Dear Parents,

Our children are growing up in ‘fearful’ times. We hear constantly from the media and from our politicians, exhortations to not be afraid of “others” whilst at the same time demonizing those of difference. What a stark contrast to the message contained in this week’s Gospel, which reminds us what it actually means to us to actually practice Christianity. There are many parallels with the era in which Jesus lived and the social ideas of the time.

‘Love your enemies’, these words were addressed to a people whose traditions urged them to care for their own; but saw no place for good will and generosity to foreigners in general - whom they looked upon as rivals and enemies. Old Israel had been taken into covenant with the living God, shown in the Exodus to be the champion of the poor and oppressed. Through the covenant they were called to identify with the ways of God. In fact, their traditions – as last Sunday’s reading from the book of Exodus makes clear – were remarkable compared with the outlook of other peoples of their time. As they began to learn what identification with God’s ways involved; they recognised that they must care for the powerless - the poor, widows and orphans, the strangers who had settled among them. But they still had much to learn - their good will was not extended to all of God’s children without exception. In advocating this as the ideal as his New Law of love, Jesus was not abolishing the old Law, but bringing it to ‘fulfilment’. The ideal held up by Jesus as the fulfilment of the Law was clear: ‘I say this to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; so that you will be children of your Father in heaven’ (Mt 5:44).

At the end of last term we received some very good news that the Catholic Education Office was bringing forward some of the building programme for 2014-5. As you would be aware, we are currently building Science facilities and the staff study area as we increase teaching staff numbers to 40 next year. Additional car park works are also underway to be ready for the beginning of 2015. A decision has been made to extend the building works immediately to include construction of the Reception complex all of which are expected to be completed for Semester 2 2015.

In addition, we will go to tender on the Learning Centre (once upon a time “The Library”) and another set of 6 classrooms at the beginning of February with an expected construction completion time the end of 2015. This will effectively complete the southern and western sides of the College. Parents who have driven past will also notice that our temporary school is shrinking with the relocation of 6 classroom modules to the eastern side of the College.


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Whilst on building... we have postponed our Working Bee a few times due to the changing nature of the temporary school and the completion of building works associated with Stage 2. In its place, we are looking to do some quite specific earthworks this term around the front of the school to assist us with drainage and to assist the passage of the students between schools without walking through mud and water. Do you own a bobcat or similar and could you give us a couple of hours on a Saturday morning? If so, please give the school a ring to discuss the job! The General Working Bee is now likely to be held right at the beginning of the year to spruce the College up for the 2015 academic year and we will want window cleaning, some painting and gardening done then. Watch for a flyer towards the end of the year with the exact dates.


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Congratulations to Miss Brady, all our Year 9 students and their tutors for a fantastic effort at the Outdoor Education experience at Upper Colo last week. Despite some stormy weather overnight, a challenging and fun time was had by all. Students in Years 9 & 10 have the opportunity to complete the College Leadership Diploma and the Outdoor Education programme is an integral part of satisfying the requirements. All the components of the Diploma will also appear on each students Record of School Achievement from the Board of Studies.

Congratulations also to Taryn Poidevin, Year 7, who recently competed in the Interschools Equestrian Carnival at Camden representing St Benedict’s and returned with a first place. Well done!

Michael Hanratty
Principal
**Oran Park Poetry Competition**

During Term 3 students of St Benedict’s Catholic College were given the opportunity to enter a poetry competition held in the Oran Park Community. The criteria asked for students to write and present a poem about the ‘Nature of Trees’. Congratulations to Thomas Haidle from Year 8 who won first prize in the competition and Paryss Tully, also from Year 8, who achieved second place. The winning poems will be on display at the Oran Park Town Centre office.

**Miss Lisa Pangallo**

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**MISA Sport**

The second week of Term saw our MISA teams compete in their first round of competition against Macarthur Anglican School. With our Year 9 students out on Camp, I would like to thank the junior students who stepped up and filled in for the week.

Congratulations to the Year 7 Boys Basketball Team who walked away with an impressive 21-4 victory. A special mention to Jonah Nader who scored 17 points, including three 3-pt shots, well done!

Congratulations to the following students who were nominated as the Most Valuable Player for their team;

- Mikayla Dillon (7 Basketball)
- Jonah Nader (7 Basketball)
- Noah Weaver (7-9 Boys Oztag)

Next week our representatives will be competing against Wollondilly Anglican College, we wish them all the best.

**Miss Lisa Pangallo**

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**School Sport**

Term 3 is underway for our weekly College sport and the students are enjoying a wide variety of activities from Zumba in Year 7 to Cycling in Year 10. Our Year 8 students are putting their fitness to the test with HYPE fitness, as well as participating in a skills clinic run by the NRL. Year 9 are fortunate enough to be participating in a soccer skills clinic, as well as enjoying ten pin bowling.

*A reminder to all students that you must have your College hat and a water bottle with you each week for Sport.*

**WHOLE SCHOOL PHOTO**

We recently had the 2014 whole school photo taken. This photo is available for purchase for $15. To order, please obtain an envelope from the College office.

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**Taylor O’Sullivan**

Last week Taylor of Year 10 represented St Benedict’s Catholic College and the Wollongong Diocese at the NSW All Schools Track and Field Athletics Championships at Sydney Olympic Park. Competing in the AWD events for Discus and Shot, Taylor finished in 4th and 6th place respectively. Congratulations Taylor on a wonderful achievement.

Yours in Sport,

Mrs Pereira

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**Miss Lisa Pangallo**

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**P&F Meeting**

***CHANGE OF DATE ***

**Wednesday 5 November**

(to accommodate Melbourne Cup)

**7pm at the College**

All welcome

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**PARKING**

With the planned extension to the carpark area which will begin construction soon, it is timely to remind parents that parking is restricted to designated areas. Please do not double park or park in an area that will restrict traffic flow. Safety for all is our priority. Notice will be given to any changes to parking arrangements.

While construction is being undertaken please be patient and considerate of other vehicles and be especially vigilant of parents and students moving through the carpark.
Science News

Congratulations to Kody Fletcher of Year 9 who has been successful in his application for sponsorship from Camden Rotary to attend the ConocoPhillips Science Experience.

The ConocoPhillips Science Experience is a three-day, hands-on science activities program being conducted in 32 universities and tertiary institutions around Australia in 2014/2015. Kody plans to attend the forensic science program at the University of Sydney in January. We wish Kody all the best and look forward to him sharing his experiences with us in the new year.

STUDENT LEAVE DURING THE SCHOOL TERM

Parents who wish to take students on leave during normal school time should apply in writing to the Principal, Mr Hanratty. If the period of Approved Leave exceeds 15 days in the 12 month period, a form for Exemption from Attendance at School will be sent home. This should then be completed and returned to the College in time for a formal certificate to be issued.

If the number of leave days in the period is less than 15, the College will issue a letter of approval.

Year 7 2015

Parent Information Night
Wednesday 19 November
at the College
Further details regarding location and starting times to follow.

YEARS 7 2015
Student Orientation Day
Friday 21 November

Arrival: 8:15am.
Follow directions to the Quad. Please avoid arriving before 8:00am to allow the present students to arrive. Parking is extremely limited.

Pickup: 2:15pm.
Please be patient with parking once again.

Lunch:
Lunch will be provided but please supply your child’s recess and water.

What to wear:
Your child’s present school sports uniform, including hat/cap.

VACCINATIONS

The third (and final) dose of the HPV (Human Papillomavirus vaccine) and the Chicken Pox vaccine is scheduled for this Thursday 30 October. This applies to all those Year 7 and Year 9 (boys only) who have received the two doses on the previous visits.

PHONE CALLS AND MESSAGES

Students are not permitted to access their mobile phones at any time at school. Students who are found to be using their phones will have them confiscated.

For the first offence during the term the student may pick their phone up at the end of the day. For any further breaches a parent must pick the phone up from the College office.

If parents/carers need to contact their child in an emergency situation they should contact the office and a message will be passed on to the student. Please be aware that Tuesday afternoon is sport time and there may be difficulties getting a message to your child, particularly if they are off site.

The Hospitality Group of the P&F is in need of “Chefs” to assist with the cooking of the BBQ for the Year 7 2015 Orientation Day on Friday 21 November.

If you can spare a few hours to help it would be greatly appreciated. Please contact the office and leave your name and contact number. Thank you.