



St Benedict's Catholic College Newsletter

Vol 6, Issue 11 26 July 2016

UPCOMING EVENTS

JULY

Wed 27 Semester 1 Academic Assembly
Fri 29 Yr 11 2017 Final Subject Selections due

AUGUST

Mon 1 CSSA Trial HSC exams commence
Japanese students arrive
Mon 8 Feast of St Mary of the Cross
Wed 10 Last day for Japanese visitors
Mon 15 CSSA Trial HSC exams finish
Feast of the Assumption
Tues 16 Yr 8 Elective presentation morning
P&F Meeting
Wed 17 Yr 8 into 9 Elective Information evening
Diocesan Athletics Carnival
Thurs 18 Bennies Bring a Blanket
Fri 19 Staff Development Day-Pupil Free
Wed 24 Parenting Teens Evening Session 1
Yr 7 Maths Incursion
Fri 26 Yr 8 Reflection Day
Wed 31 Parenting Teens Evening-Part 2

SEPTEMBER

Fri 9 Yr 7 Reflection Day
Wed 14 Leaders Induction
Thurs 15 Yr 9 Reflection Day
Fri 16 Yr 8 Pastoral Day
Mon 19 Final Preliminary Exams commence
Wed 21 Yr 12 Final Breakfast, Assembly & Beach Day
Thurs 22 Yr 12 Graduation Mass
Fri 23 Last Day of Term 4

CANCELLED

P&F Trivia Night

It is with regret that the P&F have had to cancel the Trivia Night, scheduled for Saturday 6 August, due to limited responses.

We wish to acknowledge and thank the members of the P&F committee for all their efforts .

Dear Parents

During the school holidays the Feast Day of St Benedict passed quietly by. Given the time of year and the nature of our outdoor activities, the College celebrates our patron in much earlier (and much warmer!) times of the year. Perhaps the best way to honour Saint Benedict is to attend to his teaching and to love the same things that he loves. He wrote a "Rule" (really a set of rules) that serves as the foundation of life for many, many religious communities. One reason why this Rule has endured for over 1500 years is that it is so balanced, so humane. Benedict demonstrates a profound understanding of human nature, and his Rule looks on human weakness with a compassionate eye while making it clear that life in the 'school of the Lord's service' is not always easy. As the Prologue states, "In drawing up its regulations, we hope to set down nothing harsh, nothing burdensome. The good of all concerned, however, may prompt us to a little strictness in order to amend faults and safeguard love." The Rule is designed to help communities of Christians, such as those at our school, to live a moderate life of prayer and work, so that in all things, God may be glorified.

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Last week the College took possession of our wonderful new long-awaited Library facility. There were plenty of 'oohs and aahs' at the size of the space and the variety of zones that have been created to sit and read, work and even play. The outdoor garden reading area will also prove very popular as the weather warms up. It also meant we now have the formal entrance to the College complete and it was with some pride that the students now enter and exit via the beautiful entry boulevard. It is an impressive sight of a morning and afternoon with 700 students moving through the main gates.

Our first parent group assembled on Thursday evening in the Library to be briefed about our incoming Japanese students. Twenty families have volunteered to host the students over a fortnight period as they immerse themselves in Australian family life, schooling and culture. The College is looking forward to having our homestay students take part in classes and extra curricula activities during their stay. Many thanks to the families who are very generously sharing their lives with these young men and women, many of whom have never travelled and will find western life very strange and new.

New arrangements for internal traffic management will be occurring this term as the road widening commences at the front of the College. A detailed map will be sent home to parents closer to the start date for the new arrangements. The exact dates are not yet known, but parents will need to start considering the viability of, in particular, afternoon pick ups, which are already quite challenging. There will be no right turns into the College nor any right turns out of the driveway and this will be a permanent arrangement. Now that the roads in Catherine Park are available, a new entrance from Hollows Drive will be opened for entry for those approaching from Camden Valley Way via Catherine Park Drive.

OPAL CARDS

The bus companies have asked us to remind students that they are to tap their OPAL cards when getting on and off the bus.

Semester 1 Academic Assembly

Wednesday 27 July

8:45 to 9:30am in the Cloister

Parents of students receiving an award will have been notified.

P&F Meeting

Tuesday 16 August

7pm at the College

All welcome

Reminder

STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY

Pupil Free

FRIDAY 19 AUGUST

Are you trying to come to grips with having a teenager in the house?

PARENTING TEENS EVENINGS

Wednesday 24 & 31 August

(Parents to attend both sessions.)

See the attached flyer for more details.

School Fee Reminder

The second instalment of the school fee account was due on 17th June. This date does not apply if you currently have BPay or Direct Debit pay options in place, or if you have had an interview in 2016 with the Principal to discuss alternate arrangements.

The third (and final) instalment of this year's school fee account will be sent out on 29th July and is due for payment on 16th September.

Our new bus bay is now complete and students will be entering and departing via the Catherine Park entrance **from about August 15**, dependent on Transport for NSW approval for route changes. I know the staff supervisors and the bus drivers will be more than happy to move away from the Primary stack parking in the current bus bay. We have been lucky there have not been waiting cars damaged over the years. A full school bus assembly will be held for the students as we rearrange our afternoon departure arrangements as soon as we confirm the start date.

I would also advise the parents parked on the Harrington Grove roadside of Oran Park Drive that that area will be excavated and no longer available when work commences.

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The NSW Government and the Board of Studies announced significant changes to the Higher School Certificate last week. This will impact students in Years 7 & 8 in particular, with new minimum standards for Literacy and Numeracy to be reached, before a HSC can be awarded. The first impact will be for the NAPLAN tests in 2017. A summary of the key changes can be found on the website and will be posted on the Skoolbag App.

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With enrolments for 2017 coming to a conclusion at the end of last term, it was interesting to note that this year, we really saw the best and worst of human nature in the aftermath of the process. For many years now, we have been able to accommodate nearly all families who wished to have their child educated at the College, including those from local State Schools and indeed, a significant number of non Catholics. Those days were always going to come to an end, particularly when, two years ago, we finally reached full capacity with 6 streams of students in Year 7. This year, for the first time, the enrolment panel was forced to strictly apply the enrolment criteria. Every family who applied had a copy of this criteria at point of application. The interview committee made every family aware in their interview that many families would miss out because demand far exceeded supply.

If you are in any doubt about the process going forward into 2018, please ring the College and please do not rely on Primary schoolyard half truths and misinformation about local enrolment boundaries (they don't exist), particular schools being directed from particular local suburbs (no), how you fill out the preference form can give you a shortcut (no). Many wonderful students have missed out this year but I am sure all our families understand that there are clear policies about enrolment and, in keeping with all our other local Catholic schools, we need to adhere strictly to them.

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The College is hosting its Semester 1 Academic Assembly this week, where we celebrate not only academic excellence but students who have shown perseverance in pursuing improvement. I look forward to meeting many of our parents on Wednesday morning.

Michael Hanratty
Principal





CATHOLIC MISSION AND VISION

Friday School Masses

Term 3 will see the introduction of a Friday school Mass for our students. This partnership with St Mary MacKillop Parish will see St Benedict's and St Justin's students join with local parishioners to celebrate Mass at the St Mary MacKillop church each Friday during lunch. Fr David is very excited to join our three communities together. Members from each community will be adding to specific areas of the celebration of Mass with students from St Benedict's delivering the first reading and the responsorial psalm. Last Friday saw the first of our Friday school masses with two of our year 7 RE classes assisting with the celebration. The Mass is open to any student who would like to attend and a number of students from various year groups chose to attend our first Mass. All of the students represented St Benedict's well by showing great reverence and respect throughout the Mass. We encourage all students who would like to participate in any of our weekly Masses to gather at St Mary MacKillop church at the beginning of lunch on Fridays.

Prayer Focus and Social Action

The St Benedict's Social Action group are preparing themselves for an exciting term. The current prayer focus is on the Benedictine virtue of hospitality. For St Benedict, welcoming the stranger, and people not known to the community, was so important that he instructed his monasteries to put the oldest and wisest Monk at the front gate to greet strangers who may arrive at the monastery. Chapter 53 of the Rule of St Benedict states, "Let all guests who arrive be received as Christ". St Benedict goes on to quote a passage from the Gospel according to Matthew 25:35, "I was a stranger and you took Me in". We are encouraged to welcome all who come into our presence, and this will become most important when we receive 18 Japanese exchange students at the beginning of next week. This will be an exciting time for our college community with a number of families welcoming our Japanese visitors into their homes. The Social Action group have been planning a welcome that will include a welcome pack as a sign of our hospitality.

Sacramental Program

This Wednesday will see the culmination of many weeks of work by a number of our staff and students as we welcome eight students as fully active members of the Catholic church. These 8 students have been working with Mr David Costin and Sr Anne Marie to prepare themselves to receive a variety of sacraments. Some students will be receiving the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Holy Communion with others just receiving Holy Communion for the first time. This is a very exciting time for both the school and the local parish.

Trial Exams

The next two weeks will see our Year 12 students finalising their preparation for their Trial HSC Exams. Our prayers and thoughts go out to the students and their families as they begin the countdown to their final year of high school.

Mr Craig Davidson
Acting Director of Mission and Vision

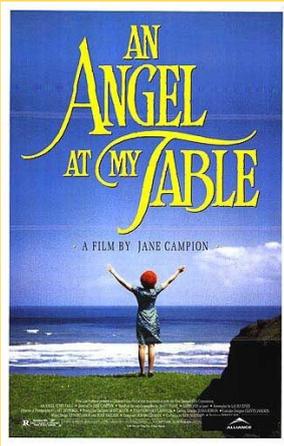




St Benedict's Catholic College Presents

Understanding & Parenting Your Teen

... for first timers and those who don't want to forget!



Ever wondered what
happened to the Angel at
YOUR Table??

Can't work out what's
"got into them"?



St Benedict's Catholic College presents a two night seminar on coming to grips with the teenager in your house.

To be held in an informal and welcoming local setting and whether it's your first teen or fourth, our experienced College Counsellor Gloria Melham, will walk you through some of the struggles of adolescence and the strategies in parenting to assist you in meeting each of the adolescent hurdles as they emerge at different stages.

BE INFORMED!

SHARE YOUR OWN PARENTING STRATEGIES!

VENUE

St Benedict's Catholic College

DATES

Wednesday 24 August 7:00pm—8:30pm
and
Wednesday 31 August 7:00pm—8:30pm

PLEASE NOTE:

Both sessions must be attended. The seminar will start at 7pm **SHARP!**

COST

The seminar is **free** to all parents.
Coffee and tea will be provided.
To **register** your attendance please ring the office on 4631 5300.