Dear Parents

Last Friday I was privileged to attend the Year 10 Reflection Day and hear our guest, Sam Clear, speak about his “Walking” Mission to join people together in “Unity bound by the love of Christ”. The incredible and inspiring story of his 15,600km walk around the world and how he survived; the inspirational people he met and the difference he made in the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of people in dozens of countries was breathtaking. It takes a lot to keep 15 year olds spellbound for nearly 2 hours, but not a soul moved with Sam’s storytelling with accompanying slides and video.

I was reflecting on this whilst listening to this Sunday’s Gospel on the Transfiguration. Yes, the transfiguration amazed Peter, James, and John. The amazement, however, led to fear of losing control and the peace that came with trusting God, not the entertaining awe of simple disbelief. The amazement helped change Jesus disciples from common fishermen to uncommon apostles.

As Jesus reveals himself to us (as he did to the three disciples), he changes us. This is exactly the story of Sam Clear. Tasmania’s champion 100m runner, an AFL second grader playing for Hawthorn, he had it all in front of him but received an inspirational call from God to do the difficult thing. Revelation can shake us up. It can mean losing control of a situation, only to be opened to new opportunities of grace. In small ways and large, Jesus constantly calls to us for a deeper walk with him. Do we heed the call and take the chance?

On Wednesday of last week, Fr. Whitty joined the College to celebrate our Ash Wednesday liturgy. In a moving ceremony, students were challenged to reflect on whether they could be “The Face of God” each day to someone in our community during Lent. Fr. Whitty encouraged us to not focus on the “giving up” but the “giving” during the Lenten season. In the same week, our survey of the “Catholic Landscape” of our College indicated very strong support for a Sacramental Programme with students wishing to complete not only their sacraments of initiation but begin their Catholic journey with the rite of Baptism. Mr. Costin is currently liaising with families regarding a sacramental programme. Should you wish your child to participate, then please contact Mr. Costin at the College.

During the week, the College quietly achieved a few new “firsts”. Maddison Crawford (Year 8), became the College’s first Public Speaker to progress to a Zone Final in the Rostrum Public Speaking competition and we wish Maddy luck in the next round. Our College Swimmers represented the school at the Diocesan Swimming Carnival and came home with a number of placings. Our best result as a squad so far. Wollongong is the strongest region in NSW and competing strongly in an age division here is a fine result. Congratulations to our team. Finally, the long awaited lockers have arrived. They will be progressively rolled out to students in the next two weeks. The advent of lockers means there will be changes to organisation, routines and time management at school level for every student.

Enrolments are now open for Year 7, 2015. About 500 people were in standing-room only attendance on Wednesday at the Camden Civic Centre on a stormy evening, our biggest ever level of interest. Enrolments for Year 11, 2015 will open in Term 2. A reminder that “Feeder School” families should have received a pre-printed enrolment form, but will still need to pick up an enrolment pack from the College detailing the specific requirements for documentation that needs to be handed in.

The College Cross-Country is being held this Friday at Mt. Annan Botanic Gardens. Last year it was a fantastic family day where the serious runners were genuinely challenged on a demanding course and joggers and walkers got a great workout. Parents and other family are again welcome to attend and support their children and assist on the day. I look forward to seeing you there.

Michael Hanratty
Principal
UPCOMING EVENTS

TERM 1

March
Wed 19 Year 9 Reflection Day
Fri 21 College Cross Country Carnival

April
Fri 11 Yr 7 Transition Reports distributed
  Last Day of Term 1

TERM 2

April
Mon 28 First Day of Term 2
Wed 30 U/13, U/15 Dio Girls Touch Football
  U/13, U/15 Dio Boys Soccer

May
Thurs 1 School Photo Day
Fri 9 Diocesan Cross Country Carnival
Tue 13 NAPLAN Yrs 7-9 Day 1
Wed 14 NAPLAN Yrs 7-9 Day 2
  Yr 10 Outdoor Ed Camp - Day 1
Thurs 15 NAPLAN Yrs 7-9 Day 3
  Yr 10 Outdoor Ed Camp - Day 2
Fri 16 Yr 10 Outdoor Ed Camp - Day 3
  Year 8 Reflection Day
Tues 20 ICAS Science Competition
Wed 21 Yr 10 Commerce Excursion
  Yrs 9 & 10 Drama Excursion
Mon 26 Yr 7 History & Art Excursion

CROSS COUNTRY CARNIVAL

this Friday, 21 March
at the Australian Botanic Gardens, Mount Annan

- Students will travel by bus to and from the venue.
- Students are to wear their full sport uniform.
- School hats and sunscreen are compulsory.
- Students are to bring their recess, lunch and drinks.

Parents are most welcome to bring a picnic lunch and join us on the day at the Lake Lawn.

Caritas Launch:

Last week, the Social Action leaders had an opportunity to attend Caritas Australia’s “Project Compassion” launch. This was a wonderful opportunity to hear from people who work on the ground level in foreign countries where people live in absolute poverty. We also had the opportunity to listen to Bishop Peter discuss the influence that our generous support can have for people around the world.

On Wednesday our College was fortunate enough to have Fr Whittey celebrate Ash Wednesday with us. At the same time, this year’s SBCC Project Compassion was launched, with the goal of reaching $5000 – which would allow a struggling Sri Lankan family enough materials to build a basic house and therefore provide shelter for their family.

We look forward to all students being ‘Christ’s light’ by putting their faith into action and raising funds to support those in need.

Mr David Costin
Religious Education Coordinator

SCHOOL FEE ACCOUNTS

A reminder that the first instalment of the school fee account is due by Friday 4 April. This does not apply to those who have Direct Debit, periodic BPAY or other alternate arrangements in place.

If you are experiencing difficulties with making payment by the due date please contact Mrs Karen Earnshaw on 4631 5004 or email to KarenEarnshaw@dow.catholic.edu.au

Thank you for your assistance in finalising this payment.

Mrs Wardley and Mr Costin, accompanied by our Social Action leaders, attended the Project Compassion launch.
MISA Sport

At a recent MISA Sport meeting, it was decided by all participating MISA schools that students must return back to school at the conclusion of their MISA competition.

The MISA Sport Policy now includes that parents/carers should not take their child directly home after their game, as the student is required to return to school in order to finalise their normal school day. This policy will be implemented, beginning Tuesday 4th March, to reduce risk of any unforeseen student health and safety issues.

Swimming Age Champions 2014

Congratulations to the 2014 Age Champions from the recent Swimming Carnival, pictured here with Mr Hanratty.

U/12 Girl: Ashley Bales  
U/13 Girl: Bryanna Rixon  
U/14 Girl: Maddison Evans  
U/15 Girl: Courtney Warden  
U/16 Girl: Stephannie Krause

U/13 Boy: Angus White  
U/14 Boy: Bryce Earnshaw  
U/15 Boy: Jacob Laycock  
U/16 Boy: John Plotekic

U/17 Boy: Darren Turner

APOLOGIES

Our apologies to Stephannie Krause of Year 10 whose records at the recent Swimming Carnival were incorrect in a recent newsletter. Stephannie is the record holder for the U/16 Girls in: 50m Freestyle (34.75), 50m Backstroke (42.10), 50m Breaststroke (48.44), 50m Butterfly (37.44) and 100m Freestyle (1.19.56). Congratulations to Stephannie on her achievements.

WOLLONGONG DIOCESAN SPORT

The College's involvement in sport at the Diocesan level provides the students of St Benedict's with a representative sporting pathway. The Wollongong Diocese is aligned with the NSW Combined Catholic Colleges Sporting Association and it is via this association students have the opportunity to compete in elite school sporting competitions.

For many sports, particularly team sports, the representative pathway does not commence until the U/15 age level. The notable exceptions to this are swimming, athletics and cross country running.

The NSW Combined Catholic Colleges Association provides sporting opportunities in a wide range of sports and the processes required to access these opportunities are outlined on their website; https://www.csss.nsw.edu.au.

Relevant sporting opportunities will be advertised at the College but we recommend families access the NSW CCC website if there is a particular sport in which your son or daughter excels.

Please do not hesitate to contact the College if you have any questions regarding Diocesan Sport.

Representative Sporting Pathway:

School Team → Diocesan Representative Team → NSW CCC → NSW All Schools → Australian Representative

Mr Matt Limbrey
Drinking Water

All testing is now complete and approvals have been given for the use of the town water supply. Students can use the bubblers and are able to refill their drink bottles from these water stations.

Counselling Services

Support that’s there when you need it the most...

CatholicCare works alongside families to develop and sustain healthy, functioning relationships for all life stages.

Our affordable counselling services can help when you experience:

- grief and loss
- family and relationship difficulties
- stress, anxiety or depression
- changes in personal or family situations

We specialise in counselling for:

- Individuals
- Couples
- Families
- Carers

Our experienced Counsellors are located in:
Wollongong, Nowra and Campbelltown

NEW: CatholicCare Wollongong can now offer individual Thursday evening appointments from 5pm to full time workers or those with full time child care responsibilities.

Call 4227 1122 to find out more.
www.catholiccare.dow.org.au

“From the first time I made contact with CatholicCare, I began to feel I had hope”. Sam

UNIFORM SHOP

The Senior Girls cardigan is now in stock at the uniform shop.

YEAR 7 2015

A reminder that Enrolment Applications for students who wish to commence at St Benedict’s Catholic College in Year 7 2015 must be handed in at the College Office by Thursday 10 April.

On receipt of the completed application an interview time will be organised. Early lodgement of these forms will allow for more flexibility with interview times.

Drinking Water

All testing is now complete and approvals have been given for the use of the town water supply. Students can use the bubblers and are able to refill their drink bottles from these water stations.
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, Campbelltown

4 Tuesday Mornings 10am - 12:30pm
3, 10, 17 & 24 June 2014

Workshop Fee: $10 per session

BRINGING UP GREAT KIDS
Parents will learn "mindfulness" techniques to increase awareness of their thoughts & feelings, be more aware of their children’s needs & how to better respond to their child’s behaviour to improve children’s self identity, decrease parental Stress & enhance the parent / child relationship.

CatholicCare, 35a Cordeaux St, Campbelltown

6 Friday Mornings 10am - 12:30pm
9, 16, 23, 30 May, 6 & 13 June 2014

Workshop Fee: $10 per session

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.

CatholicCare, 35a Cordeaux Street, Campbelltown

5 Monday Mornings 10am -12:30pm
5, 12, 19, 26 May & 2 June 2014

Workshop Fee: $20 per session

MY KIDS AND ME
A workshop for parents who have had children removed from their care. Assists participants to identify parenting skills, strengths and resources to develop relationships with their children.

Claymore Community Centre, Claymore
Cnr Gould & Dobell Rds
7 Thursday Mornings 10am -12:30pm
8, 15, 22, 29 May, 5, 12 & 19 June 2014

No Fee

MORE HARMONY, NO HARM
(for Men)
Topics covered include understanding and managing strong emotions, effective communication, assertiveness skills and positive behaviours for healthy relationships.

CatholicCare, 35a Cordeaux St, Campbelltown

7 Thursday evenings 6:30pm - 9:00pm
8, 15, 22, 29 May, 5, 12 & 19 June 2014

Workshop Fee $10 per session

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
Every 2nd Wednesday evening of the month 7pm - 8:30pm
14 May & 11 June 2014

Workshop Fee: No Fee

WORKSHOP BOOKINGS

Campbelltown  4628 0044
Wollongong       4227 1122
Nowra                 4421 8248

Other workshops may be available on request. Limited childcare may be available for some workshops.