Dear Parents

I was sitting listening to the Gospel being proclaimed on Sunday night with a rueful smile. During the week I had call to contact the landscapers about a whole species of some 50 plants in the school that had steadily deteriorated over a month. How could they have planted things that just were not hardy? Sensing I was unhappy with the situation, the owner came out to inspect the carnage. Imagine my embarrassment to be told that yes, they look dead and probably need to be thinned out, but in fact, are bulbs, and will spring back to life in Spring time with a bit of water. The Gospel of the good and bad seeds planted seemed to sum up that event.

Weeds have a habit of growing amidst any seed we’ve sown, no matter how well we’ve prepared the soil. They seem to be more robust than our plants; perversely, the weeds choke their growth. They are an unwanted, destructive nuisance.

These agricultural parables are all variations on the theme of the sowing of the Word of God. Applying this to the Church here on earth it’s only too obvious that it’s a mixture of good and bad people. We know only too well that serious sinners can do great harm to good people, especially the young. Their behaviour can be a scandal, leading some to want nothing more to do with religion. At the same time, whilst books, the media and information technology produce so much that is innocent and wholesome, they also purvey much that is unsavoury and damaging.

Our present parable about the weeds raises the question as to what we are doing to deal with threats to the Good News taking root and growing in our own lives, in our relationships and in the wider world around us.

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This Friday is a very special day in the history of the College and I would invite all parents, if able, to attend our St Benedict’s Feast Day Mass and associated celebrations at 9am. It will be held for the first time on our own school site in the new cloister area (or COLA). Fr. Michael Williams will preside at our Mass, which will be attended by many dignitaries, including the Director of Schools, Mr Peter Turner and our local State Member, the Hon. Chris Patterson. A new altar, handcrafted by our TAS Coordinator Mr Chris Shelton, will be blessed and commissioned at the Mass.

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This Saturday night the Parents & Friends Trivia Night is being held at the Camden Civic Centre and I thank Mrs Libby Tully and Mrs Maryanne Turner for the wonderful effort in organizing some great prizes on what promises to be a fun social evening. The event is a sell out and I thank our parents for their great support. Any funds raised will go directly to the purchase of “Apple TVs” which broadcast in each of the new classrooms and Food Technology areas.

Reports were issued at the end of last term and Parent/Teacher Interviews were held over the last two days of the term. If you were unable to attend or could not see teachers whom you wished to speak with, please do not hesitate to contact your child’s Year Coordinator to organize a time with multiple teachers or contact individual teachers directly.

In Week 3 the College moves into its next curriculum development stage with the Year 11 Subject Information Evening. It is a challenging time as families make decisions about pathways into the HSC years or the world of vocational study. We will also be opening up Year 11 to new enrolments and advertising that in local papers.

I had the great pleasure of accompanying the Duke of Edinburgh students on their “Race Around Sydney” Bronze Expedition last week. After almost 40kms of walking the highlights of Sydney City, covering the Spit to Manly bushwalk and a very spectacular, if windy night on Cockatoo Island, I can report that the group certainly earned their badges. I thank especially Mrs Isbister and Miss Harriden who organized both the Canberra and Sydney “Race Around...” experiences which offered fantastic mental and physical challenges for the awardees.

Looking forward to seeing many parents at all the events that are on over the next two weeks.

Michael Hanratty
Principal
**YEAR 10 ENGLISH EXCURSION**  
*Macbeth*

Year 10 students will travel to the Sydney Opera House tomorrow, **Wednesday 23 July**, for a performance of Macbeth.  
Students are to be at the College by 7:10am for **departure at 7:15am** sharp. Students will return to the College in time for normal after school buses.  
Students are to wear their full winter College uniform, including blazers and are to bring their own recess, lunch and drinks in a small bag.

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**YOUTH MASS @ PICTON/TAHMOOR—every 4th Saturday of the month**

The next YOUTH MASS @ St Anthony’s Church, Tahmoor is on Saturday, JULY 26 @ 5-00 pm. Come along and join in the fun with a large band (5 guitars, Clarinet, Flute and a wonderful set of new drums.). Sing along with the stunning choir from St Anthony’s school and enjoy refreshments afterwards in the foyer. **SEE YOU THERE!!**

On behalf of the Parish Council-Margaret Cronin 4681 8321.

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**NOURISH**

A support group for women and men with eating and/or body image concerns. It is recovery focused and is open to any person experiencing eating or body image related issues. Support group members may or may not have a diagnosis of an eating disorder.

CatholicCare, 35a Cordeaux St, Campbelltown  
Please call 4254 9316 for dates and further details.  
Workshop Fee: No Fee

**SEASONS FOR GROWTH (Adults)**

This program provides the opportunity for participants to understand and cope with grief and loss and changes that occur throughout life. It educates people about the grief process and assists them to develop skills for coping, problem solving and decision making. The program also builds a peer support network and helps restore self confidence.

CatholicCare, 35a Cordeaux St, Campelltown  
4 Wednesday Mornings 10am—12:30pm  
30 July, 6, 13 & 20 August 2014  
Workshop Fee: $10 per session

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**KEEPING KIDS IN MIND**

A post-separation parenting workshop. Learn how to deal more effectively with the emotional and practical issues of parenting after separation. Explores loss and grief in parents and children, power grabs and impact on children.

5 Monday Mornings 10am—12:30pm  
11, 18, 25 August, 1 & 8 September 2014  

or  
5 Thursday Evenings 6:30pm—9pm  
31 July, 7, 14, 21 & 28 August 2014  
CatholicCare, 35a Cordeaux Street, Campbelltown  
Workshop Fee: $20 per session

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**Our Equestrian Team in action at the recent NSW Interschools Championships**
Welcome back to Term 3 at the College.
A reminder that 'Mathematics Help' is on at lunch every Monday and Thursday.

Many conversations in our parent/teacher interviews centered on the need for students to have a program of home study – while completing set homework consolidates learning from each day’s lesson students must also review previous work on a regular basis. Students have the opportunity to come to 'Mathematics Help' and work with a Mathematics teacher on a personalised program. Students can download a study guide template from each years Mathematics course on Moodle as a starting point – parents are encouraged to ask to see this template and work with their son/daughter on a home study program to suit their individual needs. (The study guide is the first item on the Year 7/8/9 Mathematics course Moodle pages)

**Important Dates**
August 7th - Australian Mathematics Competition (AMC)
August 25th to 31st - National Literacy and Numeracy Week
August 27th – Year 7 and 8 ‘World of Mathematics’ incursion at the College

**Term 3 Assessment Dates**
Year 7: Week 10B Monday September 15th
Year 8: Week 9A Friday September 12th
Year 9: Week 7A Thursday August 28th
Year 10: Week 9A Friday September 12th

**Student Projects**
The ‘Student Projects’ course (see the ‘Project Ideas’ link on the Mathematics Moodle page) provides opportunities for students to explore the applications of Mathematics in a project that is of particular interest to them. Students can pick their own project idea or use one from the Moodle site. Examples including ‘CSI Mathematics’, ‘Code Breaking’, ‘The Mathematics of Minecraft’, etc. are some of the possibilities explored on the site. All students are encouraged to pick an idea and present their findings on the site.

**Some strategies to assist your son/daughter in Mathematics:**
- Talk about current class work and how it relates to our everyday lives, rephrasing, discussing and using words from the days lessons are important literacy skills.
- Encourage a sound understanding of ‘mental mathematics’ skills such as estimation and proficiency in the times tables (this basic skill is essential).
- Provide supervised access to Internet based resources (all students have access to HotMaths, Moodle and are encouraged to review alternative explanations on sites such as Khan Academy/YouTube, etc.).
- Develop a revision plan and study timetable with your son/daughter, research has shown that focused revision is a skill to develop early on.
- Ask your son/daughter to bring their last assessment task to ‘Mathematics Help’ to review.
- Target improvement rather than a specific grade – form a plan based on what am I going to do differently/better than last time in my assessment preparation.
- Every student has a Mathematics ‘Grid’ book (used for class work) and ‘Procedure/Study Book’ (used to summarise learning and highlight main concepts/revision) – ask to see each of these on a regular basis.

**Congratulations** to Portia Zuber, Zac Winters & Carol Halim (Year 7), Isaac Hobman & Emily McDermott (Year 8), Alex Kolokotas, Kody Fletcher & Thomas Walker (Year 9), and Alex Mougius & Courtney Wilson (Year 10) on completing the Mathematics Association ‘Challenge Stage’ Competition for extension students. This activity is designed to promote problem solving in Mathematics and all of the students are to be commended on their diligence in completing the activities.