Dear Parents

Welcome back to Term 4. I hope that your family had an opportunity to rest and relax together over the two week break ready for the hectic time that is the run into Christmas. On site there have been a number of changes that anyone who has dropped their children off or driven past, will have noticed. With six demountable classrooms being moved to the permanent school site and a number of others decommissioned, we have reached a tipping point in the construction programme with nearly all classes at “St Benedict’s” and away from the St Justin’s Primary site. A second fully equipped Science Lab was also outfitted during the holidays in preparation for the large number of extra Science classes in 2015. These two ‘temporary’ Science labs will be in operation until mid year when the six permanent Science facilities will opened. In the meantime, Construction continues apace. Keep checking the ‘Build My School’ website for photos and all the latest.

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Last Tuesday Sr. Teresia, a Marist Sister who works in the slums in Jamaica, spoke with the students at Assembly about her life and work with the poorest of the poor to bring them the basics of education and health. In this, Mission Month, the College’s outreach programme is focusing on supporting the wonderful work of the Sisters and more broadly the work of Catholic Mission, whose work takes them all over the world. In the Benedictine tradition of Hospitality, outreach and the welcome and care for the stranger was core to Benedictine spirituality and activities this month will focus on support of the Missionary work in Jamaica.

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Our Middle School leaders were announced on Tuesday to Year 8 and will be presented to the College community at the next full school Assembly. I offer my congratulations and that of the staff to those who will hold a variety of leadership positions next year.

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Year 9 students are on their Outdoor Education Programme this week as part of the Leadership Diploma. All students in Year 9 start the ‘Purple’ Award and are expected to complete Community Service activities and participate in Extra Curricula activities to satisfy the requirements. Our first group of recipients from Year 10 will be presented at the end of this year. I thank the Year 9 Tutors for giving of their own time and commitment in giving the students this fantastic opportunity.

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The process of appointing teachers and ancillary staff for 2015 began this week. We will have 11 new teaching staff next year and have received over 150 applications for these positions.

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On behalf of the staff can I thank the Parents & Friends Association for the wonderful Morning Tea they provided for the staff in celebrating World Teachers' Day. To all those who cooked, bought and prepared the yummy treats, thank you. Special thanks to Mrs Rachael Zappia and Mrs Clare-Ann Taylor who coordinated the efforts on behalf of the P&F.

Michael Hanratty
Principal

SKOOLBAG APP
We have been notified by the team at Skoolbag App that there is a problem with using the App if you have updated your iPhone to iOS 8. The new update for the Skoolbag App should be available within the next 7-10 days. Apologies for the inconvenience.

Year 7 2014 Reflection Day

On Friday 5 September 2014, Year 7 travelled to the Don Bosco Sports Centre for their Reflection Day. The purpose of the day was to reflect on the teachings of the RE classes in Term 3: Ways of Praying.

During the day we undertook a range of activities including decorating a prayer tablecloth for our homerooms, enacting a passage from the bible, singing hymns (so much musical talent!), writing a prayer onto a prayer card/bookmark, writing prayers onto the wooden prayer boards and praying the Lectio Divina.

During each activity we were encouraged to reflect on how these activities are all different ways of praying to our God. My personal favourite activity was the prayer card/bookmark making. It was a nice way to create a heartfelt, personal prayer that we can have with us all the time.

by Gaby Davis

2014 Diocesan Basketball Championships

On Thursday, 9th October, the annual Wollongong Diocesan Basketball Championships took place at Minto Basketball Stadium. A junior boys team, made up of students from years 7-9, represented St Benedict's. The day consisted of 8 intense and challenging games against Catholic schools from the Macarthur and Wollongong regions. Unfortunately, the results did not go our way, however, the boys always played their best. They are to be commended on their excellent effort and their determination to play hard till the final whistle.

Congratulations to the boys that represented our College. Players should be proud of their achievements and for competing with fantastic sportsmanship. Special mentions go to Kody Fletcher and Marlon Font, who finished as our top scorers for the day. It is also important to acknowledge the efforts of our year 7 players, Lachlan Parker and Jonah Nader, as they played extremely well against much older opposition.

Team list: Isaac Hobman
           Kody Fletcher
          Marlon Font
           Lachlan Parker
           Jonah Nader
           Pat Stafford
          Carmine Pelligrino
           Joshua Irons
          Reagan Billett
           Angus Pirotta

Mr Tim Manns
Celia Lashlie - Growing Gorgeous Boys into Good Men!

- Adolescent boys – they seem to disappear into another world where they barely communicate, and where fast cars, alcohol and drugs are constant temptations.
- Will they survive to become good men?
- How can parents and schools understand and help them through this difficult and dangerous time?

Celia knows what can happen when boys make the wrong choices. As the first female prison officer and during her "Good Man Project" she talked to 180 classes of boys throughout. The result was a significant insight into the minds of teenage boys and what they are feeling in this period of their lives. There are challenging suggestions for parents if they want to see their sons become the good men they want them to be. Celia gives parents food for thought and plenty of hints to work with their teenage sons. All parents will find something valuable in this talk - regardless of whether they have sons or not.

Wednesday 29th October
6:00pm-8:00pm
Wollongong Hospital Auditorium, Level 8 Block C.

Bookings Essential: Ph. Donna Forknall: (02) 4254 2700
(Places may be limited) Donna.forknall@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au
SEMESTER 2 EXAMS
for Years 9 and 10 will be held between Monday 3 November and Friday 7 November.
Students should be incorporating a regular revision programme as part of their homework in preparation for the upcoming examinations.

Café Accounts
Please ensure when you have set up your child’s Café account that you have linked their student ID number to the account as this is necessary for the card to work at the Café.
To register for a flexi-school account please go to: https://www.flexischools.com.au

HATS
Students are to have their school hat on sport days as well as their PDHPE days. The wearing of the school hat is compulsory for these activities. Students who do not have a hat may be excluded from participating and will be issued with a Concern stamp for failure to have the appropriate equipment for class. A limited number of hats are available for sale from the school office.

WET WEATHER
As there is no shelter between the permanent buildings and the bus bay students are strongly advised to keep a small fold up umbrella in either their bag or locker.
Teach children to persist

Parents can promote persistence by encouraging their children to keep going and not give in at the slightest hurdle or difficulty.

“Persistence and patience have a magical effect before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish.”

John Quincy Adams

The ability to persist at a task and see it through to the end is one of the most important success attributes that you can develop in a child.

There are numerous times every day when children must persist rather than give in. A young child learning to tie shoelaces must persist. A primary aged student must show determination to finish tasks and a secondary student needs to work through difficulties, particularly those he doesn’t understand or consider completely right away.

They need to be able to persist when work gets hard or life gets tough. They need the ‘stickability’ to work through difficulties and hang in there when things don’t go their way.

Some children are more naturally predisposed to persist than others. They have a determined, even competitive streak in their temperament that doesn’t allow them to give in. These children and young people can drive themselves very hard to succeed.

The results of the Australian Temperament Project show that persistence is the one temperamental factor that can be improved over time. Parents and teachers can develop persistence in children and also impede its development by making life too easy for children so that they don’t have opportunities to persist or hang in there.

Parents can promote persistence by encouraging their children to keep going and not give in at the slightest hurdle or difficulty.

Parents can be a sounding board for children’s gripes but they should show confidence in their ability to cope and get through their difficulties. “You can do it” is far more powerful in terms of promoting an attitude of persistence than “If it is a little too hard then try something else.”

Let children know that there is a correlation between effort and success. In fact, they need to learn that by GIVING EFFORT they will more than likely experience more success. The ability to persist in the face of difficulties maybe an old-fashioned quality but it is one of the best success attributes that children will ever develop.

Here are four practical strategies you can use to promote a sense of persistence in your children:

1. Develop a vocabulary for persistence.
   Words like “Hang tough”, “Work Hard” and “Hang in there” can become part of their every day vocabulary.

2. Point out to children when they stick at a task.
   Most parents know it pays off when they catch their children being good but it also pays off to catch them being persistent. The behaviours you focus on as parents expand so let them know when they have been persistent. Also remind them that persistence generally pays off.

3. Help children to remember times when they experienced success by HANGING IN when they were younger. Let them know that persistence has paid off before and it will again.

4. Talk about HARD WORK with your children.
   They need to understand that to be successful they need to do things that are NOT fun or easy. While it would be good if all work and learning was fun, in reality, this is not always the case.

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