Dear Parents and Friends of the college

This week Year 10 students have been involved in various activities as they approach the conclusion of their compulsory schooling. The week has been organised to cover areas of importance to students leaving the college and those continuing onto Year 11. The activities included CPR training, Year 10 Retreat Day, The “All My Own Work” Program for Year 11, a drug awareness talk and a talk by the Police Youth Liaison Officer. The activities undoubtedly proved to be both informative and useful to the students and added to their understanding of the related areas. The week will conclude this evening with the Year 10 Thanksgiving Mass which will be followed by the Year 10 Dinner Dance on Wednesday, next week. I wish Year 10 all the best during this milestone in their lives and especially acknowledge the students who will be leaving Good Samaritan at the end of 2008.

Over the last two weeks, there has been an increased focus on leadership at the college. On Thursday evening of this week, a twilight meeting of the 2009 class leaders was conducted for elected leaders in Years 7-11. The purpose of the evening was to explore leadership in more detail and to decide who would represent each year group in the college SRC. The evening proved to be fruitful for the participants and enabled each to really reflect on their leadership roles and to set directions for 2009. I am sure the above experience will put these students in good stead, as they begin their leadership roles next year. I thank Mr Brooks, Mr Costin and the Pastoral Care Coordinators for their organization. I also thank the students for their willingness to accept leadership responsibility at Good Samaritan.

Last week, Year 9 also had the opportunity to focus on leadership through the Peer Support Program. The Peer Support Program offers leadership opportunities to our students, while giving support to the new Year 7 group. The student body of Year 9 was most impressive in their attitude and displayed a high level of maturity and conviction in their willingness to serving others. It was really gratifying to witness the involvement of the students and the passion with which they embraced this leadership opportunity. I thank the students for their involvement and Ms Walker and the teachers involved for their support of the students. A group of students will now be selected as peer support leaders in 2009.

Recently the college made a decision to use the PC Platform for computers which will be given to Yr 9 students next year. The computers are part of the Federal Government’s National Secondary Schools Computer Funding project. The decision to use the PC Platform was taken after a consultation process involving staff, students and parents. Mr Reyes has explained the process later in this newsletter.

Last week the final meeting of the Parent Consultation Committee was held for 2008. The meeting reviewed the achievements of the college in relation to the 2008 Annual Development Plan and sought parent responses to the approach taken by the college. At the conclusion of the meeting the members of the committee were given the opportunity to complete a survey, in relation
From the Principal

to the performance of the college. If any other parents wish to complete a survey these are available from the college or by going to the homepage of the college website www.goodsamitarian.nsw.edu.au.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Parent Consultation Committee for their support of the college and their willingness to offer their views at meetings. Thank you to Mr & Mrs Hobby, Mr & Mrs Duncombe, Mr & Mrs De Martin, Ms Tishler, Mr and Mrs Romeo, Mr Kamalaneson, Mr & Mrs Beazley, Mr & Mrs Towerton, Mrs Gatto and Mrs Cosgrove and Mr & Mrs Cassone.

I remind parents that the college Presentation Evening will be held on Monday December 8 at All Saints Performing Arts Centre. This evening provides our college with the opportunity to recognise excellence and to celebrate achievements. I extend an invitation to all parents and students and encourage all to attend to acknowledge success at Good Samaritan.

A reminder that final student reports for 2008 will be issued in the last week of school. The distribution of these reports will be accompanied by the parent/teacher/student interview day, held on December 17. I encourage all parents and students to attend the parent/teacher/student interviews so that success can be acknowledged and that areas for development can be addressed.

This week, we welcomed Mr Grech and Mr Griffiths back to the college after their long service leave. I thank Mrs Armen and Mr Taylor for teaching their classes in their absence. Next week, Mrs Naraj will begin her maternity leave for the remainder of this year and all of 2009. We wish Mrs Naraj and her husband Ivan, all the very best as they await the birth of their third child.

Last week I received notification of the outcome of Mr Griffiths’ and my contract renewals. I am pleased to announce that both processes were affirming and positive. As a result of successful contract renewals, Mr Griffiths and I have been offered further contracts for three and four years respectively.

This week we begin the season of Advent in the church year. This is a time of preparation in our lives as we await the birth of Christ. Often the lead up to Christmas can be focused on the material aspects of the feast. I encourage everyone to use the season of Advent to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas and to incorporate prayer into our lives.

God bless

Mr J Lo Cascio
Principal

From the Assistant Principal

Library Cards
All students enrolled at the college are required to have an identification card. This is ordinarily issued when they commence at Good Samaritan. The card is currently used for borrowing books from the school library. In 2009 it will also be used if students arrive late and depart early from school, using recently installed technology. In order for students to access this new facility, they will need to ensure that they have a valid identification card. Any student who requires a replacement card will have the opportunity to order one before the end of this year, so that it is available for use from the beginning of 2009.

Textbooks
All students will be expected to have textbooks from the commencement of the 2009 school year. This includes students in Year 9, who will receive a laptop computer during next year. Any families wishing to take advantage of the service provided by Endeavour Education to purchase textbooks need to return the order form to the college office by no later than Monday, 8th December. There will also be an opportunity for textbooks to be purchased at the second-hand book sale scheduled for lunchtime on Thursday, 4th December.

2009 Preparations
A letter has been sent home this week to the parents / carers of all students in Years 7 to 11. This communication contains important advice regarding preparations for the start of the 2009 school year. Please ensure that you have received a copy. There is a return slip provided to enable parents / carers to acknowledge receipt of the letter. This needs to be returned to the college before the end of this year. In the case of Year 10 students the deadline will be the first school day next year.

Mr P Brooks
Assistant Principal

TAX REFUND FACT SHEET

Mr Chris Hayes, Federal Member of Werriwa, has written to the college to provide information on the Federal Governments’ Tax Refund Scheme.

In brief, the scheme aims to help families with children in primary or secondary schools, to meet the cost of school education. Certain educational expenses such as laptops, home computers plus running costs, educational software, school textbooks, stationery and materials, plus tools of trade are all claimable.

There are eligibility restrictions however, you need to be a family receiving a Family Tax Benefit Part A, or a student receiving Youth Allowance or ABSTUDY. If you are eligible, then you may be able to claim a 50% refundable tax offset up to $1500 for each child undertaking secondary school. That is, a refund of $750. Parents are expected to retain receipts for the purchases of items that they wish to claim.

Fact Sheets are available from the college office.
**Parenting Corner**

Dear Parents

The famous author (Treasure Island, Kidnapped etc) proposed 12 points which he called his “Pattern for Living”. Perhaps we can learn something practical for our own lives from them.

1. Make up your mind to be happy and learn to find pleasure in simple things.
2. Make the best of your circumstances. No one has everything and everyone has something of sorrow intermingled with the gladness of life. The trick is to make laughter outweigh the tears.
3. Don’t take yourself too seriously. Don’t think that somehow you should be protected from misfortunes that befall others.
4. You can’t please everybody. Don’t let criticism worry you.
5. Don’t let others set your standards. Be yourself.
6. Do the things you enjoy doing, but stay out of debt.
7. Don’t look for trouble.
8. Hate poisons the soul. Avoid people who make you unhappy.
9. Have many interests. If you can’t travel, read about new places.
10. Don’t hold post mortems. Don’t spend your life brooding over sorrows and mistakes. Don’t be one who never gets over things.
11. Do what you can for those less fortunate than yourself.
12. Keep busy at something. A very busy person never has time to be unhappy.

This is advice we can well heed today as we face our commitments as partner, parent and friend.

Happy living

Br Colin

**Technology News**

**Student Laptop Scheme 2009**

After a number of feasibility studies, the college has decided on a plan to supply the HP laptop platform to students in Year 9, 2009. The HP laptop was chosen due to a number of considerations, which include infrastructure requirements, student familiarity and effective classroom utilisation. I thank staff, students and parents who gave their input over the last couple of months. I especially thank the students who were involved in the laptop trial this term. More news regarding the laptop rollout plan will be published in the new year.

Mr J Reyes
IT Coordinator

**Catholic Club Support for World Youth Day**

This week the college received support from the Catholic Club to defray some of the costs of World Youth Day. I thank the Club for their ongoing support and generosity in relation to College activities.

**Mathematics Awards**

The Good Samaritan Catholic College Maths Department is proud of the enthusiasm and effort that our students have for Mathematics. The following mathematically minded people, or MAFNRDS (math nerds) which is a compliment at Good Samaritan, have been working extremely well this semester and will be receiving a Mathematics KLA Merit Award this week for their hard work and enthusiasm. Congratulations! MAFNRDS rule!

**Year 7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dat Nguyen</th>
<th>Josephine Losurdo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kristine Flores</td>
<td>Andrew Le</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Nguyen</td>
<td>Caterina Bologna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Gore</td>
<td>Abanoub Botros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paulina Szwaja</td>
<td>Laura Angeloni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charbel Azzi</td>
<td>Melissa Young</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Year 8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hassail Pererra</th>
<th>Scott Carver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Iaconis</td>
<td>Gabriel Mendoza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Hughes</td>
<td>Corey Dwarte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Nguyen</td>
<td>Lana Pepito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jason Boustany</td>
<td>Angela Santaguida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bianca Varudo</td>
<td>Jason Patto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Lia</td>
<td>Jake Towerton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Year 9**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bruno Romeo</th>
<th>Rebecca Arcuri</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhiannon Howell</td>
<td>Luke Pontifex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Blandino</td>
<td>Jonathan Byrne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brydie Cooper</td>
<td>Kayla Salopek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caludia Machaalani</td>
<td>Natalie Demasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Beazley</td>
<td>Jessica Colombo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karla Beazley</td>
<td>John Zammit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Year 10**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Joel Trenear</th>
<th>Rebecca Hunt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kristen Kuan</td>
<td>Alyssa Sukyo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Sarat</td>
<td>Rebecca Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Pace</td>
<td>John Fahmi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony Poschen</td>
<td>Sandra Waga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmelo Ussia</td>
<td>Tina Pham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samantha Tablante</td>
<td>Sarah Spadaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Lisboa</td>
<td>Tamara Spiteri</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During September, your Principal, John Lo Cascio participated in the Contract Renewal Process. This is one of the accountability/development processes for our schools aimed at ensuring that students receive a high quality education in schools that are authentically Catholic.

I have received the Report of the Review Team and I am pleased to advise the school community that Mr Lo Cascio has been offered a further four year contract as Principal at Good Samaritan Catholic College, Hinchinbrook.

My sincere thanks to all in the community who have contributed to this process.

Br Kelvin Canavan, fms
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS
Minds on Maths Challenge

On Monday 24th November, six students from Years 7 and 8 travelled to De La Salle College, Revesby to compete in the Minds on Maths Challenge. This competition involved schools in the Archdiocese competing against each other in mathematical problem-solving activities. When we arrived, we knew it could be anybody’s game and were up for the challenge. Mr Georgiou announced our team name as the MAFNRDS. We made a team banner and were ready to begin. Some of the activities were very hard and we had to work individually a lot of the time. In the third round, we had to solve problems and complete an obstacle course!

The MAFNRD team consisted of Josephine Losurdo, Breanna O’Neill, Sheron Edrisinge, Joseph Iaconis, Dat Nguyen and Shedona Pulumbarit.

We came 11th overall and were proud of the work we had done. We all thoroughly enjoyed the experience and would like to thank Mr Georgiou for taking us and Mr Brooks for the use of his car.

Breanna O’Neill and Josephine Losurdo

“SPARKATHON”

Wednesday 26th November, four Year 7 students travelled to Mount Saint Joseph, Milperra to participate in “Sparkathon”, an inter-school competition for gifted students. Quinnie Kuang, Josephine Losurdo, Konrad Ryzak and Brandon Stillitano were nominated for their consistent results, broad general knowledge and ability to think ‘outside the square’.

The day proved to be busy, interactive and above all, fun. The students had to collaborate closely to nut out some of the questions and challenges posed on the day. Some activities included: producing an advertising campaign for a safety pin, solving elaborate mathematical problems, creating a new invention with a limited amount of resources, building a free-standing tower with newspaper, and deciphering codes, anagrams and lateral thinking puzzles. The students even had the opportunity to mentor our neighbouring primary feeder schools.

Overall, “Sparkathon” was a unique and rewarding experience for all students (and teachers) involved. It provided a rare opportunity for some of our ‘bright sparks’ here at Good Samaritan to really mould and flex their learning muscles. It is safe to say that we all had a great time strutting our mental stuff.

Miss Boggs
Last evening Daniel Kamalaneson presented his work at the CEO Gifted Science Students Symposium showcasing the work that he had completed during the Gifted Science Students’ Workshops. He was one of 43 students nominated from across the Archdiocese to be part of the project.

Daniel’s project was to find out if micro-waved water affects the growth of plants. He watered the plants everyday with normal water and micro-waved water. The project took three months to complete and is in the very last stages of completion. Stay tuned for the results, with some photos in the next newsletter.

During the evening the students were presented with their Bronze Certificates from CREST, by a representative from the CSIRO along with the representatives from other schools in the diocese.

Congratulations to Daniel on an outstanding job, and hopefully he plus any other interested students will be keen to take on another the project again next year.