using a paper form.

When the transition is complete, Member Online will have a new look, better features and each member will receive a new PIN to access the service.

Just like your banking service, you will be able to change and set your own four-digit access code rather than undergoing a full security check when making a phone enquiry or using online services. You will get access to what you need faster and in a more secure way.

We will also have a new postal address. You'll see all our new details on our future correspondence, and any mail sent to the current address will be redirected in the short term.

For any queries about the changes, please phone our Service Centre on 1300 655 002 and one of our Superannuation Specialists will be available to help you.

Pilgrimage of a lifetime

A Catholic Super Member Story



Ask Dr Bob Dixon who he would recommend embark on a pilgrim through France and Spain to Santiago de Compostela and his answer is simple:

Everybody.

In 2008, Dr Dixon, a Catholic Super member since the late 1970s, began walking from Le Puy-en-Velay, one of four traditional starting places for the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage in France, to arrive at St Jean Pied de Port at the foot of the Pyrenees just over a month later.

He walked for 740km, staying in local pilgrim hostels overnight. He was alone, though he made a number of lifelong friends along the way. He says for him, and many others he encountered, the experience was life-changing.

Next year he plans to complete the journey from St Jean to Santiago in north-west Spain – another 800km – this time with his wife, Catherine, at his side. And he can't wait.

"It was one of the most valuable experiences of my life. It was more than spiritual. It was certainly physically challenging, it was socially rewarding in meeting so many people, it was excellent practice for my French," he said.

Having spent 18 years as a teacher in Catholic schools and in the Melbourne Catholic Education Office, Dr Dixon is now the Director of the Pastoral Research Office for the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and an Honorary Professor at Australian Catholic University.

He undertook the first part of his pilgrimage just after his 58th birthday.

"I needed time for reflection. I needed to be away from work; I needed to be away from the events of every day. I could have done a retreat in one place for a month, but instead I decided to walk for a month. I didn't know what it would be like to walk 700 or 800 kilometres," he explained.

On Day One, arriving in Le Puy, he attended Mass at the cathedral and was amazed at the number of fellow pilgrims.

"At the end of Mass every morning, the presiding priest calls forth the pilgrims for that day and he gives them a blessing and off they go. And I expected that when I stood up on September 23rd in 2008 that maybe there would be me and two or three others. Well I was astonished when 35 people stood up and went out the front for their blessing," he said.

Among them were Europeans, Americans and Australians. As so often happens with pilgrims, Dr Dixon began to form close bonds with walkers from all different backgrounds.

"People of all backgrounds, religious or not, Catholic or not, soon found themselves referring to each other and to themselves as pilgrims – even if they weren't on an explicitly religious quest," Dr Dixon said.

Pilgrimage of a lifetime



"It's an ancient practice. The Bishop of Le Puy did the pilgrimage in the year 950 or thereabouts, over 1000 years ago. Of course pilgrims at that time had to walk back. These days pilgrims catch a plane or a train home. This Bishop, when he got back, built an amazing church on the top of a very pointy hill to commemorate his pilgrimage and it's still there today."

He said while there was no specific need to train beforehand, it helped to have a good level of fitness before walking an average of 25km a day.

"The first couple of days were very difficult because there was a lot of climbing and sometimes the track was very rocky and broken and quite difficult to negotiate," he said.

Still, walking through the beautiful French countryside was a "wonderful" experience.

"The French people are very kind, very friendly to pilgrims. The fact that you're walking through countryside 95 per cent of the time means that you're constantly encountering farm animals. You encounter fresh food markets and French rural cooking, lovely villages and beautiful churches," he said.

"You just feel this amazing sense of contentment."

Have you thought about taking a pilgrimage to a place of personal cultural or religious significance?

Perhaps you've already done so – we would love to hear what you thought, or see your favourite travel shot.

Please email us at info@csf.com.au

Thinking about making travel plans? A pilgrimage could provide personal fulfilment and an unforgettable experience.

It's no secret that travel is one of the top items on any retiree's bucket list. It is one of the most frequently discussed aspirations for our clients of Catholic Financial Services, the financial planning arm of Catholic Super. But many are increasingly seeking a deeper, more meaningful experience when they travel.

For those with an interest in spirituality and history, the idea of making the pilgrimage of a lifetime is persuasive. A journey to explore the incredible landmarks of cultural and religious significance across Europe or the Holy Land can bring unmatched personal satisfaction and spiritual awakening.

Harvest Pilgrimages, an Australian company, has specialised in Catholic pilgrimage tours and worldwide Church encounters for the past 26 years.

Harvest offers 11 different all-inclusive tours, including a trip to the Holy Land, where pilgrims can experience a spiritual insight into the life of Jesus; a journey through Portugal, Spain and France for the Visitations of Mary tour; or an exploration of the sacred Road to Compostela as part of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage.

The latter pilgrimage is particularly growing in popularity.



The Camino, or The Way of St James, is more than 1000 years old and was one of the most important Christian pilgrimage destinations in medieval times, after Jerusalem and Rome. It is now enjoying a renewed interest, perhaps in part due to the recent Hollywood film The Way, featuring Martin Sheen, in which the lead character takes his own personal journey down the pilgrim's road into Spain.

Peter Calopedos, General Manager of Harvest Pilgrimages describes the experience of pilgrimage as 'life changing' for most pilgrims.

"We see when pilgrims return, their personal joy out of the experiences they've had, from the various sacred sites they have visited, from the stories they've been told whilst on pilgrimage brings the whole faith perspective into reality for them," he explained.

"We often hear particularly from people who have travelled through the Holy Land, that the scriptures and the Gospel have come to life for them and have taken on a new meaning."

With a nod to the obvious shared values between Catholic Super and Harvest Pilgrimages, Peter announced an exclusive discount for Catholic Super members who book a 2015 pilgrimage.

"We are pleased to offer Catholic Super members a special discount of 5% off the pilgrimage price if they book with Harvest by 31 March 2015, simply quote your Catholic Super member number at the time of booking" Peter said.

Frank Pegan, CEO of Catholic Super, said one of the most rewarding aspects of working in super was to be able to help people realise their retirement dreams.

Book a pilgrimage by
31 March 2015
and access the exclusive
Catholic Super
member special 5% discount
Visit us at
harvestpilgrims.com



"Whatever the dream, whether it is a pilgrimage or something else, we want to help our members achieve it using the money they have worked hard for in the lead up to their retirement," he said.

"Our team of qualified financial planners at Catholic Financial Services offers advice in your best interest – they earn a salary, not commissions. They work with our members to create a personal plan to help them meet their financial goals."

For more information about Catholic Financial Services, go to **csf.com.au/financial-advice**

To book a pilgrimage or to find out more about the pilgrimages on offer, call Harvest on their toll free number **1800 819 156**, email them at **harvest@pilgrimage.net.au** or visit their website – **harvestpilgrims.com**.

New Darwin office now open



Alan Tate
1300 655 002
atate@csf.com.au

Members and employers of Catholic Super in the Northern Territory now have a local on the ground to provide superannuation and financial advice.

Catholic Super, a national fund, has recently opened its first office in Darwin and appointed Senior Superannuation Specialist and Financial Adviser, Alan Tate.

Alan has more than 30 years experience in both financial planning and establishing businesses in regional and remote areas. And he calls Darwin home, having spent much of the past 10 years living in the Top End.

"I think Catholic Super is doing a fantastic job by actually having someone on the ground here in the Territory, who can go out to the workplace and provide the same level of service

that members would get if they were in Sydney or Melbourne," he said.

"It's so important in the complex area of superannuation that members, no matter who they are, have the opportunity to have a meeting face to face and be able to talk to someone who can help them solve their superannuation problem."

"In all the time I've been in the industry, I would say that Catholic Super is one of the most considerate super funds. They really care about their members. They not only say it, but they actually do it."

Boost your superannuation



We have a new animation about 3 ways to boost your super for retirement.

A small change could set up your super for the future – super can be complicated, but Catholic Super is here to help.

Watch our animation at our YouTube channel
www.youtube.com/catholicsuperonline

LIMITED TIME LOAN OFFERS FOR CATHOLIC SUPER MEMBERS, FAMILY & FRIENDS



We've teamed up with Transcomm to offer fantastic loan rates exclusively to Catholic Super members and their family and friends until 28 February 2015.

Car loans

6.99% [^] p.a.

Comparison rate **7.18%** ^{*} p.a.

- Loan amounts up to \$100,000 (minimum \$10,000[^])
- Choice of loan terms up to 7 years
- Fast approvals & pre-approvals
- Repayments to suit – Monthly/Weekly/Fortnightly
- Unlimited free extra repayments
- No penalties for early payout
- No account service fees
- Low set up cost of \$133

[^] for cars up to 4 years old

Personal loans

10.40% [^] p.a.

Comparison rate **10.58%** ^{*} p.a.

- Borrow up to \$50,000[^] (minimum \$5,000)
- Choice of loan terms up to 7 years
- Repayments to suit – Monthly/Weekly/Fortnightly
- Unlimited free extra repayments
- No penalties for early payout
- No account service fees
- Fast approvals
- Low set up cost

[^] some loans may require security

GO TO: CSF.COM.AU/SPECIAL-OFFERS OR CONTACT: 1800 013 042

*Comparison rate based on \$30,000 loan over 5 years. Warning: This comparison rate is true only for the examples given and may not include all fees and charges. Different terms, fees or other loan amounts might result in a different comparison rate. For new loans only. Approval is subject to our lending conditions. Fees and charges may apply. Credit is provided by Transcomm Credit Co-operative Limited t/as Transcomm Credit Union ABN 54 087 651 750 Australian Credit Licence Number 245 606 99 King Street, Melbourne Vic. 3000 Telephone: 03 9629 4484 Fax: 03 9629 4130 Email: enquire@transcomm.com.au or loans.dept@transcomm.com.au All applications for credit subject to Transcomm's credit assessment criteria. These rates are indicative as at 3rd November 2014 and are subject to change without notice. This offer expires 28th February 2015.

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