Dear Parents and Friends of the College,

Last week the college came together for our first assembly of 2008. There was a great deal to explain to students as well as to set the scene for the year. During the assembly I reminded the students that Lent is a time for us to seek to promote the dignity of others. This can be done by reaching out to others who live in countries where the dignity of each human is not valued. We are able to support these people through contributions made to organisations such as Caritas, during and beyond the period of Lent. Our college makes a significant contribution to Caritas each year and students were encouraged to continue their generosity in 2008.

I also reminded students that Lent must also have an impact on us and those around us. It is essential that we continue to respect the dignity of those around us whether it be in the college environment or in our families. It is important that students recognise that respect for others is a major way we promote the dignity of others. One way that particularly comes to mind is respecting others in terms of the way we speak. The use of obscene language displays a lack of respect for oneself and others and is not acceptable in our school environment. Equally the spreading of rumours or the promotion of gossip also has no place in a Catholic environment where the dignity of each person is of paramount importance.

I ask all parents to join us in reminding students that every person deserves to be respected and we all have an obligation to respect ourselves and others at all times. I hope that attitudes changed or consolidated during Lent will continue beyond the season. During last week’s assembly I had the pleasure of presenting Gold Awards to six dedicated students. These awards were the result of commitment to various areas of college life during 2007.

Congratulations to Lauren Smith, Monique Panetta, Bruno Romeo, Nhi Tran, Sandra Jajou and Jess Labuguen.

This year the criteria for the achievement of a Gold Award has changed. To achieve a Gold Award students will need to meet the criteria of previous years as well as a Silver Award presented on the basis of community service.

Recently I attended a meeting related to World Youth Day. It was certainly apparent that momentum is building both within our college and across the nation. The number of Good Samaritan students who will be involved is increasing daily as the registrations continue at the college. The next event that the college will be involved in is the Vigil involving the Cross and Icon at Freeman Catholic College on the evening of April 8. Our college will provide prayer at a station during the pilgrimage. Parents and students are invited to be involved in this event in the lead up to World Youth Day.

Next Monday evening the college will conduct a presentation by the NetAlert Agency. This presentation will address the dangers and safe use of the internet by young people. I stress the importance of an evening such as this and I urge all parents whose children have access to the internet to attend the presentation.

Next week Br Colin will return to Good Samaritan after 2 years in Pakistan. We are very fortunate to have Br Colin joining us for 2 days per week. Br Colin will offer counselling support to staff and students. Welcome back Br Colin.

God Bless,

Mr John Lo Cascio
Principal
Motivational Media Presentation

On Wednesday, 12th March all students will be involved in attending a session at the college entitled *The Power of Everyone*. Presented by the Motivational Media group, this audiovisual presentation has a focus on the impact of our decisions in empowering ourselves and those around us. In particular it will examine the power associated with being prepared, making wise decisions, persistence and working together. This links very closely with the College theme for 2008 of *Be the Change You Desire*. In subsequent weeks there will be opportunities for follow-up of the issues raised in the presentation through the pastoral care classes.

Silver Awards
presented at College Assembly on Thursday 21st February 2008

Congratulations to all recipients

Year 8
Adam Ciampa
Jay Fagan
Shauntae Farrugia
Linda Goria (2)
Hassail Perera
Frances Sentina (3)
Sherly Sylvester

Year 9
Patrick Goorkiz
Agnieszka Komenda
Bruno Romeo (2)
Andre Rovira
Victor Tran
Nicholas Vella

Year 11
Nicole Cabello
Mariecar Capili
Matthew De Martin
Wesley Lizada
Monique Panetta (2)
Ashleigh Pontifex

Year 12
Sandra Jajou (3)
Jess Labuguen
Nhi Tran (2)

NetAlert Presentation

Parents are reminded of the opportunity to attend the NetAlert session to be presented on Monday 3rd March in the college library commencing at 7 pm. All families were previously sent an invitation that contained full details of this important and highly informative evening. Any final replies to this invitation should be sent to the college by Monday 3rd March.

Student Safety and Welfare

Students entering and exiting the college through the main entrance are required to do so using the marked crossing at the set of lights located at the front of the school. Any student crossing the road near the school gates is not only disobeying school rules but also placing themselves at risk of being injured by buses and cars moving through this area. Likewise, students who need to cross Hoxton Park Road are required to do this only at the crossing and lights provided for this purpose. We appreciate support in enforcing these essential safety procedures. Finally, parents are reminded that cars are only permitted to enter the site after 3.10 pm to collect students from the bus bay area. Your co-operation in this regard is appreciated.

Attendance and Appointments

It is the college’s expectation that students attend all classes on all days except when they are absent from school due to sickness or for other approved reasons. Any appointments should ordinarily be made outside school hours. This requirement is equally applicable on Tuesday afternoons as students are required to fulfil mandatory requirements in relation to participation in physical activity and sport.

Sickness

If a student is ill at the start of the day parents are requested to make a judgement about the suitability of sending a sick child to the college. In the event of a student becoming ill whilst at school the procedure is that the student reports to the college office after gaining permission from their Pastoral Care Teacher or Year Co-ordinator. Contact is then made with parents if it is assessed that the student’s illness requires them to be sent home. Students are not permitted to contact parents requesting to be collected from the school as there is a clearly established procedure in place for responding to matters of sickness.

Mr P Brooks
Assistant Principal

School Assembly
Hosted by
Chisholm
21 February 2008
HomeStay Program

Over 160,000 pilgrims will be descending on Sydney during WYD and we need your help. The HomeStay Program creates a wonderful and perhaps unique opportunity for you to show some Australian hospitality to pilgrims.

Returning pilgrims from Cologne and previous WYDs reported staying with host families as one of the highlights of the pilgrimage and the experience had a lasting effect on them.

HomeStay has already been launched in parishes and this is a way in which families of school students can be directly involved in WYD08.

Pilgrims will need a sleeping space (bed, sofa, floor) and breakfast from 14th to 21st July. Pilgrims will be between 18 and 35.

The possibility of sharing stories about other cities, countries and parishes is just one of the benefits you and your family could receive. This is your chance to experience the benefits of an “exchange” for just one week.

Your support is vital to the success of this program and making WYD the catalyst for the 20 year program for the renewal of the church in Sydney and Australia.

If you have any questions about the HomeStay Program, or any WYD matters please call the College HomeStay Representative Gail Gerrish on Tele: 9607 8019 or 0400 501 066.

Parenting Corner

Last week I began interviewing our Year 7’s and what a happy, confident, well-mannered group they are. They appear to have made the transition from being the senior students at Primary to the newest on the block at High School fairly well. No doubt all parents, especially those with a first child going to High School had common fears, as with any change, so congratulations to parents and children alike that these first hurdles have been met – even the injections last week! May your adolescents continue to meet the challenges and develop their talents at Good Samaritan Catholic College. It has much to offer spiritually, academically and physically.

A few years ago the Sydney Morning Herald listed a number of “practical tips” for Good Parenting. We all know there is no “magic formula” for being a good parent. Certainly UNCONDITIONAL LOVE is essential and non-negotiable and so is CONSISTENCY when dealing with our adolescents but the following may serve as reminders:-

**Build your child’s self esteem**
A child who feels worthwhile is less likely to misbehave and will enjoy better relationships with others.

**Acknowledge good behaviour**
Make a habit of encouraging your children when they are behaving well or trying to follow your instructions.

**Be fair and consistent when applying rules**
Children lose respect and trust if they think discipline is random, unfair or punitive.

Handle conflict calmly
Having a negotiated discipline plan in place can help take the heat out of a trying situation.

**Teach by example**
Young people model what they see, so demonstrate the qualities you would like them to develop. (Or to quote our motto this year – **Be the change you desire!**)

**Show you care**
Try not to be so strict that your child can’t feel your LOVE and GOOD INTENTIONS.

If you have any concerns about your adolescent don’t hesitate to get in touch. We are here to work together, so best wishes in your role as a LOVING PARENT.

Sr Marj Carroll

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**UNIFORM SHOP HOURS**
The Uniform Shop will be open on the following days and times:
Monday to Thursday 7.30 am to 8.20 am
Tuesday 11th & 25th March 12 noon to 3.45 pm
Tuesday 8th April 12 noon to 3.45 pm

If you require a tracksuit or jumper—would you please advise the Uniform Shop as an order will be placed next week.

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World Youth Day is fast approaching only 137 DAYS left to go!

Good Samaritan Catholic College has almost 200 students registered! That is a great effort by our students and teachers.

The official World Youth Day program contains a week-long program of events and in the year and week prior a number of lead-up events.

**Tuesday 1 July 2007 to Tuesday 15 July 2008**
Journey of the Cross and Icon of Our Lady

**Thursday 10 to Monday 14 July 2008**
Days in the Dioceses

**Tuesday 15 July 2008**
Opening Mass of welcome celebrated by George Cardinal Pell followed by concert

**Wednesday 16 to Friday 18 July 2008**
Catechesis (teaching) sessions every morning and Youth Festival events in afternoon/evening.

**Thursday 17 July 2008**
Arrival and welcome of the Holy Father

**Friday 18 July 2008 Evening**
Stations of the Cross—a re-enactment of Our Lord’s Passion and Death

**Saturday 19 July 2008**
Pilgrimage walk to site of Closing Mass, evening Vigil with The Holy Father and sleep out “under the stars”

**Sunday 20 July 2008**
Closing Mass and concluding events

Any questions please see Miss Welsh.
Technology News

Student Laptop Loans
The college offers students the opportunity to borrow a laptop for the purpose of academic work. The Laptop Loan Program is designed to allow students to make use of computing equipment while conducting research at home. A limited number of laptops are available for students to borrow. For further information, see Mr Reyes.

Appropriate Use of Online Resources
The college takes a serious stand on blocking internet sites that are deemed to jeopardise the safety of students. These sites include mySpace, Bebo and YouTube. A firewall has been established to block these sites, and any such attempt by students to access unauthorised sites will not be tolerated.

Mr J Reyes, IT Co-ordinator

School Based New Apprentices and Trainees
Three year 11 students join Karen Rivera as school based apprentices or trainees in 2008. Karen began a school based traineeship with Big W Carnes Hill in 2007. She attends training on Tuesday afternoons and works after school and during the holidays. She can count her traineeship as a 2 Unit HSC course Industry Curriculum Framework Retail 240 hour and may achieve a Certificate II qualification from Wide Bay TAFE.

Our other apprentices and trainees are:
Natalie Genova, traineeship in Retail at Big W Carnes Hill, Adrian Rivas, traineeship in Furniture Making with Henry Acosta and Reece Pollock, apprenticeship with McGrath Mitsubishi in Automotive Light Vehicle Mechanic.

UMAT preparation course
For undergraduate and post graduate entry to medicine at most universities in NSW, applicants must complete a Universities Medical Aptitude Test (UMAT). This is a rigorous test designed to determine the suitability of the applicant and considers not only academic aptitude, but also a range of factors known to influence success as a medical student. Preparation courses can significantly increase the chances of success in these tests. One is currently being offered by MedEntry with a discount of up to 55% for the first Good Samaritan student to register. Go to the website at www.MedEntry.edu.au and use the discount code 1143533.

Pre-Apprenticeship courses
The following courses are available;
Ultimo TAFE; baking and hairdressing beginning March 3rd, Kingswood TAFE; commercial cookery beginning March 10th, Mount Druitt TAFE; automotive beginning March 10th, Interested candidates should call 1300 657 925 or visit the website www.alliancepeople.com.au .

Automotive apprenticeships
MTA Apprenticeships Plus has a range of apprenticeships and traineeships covering many areas of the automotive industry. Contact them on 4732 2200 or visit the website at www.mtaplus.com.au .

Careers News

For your diary; UWS Parent Information Evening – June 17th.

Mr S Berry, Careers Adviser

Transport
The School Tcard System will be decommissioned from the close of business on Tuesday 18th March 2008. From Wednesday 19th March 2008, students will only be required to produce their printed bus pass to be eligible for free school travel on private buses under the School Student Transport Scheme. Students are reminded that:
• They will need their printed bus pass for free travel from the morning of Wednesday 19th March
• They should ensure they have applied for a 2008 bus pass if they have not done so already

To enable Tcards to be disposed of in an environmentally friendly and secure manner, it would be appreciated if students could return Tcards to the boxes provided at the school office.

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