Dear Parents, Students, Staff and Friends of the College,

Welcome back to another year at the College. I also welcome new students in Year 7, who begin their journey through secondary school at Good Samaritan Catholic College. I trust that everyone had a refreshing holiday and is ready to approach the year with enthusiasm and dedication.

This year we have a number of new staff members. We are fortunate to have such a talented group of people joining the teaching ranks of the College. Our new staff are:

Mrs Peterson (Curriculum Co-ordinator), Mrs Sayadi (Year 11 Chisholm Co-ordinator, English), Mr Vyas (Mathematics, Assistant Co-ordinator), Mrs Kennedy (Italian), Mr Fitzpatrick (TAS), Mr Horner (Science), Mrs Pallister (HSIE), Mrs Brown (TAS), Mr Lozelle (Librarian), Mrs Armen (RE, English, Art), Ms Samardizic (HSIE) and Mr Duong (Mathematics).

Each year the College has a theme upon which we focus as we continue our journey. This year our theme is adapted from a theme that Caritas Australia has adopted. It is also significant that these sentiments are those of Archbishop Oscar Romero, who was assassinated 25 years ago. Our theme is “Aspire not to have more but to be more”... This is certainly a challenge for our total community. We often look to what we wish to possess and not consider that which we aspire to be.

The theme will be confronting for all students. They will be challenged to be the best they can be in all areas of their lives and also in their approach to others. This is certainly relevant to everyone in our community.

As all would be aware the first students from Good Samaritan Catholic College sat for the HSC 2004. We were very impressed with the results that were achieved by many students. Our leading student was Vi Nguyen, who achieved a University Admission Index (UAI) of 97.1. Vi worked consistently for this result and is certainly worthy of praise for her efforts. Along with Vi there were two other students Andrew Bittman and Duy Tran, who received a UAI over 90. Well done!

Congratulations also to Nadine Barnes who received a Scholarship to ACU to undertake a degree in Education. This is certainly a wonderful opportunity for a dedicated student.

Overall our students can be proud of their efforts. The College achieved 13 mentions on the Order of Merit List. Our students were above state average in seventeen of the subjects for which the College presented. This is a most impressive effort and reflects in no small way the efforts of our students and talented, hardworking teaching staff.

I congratulate all students who performed to their potential in the HSC and encourage our present students to do likewise.

Our Year Ten results were also suitably impressive. The students performed well in each of the subjects for which they presented. The following table reflects the performance of the College in each of the Core subjects at School Certificate level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage of Students in Band 4 5 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>70.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>47.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>66.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian History</td>
<td>59.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Geography</td>
<td>66.80</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In the main students who continue to work diligently will always perform well.

This Newsletter includes the College Annual Development Plan for 2005. This plan is drawn from the Strategic Management Plan 2004-2008. I encourage parents to be familiar with this plan as these are the priorities for the College throughout 2005.

This year our Opening Mass will be held at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Mount Pritchard. The Mass will begin at 10.45 am on Friday 18th February.

I take this opportunity to invite parents to join us in this celebration. We will be presenting our school leaders with their badges during the Mass.

Next Wednesday is Ash Wednesday which begins the season of Lent. Lent is a time of preparation and reflection as we journey towards the new life of Easter. Lent is a transformation of death into new life. By observing the 40 days of Lent the individual initiates Jesus’ withdrawal into the desert for forty days.

St Paul gives us some direction for Lent in the following passage:

Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other..... Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Colossians 3:12-14

I look forward to this year with enthusiasm.

God Bless.

John Lo Cascio
Principal
The first meeting for Confirmation this year is on Tuesday 8th February at 7.30 pm (after the 7pm Mass at Good Shepherd Church) Twentieth Avenue Hoxton Park. This is the last chance to register. (This meeting is for parents only).

Fr Peter Fitzgerald

This year the College will involve parents in parent groups. The groups are:

- Parent Pastoral Care Group
- Parent Curriculum Group
- Parent Maintenance Group
- Parent Function Support/Fundraising Group

Any support in any of these groups would be most appreciated. The initial meetings will be conducted at the College at 7 pm on 15/02/05.

Homework is a fact of school life for both students and their parents. It is an essential way of reinforcing learning that is undertaken in the classroom. Homework is quite challenging at high school level and can often be the cause of a great deal of stress for all concerned. The College is keen to offer support in this area to students. Each Monday and Tuesday there will be assistance available with homework and assignments. Hopefully, this will go some way towards reducing stress levels around the home. Mr Colin Zuman will supervise the students and offer assistance when required. Other teachers will also offer assistance subject to availability and demand.

Homework assistance is open to all students in the College at no cost and we hope that students will take advantage of this opportunity to improve the standard of their homework and assessment tasks.

Homework group will begin next week 9th February.

Time: 3 pm to 4 pm every Monday & Tuesday (starting next Monday).

Place: College Library

Please note that for a student to attend:
- They must have a particular task to work on.
- They should not turn up without anything specific to do.
- Parents/carers should notify Mr Zuman in writing that a student has permission to attend. A note in the College Diary is sufficient.
- The student’s diary will be signed by the supervision teacher to confirm attendance.

Limited access to computers is available if required.

We hope that students will take advantage of this opportunity to enhance their learning.

This week has seen quite a serious traffic problem at the College as parents endeavour to pick up students at the conclusion of the school day. It has been difficult to maintain safety and to enable buses to enter the College as traffic banks up as parents attempt to pick up their sons and daughters.

Parents are asked to come to the College from 3.10 pm rather than 2.55 pm in order to alleviate the problem. Another solution would be to meet your child outside the College. If we are unable to improve traffic flow it may be necessary to stop vehicle access to the College between 2.50 pm and 3.30 pm, which is a situation we would prefer to avoid.

If there are any problems with book packs which were distributed on 2nd February, please call Endeavour Education on Tele: 9771 3133. Do not call the school, as the school does not have access to any of Endeavour's paperwork.
CANTEN

The canteen offers a variety of hot foods and sandwiches, rolls and salad boxes are prepared each day. Students are able to purchase food at recess and lunch.

Enclosed separately with this Newsletter is the latest Canteen Menu.

Next Tuesday is Shrove Tuesday. Pancakes will be available from the Canteen at recess.

2 Pancakes with Maple Syrup - $2.50

Also, next Wednesday is Ash Wednesday. Please note: there will be no meat products sold at the canteen on this day.

BLAZER MEASURING

All students at Good Samaritan Catholic College will be required to have a Blazer by the beginning of Term 2. Students will begin Term 2 (26th April) in full winter uniform.

Next Tuesday 15 February 2005 the College will be holding Blazer Fittings for all Year 7 students and placing the 2005 order for Blazers.

Students in Year’s 8, 9 and 10 will need to check their Blazer size and if a new Blazer is required, there will be a time made available for these students to be fitted on the Tuesday and for the necessary sizes to be included in the order.

The current prices are:

Boys Blazer Youth $138.00 Size 10 - 17
Mens $145.00 Size 5 - 10
Girls Blazer $132.00

Also, if any Year 7 student already has a Blazer, please let the office know so that a Blazer is not automatically ordered.

Parents will be required to pay for the Blazer before they can be collected in the last week of Term 1.

Any current student wishing to sell their Blazer through the College Second-hand Uniform Shop will need to leave their Blazer at the Uniform Shop between 7.30 to 8.30 am Tuesday 8th February. (Blazers left after this date will be too late for resale!). The Blazer needs to be dry cleaned with name and selling price clearly marked. The College retains 10% of the sale.

LOST PROPERTY

The ‘Lost Property’ box located in the student foyer has been moved to the Uniform Shop (Open 7.30 am to 8.30 am daily and Tuesday lunch)
After a year of fervent studying, pretending to study and downright not studying; the highs and lows of the HSC came complete with emotional and nervous breakdowns, late and sleepless nights and gallons upon gallons of coffee and caffeine-based substances. “Stress” seems to be the common denominator of the challenging and gruelling HSC experience, and having come out of it seemingly unscathed - except for the permanent caffeine addiction - it is with surprising nostalgia that I reflect upon the HSC experience, in particular the art-making process of the Visual Arts class, in my final act as a student of Good Samaritan.

Having spent my entire school career doing visual arts, I have found that learning art, unlike most other subjects, is not a particularly structured or systematic process. Indeed, it is particularly in the HSC year that many of my fellow art students, much to the vexation of Ms Molloy, have sat in class, staring into space, chatting to friends, or aimlessly scribbling on scrap pieces of paper. I myself, am known to have sat through double lessons in complete blankness and non productiveness; “waiting for inspiration”, as I put it. However, those moments of creative bemusement were always short lived and followed by truly inspiring art making. In retrospect, it was the space-staring, chatting and aimless scribbling that filled the void between each breakthrough and each moment of pure artistic genius. What results are pieces of artwork which not only portray what the artist intended, but also tell the story of their conception within the layers of paint, the precision of print and the vibrant melding of colours. While a year doesn’t seem much time to create something truly inspiring, it is the adrenalin provided by the additional stresses of the rest of the HSC, which creates just enough room for the introspective reflection and creative anarchy that precedes an artist masterpiece.

However, if I have learnt something more important than “embracing the void” it is that good art must challenge not only its audience, but also its artist. Having spent the year, including lunch at times, study breaks and after school, in the art room, I watched my peers as they experienced those moments of blankness and creativeness. More importantly though, I watched as they stood helplessly before their progressive works and found themselves frustrated, angered, saddened and seemingly defeated by what they created. Indeed, having chosen to create an artwork from a challenging part of my life, it was many-a-time when I found myself powerlessly confronted by my own work, what it was and what it could become. It is these moments that we realise what art is really about. Although good art may be about painting a fruit bowl with the right colours, sketching a life-like portrait, or sculpting the perfect human form; great art is about being challenged by what you are making, overcoming those obstacles and creating a work that not only portrays a message to your audience, but more, importantly, has taught you something. For me, my work, its process and result, taught me to not only accept what I am and where I come from, but to embrace my origins and be proud of how it has shaped who I am today. Whether it is the emotions generated during the art making process, or simply putting a yellow star on a red banner, it is moments when the artist is challenged by their own work when great art is created.

Although honoured with a spot in the prestigious 2005 Art Express Exhibition, there is still much I need to learn about art making, both the conceptual and technical aspects of practice. However, I have learnt that art is not a formula to memorise, dates to remember, or texts to deconstruct. It doesn’t demand the calculated mind of a mathematician, the objectivity of an historian, or the compositional discipline of an essayist. Art is simply creating something that first and foremost, has meaning to the artist; only then can others derive meaning. So, my advice for HSC art students is: Don’t waste time, procrastinate now, so that you can be challenged later and create great art in the end.

**Art Express Exhibition**

at

**Art Gallery of NSW**

Art Gallery Road

The Domain

February - April 2005