ISSUE 1-1

9th February, 2007

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Our Vision
Mercy Regional College serves a wide rural community which values growth and diversity in Catholic Education in the Mercy tradition.

Our Mission
In the Spirit of the Gospels we commit ourselves to the core values of community, inclusiveness, learning, care, justice and mercy, excellence and achievement.

Our Goals
Community
Through the Mercy tradition we promote the uniqueness of the community and its heritage.

Inclusiveness
Through the Mercy tradition we welcome and celebrate individual difference.

Learning
Through the Mercy tradition we encourage our community to seek knowledge, to nurture curiosity and to love learning.

Care
Through the Mercy tradition we commit ourselves to caring for each other.

Justice and Mercy
Through the Mercy tradition we seek to act with love, fairness, tolerance and compassion to all.

Excellence and Achievement
Through the Mercy tradition we support, acknowledge and strive for personal excellence and achievement.

Welcome
It is with great pleasure that I welcome all members of the Mercy Regional College community to the 2007 school year. I hope that you have all had an opportunity to rest and relax at some time during the course of the summer holidays. I would like to extend a very warm welcome to our new Year 7 families along with those families who have first time students in other year levels commencing at Mercy.

For the families who have children in Year 7 the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria have drafted an information handbook titled “Catholic Schools: First Choice”. Please find this booklet attached to your newsletter.

I hope that all our new students enjoy their time at Mercy Regional College.

Our Year 7, 11 and 12 students commenced on Wednesday 31st January followed by Year 8, 9 and 10 on Thursday 31st January. From all accounts the students have settled back into school life very quickly.

This year at our Commencement Mass the College will officially launch the new Vision and Mission Statement of Mercy Regional College. Our Vision and Mission Statement must always be at the forefront of any action that we take within our College community. There will be times when we are challenged in fulfilling each aspect of our Vision and Mission Statement, but we must remain vigilant in reminding each other of our responsibilities.

Our Vision and Mission Statement also includes six core values. Over the course of the next six years one core value will be the particular focus for the year.

In 2007 our core value will be:

Community: through the Mercy tradition we promote the uniqueness of the community and its heritage.

Enrolments
Our enrolments for 2007 are in total 390 students, again an increase from last year. Below is the breakdown of the various year levels:

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<th>Year</th>
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<td>Year 7</td>
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<td>Year 8</td>
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<td>Year 9</td>
<td>63</td>
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<td>Year 10</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>Year 11</td>
<td>68</td>
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<td>Year 12</td>
<td>54</td>
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House Captains for 2007
I am delighted to announce the following students as House Captains for 2007.

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<td>Markey</td>
<td>Rachael</td>
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<tr>
<td>O’Sullivan</td>
<td>Baxter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frayne</td>
<td>Rhiannon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tindley</td>
<td>Cabel</td>
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<td>Ryan</td>
<td>Leah</td>
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<td>Dridan</td>
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<td>Rachel</td>
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<thead>
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<th>Male</th>
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<tr>
<td>Darcy</td>
<td>Justin</td>
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<tr>
<td>O’Sullivan</td>
<td>Logan</td>
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Congratulations to all student leaders.

New Domain Name
Over the holiday break Mr Daniel Beard and Leigh Van den Berghe have been working hard to upgrade our servers and other items associated with our information technology system. One of the significant changes to occur was the use of a new domain name. The College web address is now: www.mercy.vic.edu.au
This address follows the same format as all other secondary schools in Victoria. As a result our e-mail address has also changed. They College e-mail address is now: office@mercy.vic.edu.au

2006 Year 12 Results
Monday 11th December was the date for the release of the Year 12 results for 2006. I am delighted to report to the school community that our class of 2006 achieved some very positive results. Megan Campbell was announced as Dux of the College for 2006 achieving an ENTER of 95.15. The College had a 100% satisfactory VCE completion rate having achieved a medium study score of 31 which is above the state average. Six percent of our students achieved a study score of 40 or better. Three students achieved an ENTER of greater than 90 and 47% of the class of 2006 achieved an ENTER of 70 or better. All in all our students have achieved and excelled in 2006. Congratulations and well done!

Commencement Mass
All members of the Mercy Regional College community are invited to attend the Commencement Mass to be held on Tuesday 6th March, 10.00am at St Thomas Church in Terang. Morning tea will be served at the conclusion of Mass in the St Thomas’ Hall. It would be greatly appreciated if parents could bring a plate of morning tea.

New Staff
This year we welcome five new members of staff, Mr James Castles, Mr Michael Clements, Mrs Sarah Gellie, Ms Tina Jenkins and Mrs Rebecca Rees.

Mr James Castles commences a fulltime position at Mercy this year. As many families would know James fulfilled a short term contract towards the end of last year at the College. James holds a Bachelor of Applied Science and a Graduate Diploma of Education from Ballarat University. James will teach Year 11 PE and Outdoor Education along with some junior PE and Science.

Mrs Sarah Gellie will teach in a number of different areas in the junior school during the course of this year. Sarah holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Monash University and a Graduate Diploma of Education. Sarah comes to Mercy from Timboon P-12 College. The College also extends our congratulations to Sarah on her marriage to James just prior to Christmas.

Ms Tina Jenkins graduated from Monash University in 2004 with a Graduate Diploma of Education following the completion of an Arts degree. Tina joins the Creative Arts Faculty, teaching Art and Visual Communication and Design.

Mrs Rebecca Rees is a graduate teacher from the University of Melbourne who completed teaching rounds at the College during term 4 last year. Rebecca will be teaching in the English and Humanities Faculties.

I take this opportunity to welcome our new staff to Mercy and I trust that they will enjoy their time with us.
Calendars, Diaries, Newsletters and Year Books
During the first week of school all students were given a copy of the College Diary. A copy of the school calendar was also posted home to each family. Those families who ordered a Year Book should have also received a copy by now. If this is not the case, please check with your son or daughter in the first instance.

A reminder for parents to return the form which allows for you to indicate your preferred method of receiving the newsletter. If the form is not return the newsletter will continue to be distributed to the youngest in each family.

People to contact at Mercy Regional College
To assist members of the MRC community to make contact with staff in the College who have a position of leadership, I have taken the opportunity to list the various positions and the person to contact.

Principal
Mr Andrew Watson

Deputy Principal
Mr Kerin Glennen

Business Manager
Mr Martin Ellul

Director of Religious Education & Faith
Mrs Margaret Leahy

Director of Learning & Teaching
Mrs Lisa Pope

Head of O’Keeffe Campus
Mr Michael Goss

Daily Organiser
Mrs Jenny Phillips

Year Co-ordinators
VCE Co-ordinator Ms Lyn Davies
Year 9 & 10 Co-ordinator Mr Lachie Lee
Year 7 & 8 Co-ordinator Mr Tony Wynd

Heads of Faculty
English Mrs Margaret Leahy
Mathematics Mrs Leanne Carpenter
Science Mr John Houlihan
Humanities Mrs Lachie Lee
Learning Enhancement Mrs Danae Fraser
Creative Arts Mr Jared Lynn

Performing Arts Mrs Maria Russell
Technology (term 2 onwards) Mr Wayne Walsh
Sport, Health and PE Mr Darren Cheeseman

Please feel free to contact any of the above staff if you have any concerns or questions.

Uniform
I would like to remind all students of the importance of representing Mercy Regional College to the highest possible standard when in the general community. One very practical way in which all students can achieve this is through wearing the College uniform correctly and with pride.

The details relating to the College uniform are clearly expressed in various documents including the student diary. I would ask for parents’ support in ensuring that all our students wear the uniform correctly and with pride.

On Monday this week the College photos were taken. I was present at the taking of each class photo and as a consequence inspected each student’s uniform. The lack of personal grooming surprised and concerned me.

I draw to the attention of students, in particular, and parents to the following concerns:

- the number of boys who had missing buttons from their shirts;
- the number of students who had not cleaned their shoes in a very long time;
- the number of students wearing the incorrect shoes (black leather shoes are to be worn);
- the number of boys who did not have shoes tied up properly, or are in need of new shoe laces;
- the number of girls who did not have shoes buckled up properly and then insisted on wearing them that way;
- The number of students wearing incorrect coloured socks (girls must wear white socks and boys must wear grey socks);

I would ask as a matter of urgency that all students with the support of their parents attend to these matters of personal grooming and wearing of the correct uniform.

Date Claimer
Last year the first Annual Mercy Dinner was held where the College welcomed back and honoured past student Mr Paul Broderick. This year the second Annual Mercy Dinner will be held on Friday 25th May commencing at 7.00pm. Our guest this year will be Fr Ed Moloney, our first past student to be ordained as a Priest. It again promises to be a most enjoyable evening, so please make a note in your diaries and keep the date free.
**Mercy 150th Anniversary**
This year is also the year when the Mercy Sisters celebrate the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Mother Ursula Frayne, Sister Anne Xavier Dillon and Sister Joseph Sherlock, the first Sisters of Mercy in Melbourne. Given our proud history that is linked to the Mercy Sisters, we look forward to commemorating their contribution to education in Camperdown and Noorat during the year.

**St Thomas Centenary Celebrations**
Along with the Mercy 150th anniversary celebrations, St Thomas’ School and the Sisters of Mercy Terang are celebrating their centenary on the weekend of the 24th & 25th February. Further details of the celebration will be in the next newsletter.

**PTFA Meeting**
There will be a PTFA meeting at the McAuley Campus, Camperdown on Monday 12th February at 7.30pm. I would encourage all parents to give serious consideration to attending these meetings. A special invitation is extended to all new parents.

**Coming Events**

- **Friday 9th February**
  - MRC Swimming Carnival

- **Sunday 11th February**
  - Presentation Ball Training – O’Keeffe Campus

- **Monday 12th February**
  - Year 10 Work Experience commences
  - PTFA Meeting – McAuley Campus @ 7.30pm

- **Wednesday 14th February**
  - Year 7 Camp commences
  - Year 11 Retreat commences
  - Year 12 Retreat commences

- **Friday 16th February**
  - Year 7 Camp concludes
  - Year 11 Retreat concludes
  - Year 12 Retreat concludes

- **Sunday 18th February**
  - Presentation Ball Training – O’Keeffe Campus

- **Tuesday 20th February**
  - Board Meeting @ 7.30pm

- **Wednesday 21st February**
  - Presentation Ball Training – McAuley Campus
  - HSSSA Swimming

- **Saturday 24th February**
  - St Thomas Centenary Celebrations

- **Sunday 25th February**
  - St Thomas Centenary Celebrations
  - Presentation Ball Training – O’Keeffe Campus

**Camp and Retreats**
With the Year 7 Camp and the Year 11 & 12 Retreats taking place next week from Wednesday to Friday, I would remind parents that the permission form, medical form and payment must be brought to the College office by no later than Tuesday morning the 13th February. You cooperation in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

**Quotations of Catherine McAuley**

“Now and again bestowed some praise”

**Mercy Awards**

**VCE (Yr 11 & 12) Mercy Award**
Kerry Bant for her organisational skills.

**Middle School (Yr 9 & 10) Mercy Award**
Daniel Lee for participating in the Victorian Spirit of Anzac Award and for the work that he did in preparation for this over the holidays.

**Junior School (Yr 7 & 8) Mercy Award**
Rebecca Buckholz for her efforts to assist in the cleaning up of the classroom after a class activity.
FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER
Matin Ellul

Last week a letter was posted home to all families outlining the Fee structure for 2007. A form was attached giving parents a number of options on how to pay their fees for the year please tick an option and return the form to the office by no later than 14th February. If you wish to pay by Direct Debit or Credit Card Authorisation your form must be returned ASAP late submissions will not be accepted as deductions from your nominated account will commence on 28th February. Information about EMA was included, if you are eligible you must fill out the form and send it back to the office with a copy of your Health Care Card by 28th February. Please find your Fee Statement for the year attached to this newsletter.

Wellbeing Coordinator
Kerin Glennen

Please find attached to the newsletter two flyers on the following programs that may be of interest to your family:

- Centacare’s program for Term 1 & 2 on Family Relationships.
- “Raising Teenage Boys” – Information Night to be held at the College on Wednesday 21st February, commencing at 7.30pm.

Performing Arts Coordinator
Michael Goss

‘LEADER OF THE PACK’
Leader of the Pack, Chapel of Love, River Deep Mountain High, Da Doo Ron Ron, Do Wah Diddy... Sound familiar? Well great news! In August 2007, Mercy will be producing the musical hit production ‘Leader of the Pack’. The show is basically a revue of the hits of singer/songwriter, Ellie Greenwich. You learn a little about her early years growing up; how she would pick out tunes on a piano while her mother wrote them down and how she then went on to become one of the most famous songwriters of all time.

In the next couple of weeks, the College will be holding auditions for any student wishing to be part of the cast. There are numerous roles and plenty of opportunity for any interested students to be involved in choruses. As well, the production will require lots of students to be involved as musicians, crew and assistants. So stay tuned for updates in the coming weeks.

Invitation
Past Students, Teachers, Parishioners and Friends of St. Thomas' Parish Terang are invited to Celebrate the Centenary of the St. Thomas' School and the Sisters of Mercy in our Community on the weekend of 24th and 25th February 2007.

Saturday:
Registration and Afternoon Tea from 1pm at the school.
Open Convent from 2pm-3pm.
Prayer Service for the Deceased Sisters at 4 pm in the church.
Musical Evening at 7.30 pm in the school grounds, BYO Drinks and nibbles.

Sunday:
Mass in the church at 10am celebrated by Bishop Peter Connors.
Blessing of the Memorial and Laying of Time Capsule in the school grounds.
Cutting of the Centenary Cake, Barbecue Luncheon at the school free of charge, BYO Drinks and chairs.
Open School and Convent, Launch of Centenary Book, a fine memento of 100 years of St. Thomas' School and the Sisters of mercy in Terang.

For more information you can contact St. Thomas’ school on 5592 1925 or the Parish Office on 5592 1195 or email terang@ballarat.catholic.org.au.

From the Science Coordinator
John Houlihan

The Science faculty is pleased to welcome two new staff members (Michael Clements and James Castles) to the faculty for the 2007 school year. Michael will be teaching Years 7 and 9 Science, whilst James will be teaching Year 7 science.

This year students from Years 7 - 10 were required to purchase a new science text (Science Quest Victorian Essential Learning Standards: VELS edition) and it has been great to hear some positive feedback from teaching staff and students in regards to the use of these books both in and outside the classroom.

Each of the new science text has an accompanying CD-ROM located on the inside of the back cover. The CD-ROM contains the entire text, interactive activities and animations of key concepts. It is important that student take care in the handling of these CD-ROM’s and that they are stored in a safe place so that they may be sold with the text for the 2008 school year.

I was ecstatic to have two current Year 10 students; Hugh Saunders and Matthew Almond approach me recalling some of their experiences of their attendance at a three-day Siemens Science Experience at Victorian Universities. I look forward to this year’s current Year 9 students taking the time to consider attending this wonderful opportunity for some ‘hands on’ science. The next newsletter will contain an account of Hugh’s and Mathew’s experiences and future newsletters will have information for Year 9 students to register for the 2007 Siemens Science Experience.
Recreation, ‘Give it a Go!’ Week 2007
Recreation, ‘Give it a Go’ Week is on again and here is your chance to get involved in something new. From the 24th Feb to the 4th March the Corangamite Shire is offering more than 40 different passive and active recreation activities for the young and old to try, and it’s all FREE. From Lawn Bowls to Singing; Tennis to Fishing; Ed Gym to Writing - there’s bound to something for you. Come on - Get up and active, and Give Recreation a Go!

For more information contact the Corangamite Shire on 55937 100 or go to www.corangamite.vic.gov.au

Saver Plus

1) Are you a parent or guardian of a student who will be attending school in 2007 or 2008 in the Colac Otway Shire or Corangamite Shire areas?

OR

Are you 18 or over and planning to, or undertaking an accredited Vocational Education Training course?

AND

2) Do you have a current Centrelink Health Care Card or Pension Card?

AND

3) Do you or your spouse/partner have regular income from paid employment?

If you can answer “YES” to all the above 3 questions then you may be eligible to participate in Saver Plus. This program is designed to help people save towards the cost of education.

Saver Plus has been developed through a partnership between the Brotherhood of St Laurence and ANZ bank.

If you meet the Saver Plus eligibility criteria and processes, then every $1 you save (up to a maximum of $1000) will be matched with $1 extra. Please note that this money must be used for educational expenses such as uniforms, text books, school camps, computer etc.

In the Colac Otway Shire and Corangamite Shire areas we are taking applications now. However, places are limited.

Information sessions will be held shortly in your area. For further information please contact Julie Barrow at Colac Area Health on 5232 5369.

New Catholic Primary School – Mt. Clear.
Catholic education is on the cusp of a new and exciting era in Ballarat with the development of a new Catholic school in Mt. Clear.

Our newest school will be known for -
- Proudly celebrating its Catholic identity.
- It’s provision of a quality education program for all students.
- Being environmentally sensitive and developing innovative, sustainable practices as a part of our general educational program.
- Being welcoming and inspired by the person of Jesus.

With these characteristics in mind we acknowledge that one of the many important tasks needing to be undertaken is in the ‘naming’ of our school.

To this end I write to all representatives of the broader Catholic community in the Diocese of Ballarat to seek your insights and wisdom in the naming of our newest school in the city.

Already we have held two public meetings which were very well attended and several planning meetings in the later part of the 2006. The naming of the school is a key platform upon which we can plan for the future education of the children in the Mt. Clear, Mt. Helen and Bunning region of Ballarat.

If you have suggestions for the name of our newest school these can be forwarded to bmaher@ceo.balrt.catholic.edu.au or by mail to -
Brendan Maher
C/O Catholic Education Office
P.O Box 576 Ballarat 3350.

All suggestions will be gratefully accepted and will assist greatly in the discernment process for the eventual naming of our newest school in the City of Ballarat. Thank you for your anticipated enthusiastic response!

From the Director of Learning and Teaching
Mrs. Lisa Pope

ASBA [Australian School Based Apprenticeships] & Work Placement
Parents are reminded that if your son / daughter is doing a ASBA or Work Placement this year that all the paperwork is to be handed to me before students are able to participate in one of the above.

Apprenticeship as a Chef
If anyone is interested in doing an apprenticeship as a Chef a position is available at the Great Ocean Hotel in Apollo Bay. You can contact Sean Malady at the hotel on 5237 6240 or 0417 116 741.
Raising Teenage Boys
is a job for the whole community
“Pathways to Manhood”

Come to a talk!

When:- Wednesday 21st February, 7.30pm

Where:- Mercy Regional College – McAuley Campus Theatre

A speaker from the Pathways Foundation is giving a presentation on Raising Teenage Boys in your school.
A major component of the talk focuses on solutions, and preventative models that empower young men to reach their full potential, as well as providing parents with valuable tools that they can implement immediately. The talks are directed at parents of boys between the ages of 11 and 16, but information provided in the talk is relevant to the wider community.
The talks aim to raise community awareness and encourage open dialogue on issues affecting young men. We will also discuss the award winning Pathways to Manhood Programme and provide parents with a question and answer time.

Specific topics covered in the talk include
- The changing needs of boys as they approach manhood
- Boundary setting
- How to keep them safe
- How to Discipline teenagers
- Practical parenting tips
- Building boys capacity to succeed
- Avoiding communication breakdown
- Traps to avoid
- Rites of Passage in a contemporary society

The aim of Pathways is to bring out the potential in young men and have them full of hope and inspiration as they look to the future.

There is no cost to attend this talk.
You will have the opportunity to make a donation if you find the talk valuable for you and your family. Anything from a gold coin up is appreciated.
Donations will go towards making these talks available to more families across Australia.
Donations are tax deductible.