Dear Parents and Friends of the College,

Over the last two weeks a number of parents have returned the Parent Survey related to the College Strategic Management Plan. Many responses have been positive which affirms the directions that have been taken in many areas of College life. Other responses have been constructively critical of some of the College practices and directions which has been most useful as we consider planning and future directions. I am most grateful to those parents who took the time to respond to the surveys as the information is invaluable. I am, however, somewhat disappointed at the limited number of responses received from parents. Over 500 surveys were distributed with less than 20% being returned. I would encourage parents who have not returned their survey responses to do so over the coming week as this will allow us to consider many points of view for the direction of the College towards 2012.

During Week Two and Three of this term teachers from Good Samaritan and Good Shepherd Primary have been visiting classes at each of the schools. The purpose of these visits is to continue to develop the transition program which began in 2006. It is hoped that with increased understanding and knowledge of what occurs in the K-12 continuum teachers will be able to improve student learning. This will also lead to a smooth transition from Kindergarten to Year 12 for all students.

This week I had the pleasure of presenting Gold Awards to twelve very deserving students. I acknowledge these young men and women for their commitment to various aspects to College life and encourage them to continue with their positive attitude and approach to their education. Congratulations to Tiana Romeo, Joseph Ragusa, Jennifer Awad, Danielle Froio, Elizabeth Camilleri, Luen Samonte, Caroline Said, Erika Brocklehurst, Johann Kamalaneson, Jacinta Vella, Leah Brown and Andrea Brocklehurst.

On Monday at the College Assembly I spoke to the students about the right of all students to experience success. The emphasis of the address was placed upon the importance of respecting the individual right and the right of others to learn. This right was also stressed at the Year 12 2008 Assessment Evening. Every student has the right and responsibility to learn and at no time should interrupt or disturb the learning of others.

Over the next two weeks the students in Years 7-9 will sit for yearly examinations. This is the first time that students in the junior years have undertaken a formal examination block. The College has adopted this approach for a number of reasons which we feel will be advantageous to all of our students. Firstly the need to study and revise has increased with the introduction of examinations. The incorporation of examinations prepares students for formal examinations both internal and external in future years. Examination consolidate understanding and provide constructive feedback for future learning. Finally examinations will allow students to develop positive habits that will benefit them in the future.
During Week 5 the College will begin ability testing of students from Year 7 to Year 9. The purpose of these tests is to enable the College to meet student needs by placing them in class groupings with students who exhibit similar ability and learning requirements. A letter will be sent to parents, containing more detail in relation to these tests, over the next week.

Over the past three weeks Year 12 have been continuing their Higher School Examinations and by all accounts they have been fairly pleased with their preparation and performance. From 12th to 15th November Year 10 will sit for their School Certificate. As with Year 12 I am sure the College community will join with me in wishing the Year 10 students all the best and I remind them that they will be in our prayers during this very important event.

Last week I received anonymous criticism from a parent that the College was not taking enough action against students who place, what the author referred to as “pornographic” photos, of themselves on internet sites such as Bebo, MySpace, Face book and so on. I assure parents that when the College is aware of the existence of such material we certainly take action to inform parents and to protect students. It is quite difficult to police every site and many of these are password protected which means that there is no external access. The College sees that the best people to police these sites are parents themselves, however, we certainly support parents in this action. In order to do this we have provided two opportunities this year to increase parents awareness of the internet and internet safety. The first was attended by 6 parents and the second was the NetAlert presentation at Clancy Catholic College last week. As a College we will continue to be aware of these sites, however, I would certainly implore parents to take an active role in their children’s internet use. Any parents who are concerned about internet safety should access the NetAlert site at: www.australia.gov.au/netalert

This week we celebrated All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day. These days are significant in the life of our Church as these people set examples to each of us as to how we should live our lives.

Let us Pray:
We praise you O God,
And we honour all your holy ones.
We ask the help of those men and women
Who struggled against evil and stood firm,
Who worked for justice and peace,
Who healed the sick and fed the hungry
We on earth and they in heaven,
Sing one song of praise
We in grace and they in glory
Form one communion in Christ, your Son
Make us, and all those we love,
Worthy to be called your saints
We ask this through Christ our Lord
Amen

At the end of Week 1 Ms Nolan informed me that she would not be returning to the College. We wish her well in the future.

God Bless,

Mr J Lo Cascio,
Principal

From the Assistant Principal

Staff Development Day
Monday 12th November will be a pupil free day. On this day the staff will be preparing the College’s next Strategic Management Plan for 2008-2012. The day will be an opportunity for the direction of the College over the next five years. Students in Year 10 will be required to attend school on this day as it is the first day of their School Certificate examinations. Buses will run as normal in the morning and afternoon.

Endeavour Book Orders 2008
Parents are reminded that these will be distributed to students within the next few weeks and will be due back to the College by Friday 7th December. Students in Years 8 and 10 have received confirmation of subjects for 2008 so that they will know which books to order. It is essential that these book orders are returned to the College by the due date.

Second-hand Text Book Sale
There will be an opportunity for students to sell and buy second-hand text books at lunchtime on Thursday 6th December 2007.

Students Rights and Responsibilities
Recently the College has undertaken a review of Students Rights and Responsibilities. Students and parents are reminded of Students Rights and Responsibilities as outlined in the College’s Student Management policy.

As a student:
• You have a right to a quality education.
• You have a responsibility to attend school, be punctual and prepared for classes and to complete set work to the best of your ability.
• You have a responsibility to allow others to work without distraction.
• You have a responsibility to listen to advice and follow directions.

As a College community all students have the obligation to respect the rights of others to have a quality education and understand the responsibilities associated with the right.

College Uniform
Parents are reminded that the Uniform Shop is open each morning from 7.30 until 8.25am and every second Tuesday afternoon for the purchase of uniform items. The Uniform Shop is currently selling the original style blouses for girls in Years 8, 9 and 10 for $5 each. As of 2008 female students in all years will be able to wear the new College blouse as worn by Year 7 in 2007.

Rick Grech, Acting Assistant Principal

Extra Ordinary Eucharistic Ministers Course

Just before the Year 11 students attended their residential Retreat in term 4, the College was offered the opportunity to send a number of our students to an Eucharistic Ministers course held at the Liturgy Office, Polding Centre in the city. The course gave our students an insight into the significance of the Eucharist for Catholics and it also enabled our students to appreciate how the giving and receiving of the Eucharist has developed and is placed within a very strong Christian historical context.

It was extremely pleasing to note that all of our students in the course were praised by Father Timothy Deeter, presenter and facilitator of the course, for their continual interaction with him and some of their profound responses to questions.

These students have demonstrated not only their Christian calling to ministry but have also openly demonstrated their commitment to their faith. I would like to congratulate the following students who have become the College Eucharistic Ministers to all Eucharist celebrations for the remainder of the year and into 2008.

Congratulations and well done to:

Reiko Aguilar     Elisa Gatto
Tiana Romeo      Maryann Wright
Jess Labuguen

Mr K Griffiths,
Religious Education Co-ordinator

Silver Award Recipients

Congratulations to the following students who received their Silver Award at this week’s Assembly.

Joanne Fedele
Joseph Ragusa x 2
Zoe Smith
Johann Kamalaneson x 3
Sami Rached
Tuan Vu
Alyssa Cook
Mary Villaverde
Jaqueline Da Silva
Erika Brocklehurst x 3
Irena Baltic
Gabrielle Estrada
Caroline Said
Andrea Brocklehurst x 3
Christopher Boissezon
Renee Cox
Leah Brown x 2
Jennifer Awad x 2
Sarah Spadaro x 2
Christopher Vella
Chantelle Monjo
Elizabeth Si x2
Stacey Sirol x2
Tina Pham
Kayla Arndell
Tim Morozoff
Meagan Drennan
Rowena Barreira
Ashleigh Pontifex
Annyas Badran
Jessica Bugeja
Jake Duncombe
Anthony Thepsombandith
Elizabeth Camilleri x 3
Danielle Froio x 3
Luen Samonte x 3

Year 7 Parent Survey Reminder

Parents of students in Year 7 who came to Good Samaritan from State schools are asked to ensure that they complete the survey mailed to them by the Catholic Education Office. This survey should be returned to the Catholic Education office in the reply paid envelope. Support in this venture would certainly be appreciated.

Congratulations
Andrew Estrada
who recently won the title of
Australian Wrestling Champion
National School Age Under 17 yrs
Cadet’s Category 79 Kg
Traineeship opportunities
Australian Training Company is currently recruiting for several traineeship positions in a wide range of occupations and locations across the greater Sydney metropolitan area. Traineeships include Business Administration (several), Information Technology, Retail, Sport and Recreation, Financial Services, Aquatic, Electro Technology, Warehousing and Distribution, Aged Care, Carpentry and Joinery, Electrical and Landscaping. Please see Mr Berry or visit the website at www.austrg.com.au for details.

New Internet Resources For Your Career

HSC Online has a careers resource that uses the familiar FAQ format in Beyond the HSC. There are links to several other good resources, much like the rest of the HSC Online site. Visit http://hsc.csu.edu.au/beyond/

Virtual Careers Expo is a new site that allows visitors to browse through exhibitions from 70 virtual exhibitors, download job details, research careers in various industries and is all free. Registration is required however Visit http://www.virtualcareersexpo.com to take the tour.

The trend for school leavers to enter gap year programs is becoming more widespread as students defer their place at university to travel, work and gain maturity before settling down to three or more years of further study.

Culture Care Au Pair is one such program offering 18 to 26 year olds an opportunity to live in the U.S. for a year, working as a live-in carer in a family setting. For more information please call on 1800 677 373 or from Sydney 02 9252 2977. Other programs include work as camp counselors in U.S. and Canadian vacation camps, or volunteering in several developing nations.

Mr Steve Berry
Careers Adviser

On Thursday 27th September Mrs Newhouse, Mrs Harper and the Year 11 Textiles & Design class set off to learn about Quality of Textiles in the textile industry at Big W Bella Vista.

It was an eye opener to see the corporate world and how it operates. Big W's headquarters has over 3,000 staff housed in its own world. The building encompassed its own bank, library where staff can complete courses, restaurant and its own Woolies supermarket for staff to do their food shopping. It was a bit like being in a Sci Fi movie as the building had covered walk ways and street lamps inside along the different corridors and the security was very high.

We were divided into 2 groups and spent equal time in the Design section which tested the finished garment on body forms and measured garments to ensure that sizing was correct and their were no manufacturing faults.

In the testing lab, tests and the equipment used were explained. The students cut holes in garments and weighed the fabric, calculated the yarns weight and checked it with what the manufacturer said. Nothing was left to chance. If the fabric or garments do not meet the standards required for quality control the findings are sent back to the manufacturer with a written report with recommendations. Thus if the manufacturer wants their garments sold and distributed through Big W stores then they must meet the industry standards and specifications.

Some comments from the students:
"It helped give an in depth idea of how the textiles industry works and what exactly is done. It was a good experience."

"Our excursion was a great learning curve for us all. We experienced different types of quality testing and how to correctly identify manufacturing faults and faulty designs. It was a good experience as it taught us what goes on behind the scenes of textile manufacturing. It cleared up any misunderstandings we had of the topic."

"The staff were very welcoming and helpful which made me feel comfortable."

"The staff showed us the things they do in their ordinary day of work, and we found it amazingly interesting."

"I found this day interesting and very useful for my understanding and knowledge of textiles."

Ms C Harper, T & D Teacher
This year was the thirtieth time the Australian Mathematics Competition for the Westpac Awards was held. This prestigious competition gives students around the world the opportunity to compete for cash prizes, medals and awards in recognition of mathematical performance. Students at Good Samaritan were nominated by their Mathematics teachers to take part based on their achievements in mathematics this year.

Last year, 20% of entrants from our school were awarded with either a Credit of Distinction Certificate, and this year 29% of participants achieved Credits and Distinctions, an improvement of 9%. Special congratulations to Dino Romeo of Year 12 who achieved a High Distinction as well as the Prudence Award for answering the highest number of consecutive questions correctly.

Mr Lo Cascio presented the top three performers in Grades 7 to 11 with their certificates at the School Assembly. Their names are listed below (in no particular order):
Year 7 – Trung Nguyen, Isabella Wu, Angeline Ho
Year 8 – Veronica Nguyen, Anthony Tomelic, Claudio Carrasco
Year 9 – Joel Trenear, Angelo Urso, Louise Doculara
Year 10 – Helen Said, Daniel Arcuri, Danielle Froio
Year 11 – Anthony Avati, Burt Bodagh, Nhi Tran

Congratulations to all students who were selected to participate in the competition.

Miss A Streeter
Mathematics Teacher

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**An Even Start – National Tuition Programme**

This information is relevant to parents of students who did not meet the benchmark in reading and/or writing and/or numeracy in ELLA and SNAP in 2007.

From 2008 students in Australian schools who are experiencing difficulty in reading, writing and numeracy may be eligible for support through **An Even Start – National Tuition Programme**. This programme will provide eligible students with funding for tuition in the area of weakness to the value of $700. Eligible students are those who did not meet the national benchmarks in reading, writing or numeracy in the Year 7 ELLA and SNAP tests in 2007.

Current advice suggests that the funding will be made available to families in the year following the initial testing, which means those students who did not meet benchmarks this year will be eligible for this funding in 2008. The information offered on the Department of Education, Science and Training website suggests that a letter will soon be sent to all parents whose child will be eligible for this funding in 2008. This will outline the process for registering a child and for accessing tutoring services. The information suggests that hiring a tutor will be at the parent’s discretion as long as the tutor meets specific standards set by the Department of Education, Science and Training who are administering the programme.

Further information is available for parents from the Department of Education, Science and Training Website:  www.anevenstart.dest.gov.au Phone: 1300 363 079

There are also a limited number of information pamphlets that are available from Miss Molloy here at the college.

Miss Cathy Molloy
Teaching and Learning Co-ordinator
Year 11 Retreat

On the 17th October Year 12 journeyed for a three day Retreat to Deer Park in Sydney’s National Park. We were split into two separate groups although came together as an entire grade various times on the retreat.

We began the retreat with a few games which allowed us to build trust amongst one another and give us a chance to get to know people in our groups. We then began to create our sacred space which grew across the 3 days and had symbols which represented different aspects of our lives and journey for the coming year. We later split into smaller groups for personal reflection and had discussions on themes for the College in 2008 which brought up different opinions we could reflect upon.

The first night we made banners for each house which is to represent our journey as a PC Group for Year 12. We later all came together as a Year and each wrote down things we wanted to be forgiven for and burnt them. This was followed by reconciliation amongst the Grade which gave each of us a chance to light a candle or place the sign of the cross on someone's forehead to ask for forgiveness or let them know how much they mean to us.

The second day was a time for us to reflect on the goals we wanted to achieve for the coming year. We were able to express our own personality by painting pictures that represent a side of us our peers may not see. We also wrote letters to ourselves on what we want out of Year 12 2008. That night Mass was celebrated by Brother Pat and this was a great opportunity to come together in the presence of God.

The last day was a chance for us to express what we like about each person in a written message and was a great way to bring everyone closer together. Although during the retreat we did many activities there were many opportunities for free time which allowed us to hang out with friends and also make new ones.

This Retreat was a great experience to connect with our inner selves, our friends and our God. We were able to learn more about each others’ personalities. Everyone of us was able to make a spiritual connection with our God and ourselves and allowed us to identify our own hopes, goals and dreams for the coming year. Although it was sad to leave such a peaceful environment with no stress or worries we are all looking forward to the challenges our final year at the College will bring.

On behalf of Year 12 we would like to thank all the staff who were present on the Retreat and took time away from their families to make this an experience we will never forget. We would like to take this opportunity to wish Anthony Endravian the best of luck as he starts a new journey at another school. May God watch over him this coming year.

Andrew El-Zakhem & Tiana Romeo

Parenting Corner

Dear Parents,

Following on from what I wrote last week on the FAMILY I’d like to add the following reflections based on the reading of SOUL MATES by Thomas Moore.

He writes about not separating our work and professional lives from family. He goes on to relate “how when he was a young boy his father would sometimes take him on a field trip with one of his classes – he taught plumbing in a trade school”. I’m sure my father saw these excursions as educational opportunities for me, but they were more than that. I came to know his persona as a professional man, and this made a profound impression on me.”

The kids who come to me also proudly tell me about visiting Dad’s or Mum’s workplaces and the bonding it helps create. I know I am always pleased to meet the families of our teachers at our BBQs at the beginning and end of each year and at other times when they just pop in; or as recently happened when a visiting politician singled out his daughter – a staff member – much to her embarrassment!

So bringing the family more into the life of the individual not only enriches the individual, but it may also help us regard with due complexity as well the varying roles family members take on!

So keep helping to create one of the most powerful forces in our lives – THE FAMILY.

God bless,

Sr Marj Carroll

Congratulations to Mitchell Mallia Year 10 who recently participated in the winning Under 17 years Australian Soccer Team in Singapore
CEO, Sydney
WHAT'S ON FOR PARENTS?

Learning Difficulties Coalition Seminar & AGM Behaviour Management
Practical hints for parents of infants, children and adolescents.
Discussion Seminar: Sat 10th November
AGM 1.30 pm Seminar 2.30 pm
Where: Lorimer Dods Theatre, Westmead
Children’s Hospital, Hawkesbury Road, Westmead.
Enquiries/Bookings Phone 9806 9960
Or email: -info@ldc.org.au

Celebrating Parent-School Partnership
Thursday 29th November, 7 to 10 pm
Catholic Education Office, 300 The River Road, Revesby.
Bring your school parent group along to:
Give thanks to parents who have made a substantial contribution to their school community.
Celebrate and share your achievements.
Hear about initiatives launched in 2007.
Do some forward planning for 2008 and hear from your Federation Executive Register with Sr Loreto McLeod by Fax 9772 7009 Or email: loreto.mcleod@ceo.syd.catholic.edu.au

Canteen
The College has been notified that as of Monday, 29th November 2007, Milk has increased in price by 10% and Flavoured Milk has increased by 11.5%. Price increases will need to be passed on as new stock is received this week. However, the Canteen has concerns that one item “Dare” flavoured milk will now retail at $3.40 per bottle. The Canteen tries to stock as wide a variety of choices for students as possible however, we are also mindful of the overall cost to students and families. We do not believe that at the moment “Dare” represents value for money and as such the Canteen will not be stocking this item in the future.

Mrs T Golubic
Canteen Manager

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If you have any free time the Canteen would welcome your help...