



# St Benedict's Catholic College Newsletter

Vol 6, Issue 3 1 March 2016

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### MARCH

<b>Fri 4</b>	Blessing & Opening of Stages 1,2&3
<b>Mon 7</b>	Dio Girls Touch Footy
<b>Tues 8</b>	<b>P&amp;F AGM 7pm @ College</b>
<b>Thurs 10</b>	Dio Swimming Carnival
<b>Fri 11</b>	College Cross Country Carnival
<b>Wed 16</b>	Yr 7 2017 Information Evening
<b>Thurs 17</b>	Yr 7 Vaccinations #1
<b>Fri 18</b>	Staff Development Day-Pupil Free
<b>Mon 21</b>	HSC Half Yearly Exams commence
<b>Fri 25</b>	Good Friday Holiday
<b>Mon 28</b>	Easter Monday Holiday

### APRIL

<b>Fri 1</b>	Yr 10 Reflection Day
<b>Thurs 7</b>	Duke of Ed Trial Expedition Day 1
<b>Fri 8</b>	Duke of Ed Trial Expedition Day 2
	Years 7 & 11 Transition Reports
	<b>End of Term 1</b>

### TERM 2

#### April

<b>Tues 26</b>	First Day of Term 2
<b>Thurs 28</b>	Years 7 & 11 Parent/Teacher Night
<b>Fri 29</b>	Diocesan Boys & Girls Soccer

#### MAY

<b>Mon 2</b>	Diocesan Cross Country
<b>Thurs 5</b>	College Photo Day
<b>Fri 6</b>	St Benedict's Day

Dear Parents

We are into the 4th week of Lent and the Easter season seems already upon us with the grocery aisles full of chocolates and hot cross buns. In his message for Lent 2016, which began on 11 February, Pope Francis has asked us to live Lent more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God's mercy. He said: "God's mercy transforms human hearts; it enables us, through the experience of a faithful love, to become merciful in turn. In an ever new miracle, divine mercy shines forth in our lives, inspiring each of us to love our neighbour and to devote ourselves to what the Church's tradition calls the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. These works remind us that faith finds expression in concrete everyday actions meant to help our neighbours in body and spirit: by feeding, visiting, comforting and instructing them."

To that end, I commend the wonderful work being done across the school in the area of "Works of Mercy". Currently a number of Yr 12 students are undertaking community visits to the Carrington Nursing Home and assisting and providing youthful exuberance around the communal areas whilst undertaking a number of activities. Last week we began visiting our local Public Schools where, accompanied by Sr Anne-Maree Gallagher, students from Years 9-12 are working with the Parish catechists in spreading the Good News. In Pope Francis' Year of Mercy, our students are providing wonderful examples of being "bearers of Gods Love".

Last Friday evening over 200 students and a large number of teaching and ancillary staff attended the "Unite" Festival. Mr Costin, together with the Gold Leadership Diploma candidates in Year 11, organised a wonderful afternoon of moving prayer, hilarious entertainment and powerful liturgy. We thank Fr David for conducting the exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, a seldom seen yet powerful symbol of the place of the Eucharist in our faith. Most of the young people present would have been introduced to a Monstrance for the first time. Together with the Diocesan Youth Ministry Team and student Retreat favourite, Chris Doyle, the evening was a huge success and has now become a permanent fixture in the College calendar.

This week the College will be hosting a large number of dignitaries as we officially open and Bless Stages 1-3 of our building programme. Invitations to parents were emailed or posted last week. It was important to RSVP as seating is quite limited. If you cannot make it to St Benedict's, then you can watch live as the event will be streamed from about 9:55am. This is the first of 3 such events, which usually coincide with the completion of each building stage.

Michael Hanratty  
Principal

### Staff Development Day

#### Pupil Free

Please note that Friday 18 March is a Pupil Free Day as staff will be on retreat, attending a day of spiritual formation. The College office will be closed.

*Be Still*  
AND KNOW  
THAT I AM GOD

### P&F AGM

Tuesday 8 March

7pm at the College

All parents/carers are invited to the Parents and Friends Association Annual General Meeting to be held on Tuesday 8 March at the College, commencing at 7pm.

The St Benedict's P&F does not undertake fundraising activities, as families contribute via the P&F levy. The P&F, in consultation with the Principal, is responsible for determining the way in which the funds can be best spent. Various working groups within the P&F are responsible for such things as Second Hand Clothing Pool, Working Bees, Care and Hospitality groups. P&F meetings also offer the chance to discuss issues that parents may raise and may also provide guest presenters to address key areas of parent interest.

Come along and help make a difference.

### VACCINATIONS for YEAR 7

Envelopes will be sent home with your child with details of the 2016 School Vaccination Program for Year 7 students. The first vaccine will be distributed on Thursday 17 March.

All Year 7 students will be offered

- Human Papillomavirus vaccine—HPV (3 doses)
  - \* This vaccine provides protection for girls and boys against a virus which could lead to a range of cancers and diseases later in life.
- Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine—dTpa (1 dose)
  - \* As a booster dose for all students.
- Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine—VZV (1 dose)
  - \* As a catch-up for students who have **NOT** had chickenpox **OR** a previous Varicella vaccine.

Students cannot be vaccinated at school unless a completed and signed consent form is returned to the school. If your child misses a dose of vaccine at school they will receive a catch-up dose at the next visit. Further information is provided in the Parent Information Pack. A record of vaccination will be given to your child at the time of each vaccination. Please keep these for your records and **provide a copy to your local doctor**.

Please note that these vaccinations are provided *free* only while your child is in Year 7 (or for any HPV catch-up vaccinations in Year 8.) If you choose to have your child vaccinated through your own doctor, a GP consultation fee may apply.

### College Cross Carnival Friday 11 March Mount Annan Botanical Gardens 9am start

Parents are invited to bring a picnic lunch and join us. This annual event has become a great community gathering, enjoyed by all.

Students may leave with their parents at the end of the Carnival, once they have seen their Pastoral Tutor.

Permission notes are due to be returned by tomorrow, Wednesday 2 March. A copy of the note can be downloaded from the College website, under the Parent tab, then Permission Notes.

**Students please note that due to the Cross Country Carnival, Thursday 10 March will run on a Friday A timetable.**

### OPAL CARDS

We have received notice from both Busabout and Interline that from today, 1 March 2016, students are to have a valid School OPAL card and use it to tap on and off the bus. Students who do not carry a School OPAL card will be required to pay the applicable fare or utilise a valid Child/Youth OPAL Card.

The College has contacted Transport for NSW to express our concerns in regard to delays in receiving a large number of student cards. Should you need to check the status of your application or require further information about School OPAL Cards or Child/Youth OPAL Cards, please contact Transport for NSW directly on 131 500 or visit [www.opal.com.au](http://www.opal.com.au)

## Catholic Life at St Benedict's

The Catholic Life of the College continues to be very exciting, engaging and busy, with many events and activities having taken place over the last two weeks, and more to come in the next few weeks.

### UNITE FESTIVAL

The **UNITE festival** was held recently and what a great success it was. Approximately 200 Benny's students took part in this important Catholic Youth Festival. More detail has been included in other parts of this newsletter. I would like to congratulate Maddison Evans, Chaltu Etana, Jackson Lewis and Karley Schonell for their great efforts in organising the event, as well as thanking Mission Prefect, Taylor McGovern, and Fr David for leading us in a beautiful adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. A huge thanks also to all of the staff who helped in preparation of the event as well as in supervision throughout the afternoon and evening. From comments students have made, it appears to have been a very successful festival. Students not only had a great time and got to know other students, but they developed a greater understanding of the importance of accepting all in our community, regardless of who they are, where they come from, or any other differentiating factor.

### CARITAS AND PROJECT COMPASSION

The College support of Caritas and their Project Compassion appeal continues to be well supported by students and families at the college. We have raised well over \$1500 towards this wonderful cause and are only half way through the Lenten period. A big thank you to all who have made wonderful efforts to be Christ's light by bringing joy to those in great need.

### LENT

One of the challenges of this period of the liturgical cycle, Lent, is that of forgiveness. This is a concept that is not new, but certainly one that is difficult at times, yet at the heart of our faith. I include a short reflection from Sr Hilda on St Benedict's view on forgiveness and the challenge today:

"Benedict frequently reminds us of the importance of forgiving one another: Harbour neither hatred nor jealousy of anyone...pray for your enemies out of love for Christ...Make peace with an adversary before the setting of the sun. (R.B. 4)..... Yet forgiveness is something we must never withhold. As disciples of Christ we are obliged to work tirelessly towards healing, and reconciliation at all levels." (Source: <http://wccm.org/content/forgiveness-sr-hilda>)

One of the challenges for us in our St Benedict's community this Lent is working towards reconciliation and healing in our lives. There will be activities towards the end of Lent to help our students in this area.

### DIOCESAN COLLOQUIUM

Recently, staff had the opportunity to attend the Diocesan Colloquium on Laudato Si. This important Papal encyclical looks at the idea of caring for our common home and addresses, not only Catholics in our world, but all of humanity. St Benedict also shared this view and often talked about the importance of Stewardship and caring for our environment. The Diocesan Colloquium will help us generate ideas and thoughts about how we can best support the challenges that Pope Francis gives us in this encyclical.

Mr David Costin  
Director of Mission and Vision



Yr 11 Senior Science and  
Biology Excursion  
Sydney Olympic Park  
Bicentennial Park's Wetlands



## UNITE FESTIVAL

On Friday the 19th February we held the 'Unite Festival' which had the theme of acceptance, harmony and unity. The Festival celebrated the diversity within our school with many different cultures and backgrounds. Matthew 22:39 portrays our theme very well as it says "And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself". The activities that ran during the afternoon clearly portrayed the fact that we are one in the eyes of God and that no one should be treated differently for who they are. God has created us the way we are for a reason, and that's because we have a purpose to serve him with our unique talents and abilities. Our differences are precious in his eye, we should celebrate and appreciate his unique creations with our school community. The night was filled with enjoyable games, drama, speakers, performances and yummy foods. Through all these fun and exciting activities, we hoped to build upon the message of unity, harmony and acceptance within our school. We have included some reflection on the evening below:

Stalls: The food stalls offered food from around the world from Asian to Italian Cuisine. The theme of acceptance was exemplified strongly as students were happy to try a variety of different foods. Sales were brisk and food sold very quickly. The funds raised from selling foods were donated to Caritas.

Anthony Conlon – Yr 10 student

Chris Doyle: At the Unite Festival Chris Doyle came to entertain us and talk about accepting others and having freedom. We had a lot of fun with Chris. He spoke to us about loving life and loving your friends and family. We played some games and did activities to help us work together and bond with our friends. We sang songs and did karaoke. The songs that we sang with Chris had a meaning to them. One of the songs was Living on Prayer which discusses having a good life. Chris told us to always encourage others and guide our friends and family through life. He also said to be grateful for what you have because other people in the world don't have the education and privileges that we have in Australia. We also shook as many peoples hands as we could and wished them a good life and a good future. Overall, Chris Doyle's entertainment was great and I had a good time at the Unite Festival.

Chloe Minuti - Year 7 student

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: Towards the end of the festival, we were able to celebrate the sacrament of the Eucharist through Adoration. We were extremely fortunate that Father David was able to come and celebrate this time with us. Adoration allowed for students to have a few minutes to adore the blessed sacrament of the Eucharist and reflect on their own personal thoughts. A huge thank you goes to Father David for being able to join us on the night.

Taylor McGovern – Year 11

Performances: The night concluded with a series of amazing performances by the talented students at St Benedict's. The acts consisted of guitar playing, singing and acting. Each performance had an element of acceptance, as this was the main theme of the night. The students showcased their talent with the theme of love of neighbour, in front of their peers. The involvement of the audience brought a very welcoming atmosphere to the festival and everyone's positivity, throughout the performances, gave a clear sense of unity. The audience enjoyed all the performances and loved seeing everyone's hard work on the night.

Mikayla Gauci – Year 10 student

Overall, It was a great night with over 200 students in attendance. We would like to thank them for taking the time and contributing to our festival. We would also like to thank all the teachers for taking time out of their Friday night, not only supervise, but to get involved in some of the activities and help raise money for Caritas. Finally we would like to thank Mr Costin for helping with the organisation process. We greatly appreciate everyone's support and hope that we will be able to continue this tradition for many years to come.

Maddison Evans and Chaltu Etana (on behalf of the UNITE organisational committee).



### Student Drop Off

Could we please ask parents who are dropping their child off to school in the morning proceed to the far end of the carpark (eastern side, closest to Camden Valley Way). Until the carpark, pathways and front entry are completed it is unsafe for pedestrians and restrictive to traffic flow to stop at other points in front of the school. Your cooperation in this short term request is appreciated.

## A Few Reminders

### Mobile Phones at School

- Whilst it is understood that students sometimes require mobile phones to remain in contact with parents before and after school, there is an expectation that they will **NOT** be used in any form during the school day. This includes checking messages or texting.
- The mobile phone must be turned off at all times during the school day.
- The College takes no responsibility for damaged, lost or stolen phones.
- **Students found using their phone during school time will have their phone confiscated. For a first offence, the phone will be retained at the office for the day. For subsequent offences within a term, they will be retained for one week or until collected by a parent.**



All contact during school hours should go through the College office.

### Illness at School

- Students who become ill at school must notify their teacher who will note in their diary that they are reporting to Sick Bay.
- If the student is between classes or at recess or lunch then they are to notify either the teacher on duty or of their next class.
- Students will then report to the front office.
- In Sick Bay students will be assessed and treated if injured.
- If unable to return to class or too ill to remain at school, parents will be requested to collect the student at the earliest convenience.
- If an injury warrants medical treatment and parents cannot be contacted, the school will organise treatment through the NSW Ambulance Service.



### Picking your child up early from school

Although we prefer a note in advance from a parent/carer stating that a student will be collected from school before the normal end of day, we understand that circumstances may arise unexpectedly and you may need to collect your child at short notice. While every endeavour will be made to have your child come to the office as quickly as possible, please understand that it may take up to 15 minutes for the student to come up to the office, especially if there is no office helper, or the office staff are otherwise engaged. We do not have direct communication to each classroom and cannot page over our PA system as this may disrupt exams or assessments that may be taking place in some rooms. A phone call before arrival may help in limiting the time you may have to wait. Thank you for your understanding.



### Banned Items

- Chewing gum is banned on College grounds and at all College functions and activities. Students who are in possession of chewing gum will be automatically placed on school detention.
- Students are not permitted to bring Textas or markers (except for Art Lessons), metal rulers or liquid paper to school.
- All electronic equipment is forbidden including electronic recording devices, laser pointers and games and will be confiscated for 1 week if found in the student's possession.
- All aerosol cans, including deodorants, are banned from school.