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 Focus for 2009
Learning: Through the Mercy tradition we encourage our community to seek knowledge, to nurture curiosity and to love learning.

Mr Anthony Splatt (1973 - 2009)
The College staff returned to school this week with the sad news of the sudden and untimely death of Mr Anthony Splatt. Anthony, over the course of the weekend, succumbed to complications associated with pneumonia. Anthony worked at the College on a casual basis (usually one week per month) since 2000 working in the accounts area of the office. Many students and parents would have had dealings with Anthony from time to time when attending to various requirements at the front office. He will be missed by his colleagues who will no doubt remember Anthony for his preparedness to be of assistance, his cheerful greetings and his dedication to his work. The College extends its deepest sympathies to his parents Brian and Judith on the loss of their son, all too soon. Anthony will be fondly remembered and sadly missed by many at Mercy Regional College.

"Eternal rest, give unto Anthony, O Lord and may the perpetual light shine upon him. Rest in Peace Anthony."

Semester 1 Reports
To accompany this newsletter will be your son or daughter’s report for the first semester. Having read each Semester Report I am pleased to say that, on the whole, they will provide good news for both parents and students. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the many students who have achieved excellent results. The pursuit of academic excellence is something that must remain part of the culture of Mercy Regional College. For those students whose reports indicate that they have not fulfilled their potential, this semester, please use the information and comments provided by teachers to make the necessary changes to study habits, at school and home, for Semester 2.

Fr Denis Dennehy
On Sunday, the Parish community, including Mercy Regional College, gathered to farewell Fr Denis as Parish Priest of Camperdown, after 12 years of serving this community. The College also took the opportunity to thank Fr Denis for his 17 years as a Governor of the College. During this time Fr Denis has always had the pastoral needs of our families first and foremost. I often hear of the many wonderful ways in which Father Denis has helped those in need. His time with us has also been characterised by his wonderful rapport and relationship with our students. He has always been able to engage with the students, as evidenced on so many occasions, in the life of the College. His ability to celebrate the Eucharist in a way which is meaningful to our young people, is something that has been appreciated by many of our staff. His kind and gentle manner especially in time of great need or loss has been a
great comfort to many in our community. The College has benefited from his 17-year involvement and he has added to the life of our school in so many ways.

I thank Father Denis for his work as a Governor of the College and we wish him all the very best for the future and trust that he will remain a friend of the College for many years to come.

On Track Data
Last week, the On Track data was released by the Victorian Education department. This data indicates the pathways taken by all Victorian students who completed Year 12 in 2008 and adds to the information previously collected since 2003. The data for Mercy Regional College is summarised in the table below and certainly highlights the diversity of pathways that our young successfully pursue after leaving secondary school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total completed Year 12 (Actual Number)</th>
<th>55</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>VCAA Data</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tertiary Applications and Offers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tertiary Applicants (Actual Number)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Offers %</td>
<td>81</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAFE/VET Offers %</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Any Tertiary Offer %</td>
<td>96</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>On Track Survey Data - April 2007</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>In Education and Training</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>University enrolled %</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE/VET enrolled %</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apprentice/Trainee %</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not in Education and Training</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Employed %</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Looking for Work %</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deferred %</td>
<td>22</td>
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Information Sessions for 2010
The following information sessions in relation to 2010 will be held on Wednesday 15th July:

- VCE Information Evening for 2010 commencing at 7.30pm at the McCauley Campus (this session will be for our current Year 10 & 11 students)
- Year 9 & 10 Information Afternoon commencing at 1.30pm at the McCauley Campus (this session will be for our current Year 8 & 9 students)

Along the Track
I have attached to this newsletter, for your interest, on page 8, a reflection title “The Need to Belong”, written by Jim Quilinan from the Diocesan Catholic Education Office in Warragul. I hope you enjoy this reading.

Youth Allowance
Many of you will be aware that in the recent Federal Budget it was announced that there would be changes to the Youth allowance criteria to gain independent status. These changes will have significant impact on our students and other students from the country who wish to pursue studies and by necessity are required to live away from home to do so. Previously, students were required to earn $19,500 in the preceding 18 months to qualify as independent and hence many defer studies for twelve months to qualify and make tertiary study more affordable. The changes appear to be that future students would need to work 30 hours, per week, for at least 18 months and this becomes effective from 1st January 2010. This change will have an impact on two groups of students. The first is those who are presently doing a gap year and are working to qualify. They may no longer meet the guidelines. The second group is our current students who had hoped to apply. Some might argue that this change discriminates against country students. If you feel that this is the case, I would urge parents to contact your local Federal Member, Mr David Hawker, to express your concern about this change and the possible impact it may have on your son or daughter.

Commencement of Term 3
Term 3 will commence for both students and staff on Monday 13th July. Please note that this is a change from the usual commencement day of Tuesday. As parents may recall there were three Staff Professional Development days at the beginning of this year, one of which replaced the day usually taken at the beginning of the new semesters. Buses will be operating, on this day, as normal. I would like to wish all students and their families a restful holiday. May you return to the college ready for the successes and challenges that lie ahead in Term 3.

Andrew Watson
PRINCIPAL

ATTENTION PARENTS
Please note the uniform shop will not be open during the school holidays and will commence trading again on the first Tuesday of Term 3.
Mercy Awards

**VCE (Yr 11 & 12) Mercy Award**

Phillip Zentai for his efforts in organizing the hot chip day.

**Middle School (Yr 9 & 10) Mercy Award**

Nathan Bambridge for winning the Blue Ribbon Medal (Police Award) for his conduct during a local football match.

**Junior School (Yr 7 & 8) Mercy Award**

Michael Williams for his great attitude and helpful nature in all his subjects.

The key is to complete an action plan for each of your goals -

**Goal:** What is it that I want to achieve?

**Starting Target:** What is a short term target that I can do to get moving towards my target?

**Purpose:** Why do I want this to happen?

**Benefit:** What rewards will achieving this goal bring to me?

**Disadvantaged:** How will I be affected if I do not achieve this goal?

**Decision:** Is my goal SMART......Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound?

**Needs:** From Me..What skills do I need? How can I learn these skills?

**From Others:** What help do I need from others? How and when will I approach them?

**Information:** What information do I need? How and where will I find it?

It never too late to either re-assess or begin planning, so that goals can be reached. With reports coming home it is a good time for parents and students to talk honestly regarding the setting of goals for Semester Two.

**Vicki Askew**

At the end of this term we say farewell Vicki Askew from our Mercy Community and Wellbeing Team. As a community we have been fortunate to have had her services and expertise available to so many in our school. Vicki has not only worked closely with students, parents and staff but has also been instrumental in the introduction and development of the SCADE program in our college. The program now actively supports Years 9, 10 and 11 and students now have a forum to assist in the planning of SCADE days, about what is important to them regarding alcohol and drug education in our society.

We wish Vicki all the best in her new employment and thank her for all that she has done at Mercy, especially her positive input to the Mercy Wellbeing team.

Wellbeing Report

**Kerin Glennen**

Semester one has come to a conclusion with its reports, exams and other forms of assessment. It is now timely for parents and students to discuss, assess and where needed re-assess the need to revisit a goal action plan. These steps are relevant for students, no matter which year level they are in presently.

As the old saying goes, failing to plan is planning to fail. However, the following actions may assist with helping to set a clear path to follow, help to achieve a student’s targets one-by-one and ensure that he or she is capable of achieving their goals.

Wellbeing Report

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Recently, our students from Year 7 - 12 sat subject examinations and students were busy completing final assessment pieces. This has been a busy process for all involved and now it is time to reflect. The end of semester reports will be mailed out over the holidays and parents and students will have the opportunity to review these reports to gain an insight on how they are performing. It is important to use this information as a focus for improvement in student learning.

The Assessment Tasks listed in the student reports are used by teachers to make summative evaluations on how your student performed in these tasks. Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence to make informed and consistent judgments to improve future learning. In general, a single assessment item will not tell us all we need to know about your child’s achievement and how it can be improved. Therefore, a variety of assessment tools are often used so we can match them closely to the type of information we seek and to make sure that a range of learning styles have been catered for. Such assessment tools vary across subject domains and may include assignments, projects, essays, oral presentations, design folios, production pieces, multimedia presentations and topic tests. The end of semester examination is only one form of assessment tool, which needs to be read in conjunction with other assessment types to gain an overall view of your child’s performance and how they can improve in the future. The reports aim to pinpoint your child’s strengths and advise how to develop these for the future. They also outline any weaknesses and how they could be addressed. In all, the reports are aimed to provide feedback to our students about how they may improve their work. As each of our students has a unique set of talents and gifts it is important to recognise that not all assessment types may suit your child’s learning style, yet it is through the assessment process that gaps in learning and skill development can be established and worked on to improve these areas. I would encourage all parents to talk to their child about their reports, celebrate their learning achievements and identify areas to build upon as a learning focus for the future.

The teachers at Mercy have tried their best to ensure your child’s reports are accurate and error free. However, mistakes do happen and if you have a query or have found a mistake that you would like amended please feel free to contact the appropriate Head of School to make the arrangements to have them reprinted, or discussed.

**Curriculum Report**
**Mrs Lisa Pope**

**Coming Events**
**Term 3**

**Monday 13\textsuperscript{th} July**
- Term 3 commences for all students and staff

**Wednesday 15\textsuperscript{th} July**
- Year 9/10 Information afternoon 1.30pm - 3.30pm
- VCE Information Evening - 7.30pm

**Wednesday 22\textsuperscript{nd} July**
- Mt Buller Snow Camp commences

**Friday 24\textsuperscript{th} July**
- Mt Buller Snow Camp concludes

**Tuesday 28\textsuperscript{th} July**
- Board Meeting - 7.30pm

**Wednesday 29\textsuperscript{th} July**
- Ballarat Diocesan Schools Board visit to MRC

**Thursday 30\textsuperscript{th} July**
- Ballarat Diocesan Schools Board visit to MRC

**Monday 3\textsuperscript{rd} August**
- Unit 3 Examination Results released
- PTFA Meeting McAuley Campus - 7.30pm
- Enrolment Interviews McAuley Campus: 3.30-6.00pm

**Tuesday 4\textsuperscript{th} August**
- Enrolment Interviews O’Keeffe Campus 3.30-6.00pm

**Wednesday 5\textsuperscript{th} August**
- Year 10 Boys Retreat commences

**Thursday 6\textsuperscript{th} August**
- Year 10 Boys Retreat concludes
- Year 10 Girls Retreat commences

**Friday 7\textsuperscript{th} August**
- Year 10 Girls Retreat concludes

**Thursday 13\textsuperscript{rd} August**
- Twilight Theology @ McAuley Campus 4-6.00pm

**Monday 17\textsuperscript{th} August**
- MID TERM BREAK – no classes

**Tuesday 25\textsuperscript{th} August**
- Board Meeting - 7.30pm

**Friday 28\textsuperscript{th} August**
- Frayne Speech Festival - Mt Lilydale Mercy College

**Monday 31\textsuperscript{st} August**
- PTFA Meeting @ O’Keeffe Campus - 7.30pm

**Friday 18\textsuperscript{th} September**
- Term 3 concludes at 2.10pm
From the Director of Teaching and Learning
Mrs Lisa Pope

Careers News
This holiday period is a great opportunity to begin to plan dates to attend University and TAFE Open Days. This planning process should begin at Year Nine and Ten, as it is impossible as rural students to attend several universities in a year and it can become disruptive to your study routine in the later VCE years.

It is important to begin to think about the universities you may wish to attend, investigate the courses they offer and see if any suits your needs. It is also important to investigate if courses have specific prerequisites (subjects which need to be studied), as this information may be vital to making correct subject choices. A great website which enables you to look at both University and TAFE courses and the required prerequisites is VTAC Course Search.

This link can be located on the college website and is a great research tool to investigate what courses are available. www.vtac.edu.au/courses/searchcourse.html A list Of Open Day Dates are listed below.

On another matter, Deakin University will be holding a “Parent Information Event” at the Melbourne Campus Burwood and Altona Meadows Library & Learning Centre on Thursday 2nd July 2009 7:00pm - 8:30pm. For further information checkout their website on www.deakin.edu.au/parent

For more Career Information refer to the college website www.mercy.vic.edu.au/careers.asp

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<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Open Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>Australian Catholic University</td>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>16 August</td>
<td>10.00am - 3.00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australian Institute of Public Safety</td>
<td>Ballarat</td>
<td>30 August</td>
<td>10.00am - 3.00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE</td>
<td>Bendigo</td>
<td>24 - 28 August</td>
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<tr>
<td>Box Hill Institute</td>
<td>Elgar</td>
<td>23 August</td>
<td>10.00am - 3.00pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nelson</td>
<td>23 August</td>
<td>10.00am - 3.00pm</td>
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<td>Whitehorse</td>
<td>23 August</td>
<td>10.00am - 3.00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Sturt University</td>
<td>Open Day, Every Day</td>
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<td>Chisholm Institute</td>
<td>All campuses</td>
<td>17 - 22 August</td>
<td>see website</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deakin University</td>
<td>Geelong - Waurn Ponds</td>
<td>9 August</td>
<td>10.00am - 3.00pm</td>
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<td>Melbourne - Burwood</td>
<td>23 August</td>
<td>10.00am - 4.00pm</td>
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<td>Warrnambool Campus</td>
<td>16 August</td>
<td>10.00am - 2.00pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Geelong Waterfront Campus</td>
<td>9 August</td>
<td>10.00am - 3.00pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>City - RSVP / Bookings</td>
<td>15 August / 3</td>
<td>11.00am -</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>essential (02 9923 8888)</td>
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<td>October 12.30pm</td>
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<td>Footscray City College</td>
<td>23 August</td>
<td>1.00pm - 4.00pm</td>
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<td>Elly Lukas Beauty Therapy College</td>
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<td>Footscray City College</td>
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<td>Footscray City Films</td>
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<td>GippsTAFE</td>
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<td>Gordon Institute of TAFE</td>
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<td>Grenadi School of Design</td>
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<td>Holmesglen</td>
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<tr>
<td>International College of Hotel Management</td>
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<td>International Design School</td>
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<td>JMC Academy</td>
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Twilight Theology
Margaret Leahy

The next Twilight Theology session will be held at the College on Thursday August 13th at 4pm. Please try to come along. Everyone is welcome and the sessions so far this year have been wonderfully interesting and have provoked a great deal of stimulating discussion.

Living My Life: Ethical Decision-Making in a Complex World
In this Twilight Theology Seminar we will look at the nature of ethics. The seminar will examine ideas of good and evil and how these terms might be defined. We will also examine how different ethical frameworks such as utilitarianism and virtue ethics might inform our decision-making in areas such as bioethics and war. The seminar will include brief insights into the science of stem cell research.
Dear School Principal

I would like to thank you for your co-operation in helping ensure parents, carers, legal guardians and independent students were provided with key facts about the Education Tax Refund initiative.

As the end of the financial year (30 June 2009) approaches, we would like to remind those eligible to make their Education Tax Refund claim.

We also want to ensure that those eligible:
- know how to claim, and
- have saved receipts for purchases they can claim and continue to do so.

I would therefore again request that you include the key messages below in your school newsletter and/or any other appropriate notices you distribute to parents, carers, legal guardians or independent students, many of whom may be eligible to make a claim.

⚠️ To avoid any confusion, please insert the information below without making changes to the text.

In addition, the Tax Office has prepared, specifically for schools, some frequently asked questions and answers. These questions and answers can be found on the Tax Office website by following the link below.


Thank you for your assistance.

Yours faithfully

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Erin Holland  
Deputy Commissioner of Taxation

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Education Tax Refund – Don’t forget to claim

How do I claim the Education Tax Refund?

- In your tax return.
- If you don’t lodge a tax return, claim on a separate form or over the phone.
- If you use a tax agent, make sure you ask them to claim for you.

The Education Tax Refund lets you claim up to 50% of eligible education expenses for school children. If you are eligible, you can get back up to $375 for each primary student and up to $750 for each secondary student.

You can claim things like text books, stationery and even internet costs.

If you receive Family Tax Benefit Part A for a child at primary or secondary school, you will be eligible. Some other people are eligible too, to find out more about this and other information such as what you can and can’t claim go to australian.gov.au/educationtaxrefund or call the Tax Office on 13 28 61.

⚠️ Remember, you need to keep all receipts for expenses you claim.
The Need to Belong

Not long after Herod has John the Baptist beheaded, Jesus is warned to leave Galilee as Herod also wants to kill him. Jesus replied:

Go tell that fox, I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal. In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem! O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! (Lk 13:31-35)

The image of the hen protecting her chickens against the fox is very powerful. We all need to feel secure, to feel protected. Psychologists tell us that such feelings are an integral part of one of our most basic needs - the need to belong. Today we are presented with extraordinary means of ensuring that we feel as if we belong - technology connects us like we have never been connected before - mobile phones, the internet, email, SMS, face books and so on allow for almost world-wide instantaneous communication. The security of knowing that we are ‘in touch’ with our loved ones, almost wherever they may be, is very comforting. Does anyone still remember having to ‘book’ phone calls overseas, sometimes days in advance?

But, paradoxically, do these wonderful inventions also keep us apart? It can be easier, more efficient and quicker to email or SMS, but does that mean we don’t talk, that we don’t spend time together, listening, watching, conversing – just enjoying one another’s company? Wherever possible, shouldn’t these technological wonders augment our communication rather than being its major focus?

Life is busy. There never seems to be enough time, especially for simply talking, conversing, making deeper connections, listening to the other. There is so much to be done. To find time we can find ourselves trying to distance ourselves from people, trying to move them on as quickly as possible so we can get back to what we were doing. Sometimes we can go through the motions of a conversation but our minds are a hundred miles away or back at the desk or the workplace where the job awaits.

So how welcoming are we? Do you see yourself as an includer, an affirmer, a person who thinks about others? Do you go out of your way to welcome the stranger – the new person at work, the new people in the neighbourhood or the parish or the club? Having lived in six different suburbs and towns, such welcomes are very, very rare. Many communities pride themselves on being open and welcoming but the reality can be very different. For example, two visiting speakers from the USA told the story of being asked to speak at a Diocesan gathering in the US. They went to Mass in the local parish church where they were staying and were both struck with how impersonal it was. A nod at the door when they arrived and, although they stood outside the church after Mass, no-one spoke to them. Later that day they spoke at the Conference. Afterwards a group came to speak to them. “You must come to our parish”, they said. “We are not like other parishes here – we are so welcoming and friendly, a real community”. No prizes for guessing which parish it was!

Jesus offers us a challenge in his hen and chicken image. Despite their continuing rejection, despite their treatment of those sent before Him, Jesus still longs to gather ‘Jerusalem’ in his embrace. He made a similar point in another place:

Treat others the same way you would want them to treat you. If you only love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. (Luke 6:31-36).

It’s easy to make people feel welcome if they are ‘one of us’, if they respond as we would wish or if we like them. It is much harder to welcome those who may be different, perhaps difficult or demanding or even aggressive. Once again, Jesus challenges us:

When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbours; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. (Luke 14:13-14).

How do we make the recalcitrant student feel more welcome, the anxious parent, the demanding patient, the complaining neighbour, the impatient customer and so the list goes on. Psychologists also tell us that people who regularly and often persistently complain (you know, those we try to avoid as much as possible) do so to gain a sense of participation and meaning in their immediate community. They too want to belong!

The image of a child standing alone in a playground without friends, without companionship is a graphic image. But is it restricted to the playground? In our neighbourhood or community, are we aware of the lonely, the sick, the bereaved, the shy who find it difficult to mix. Do we try to include them - do we allow ourselves to be touched by those who will not repay us, those who may challenge us?

Can be a tough call, can’t it?

Regards

Jim Quilllan
Phone: 0401 933 023
Email: jquilllan@dsci.net.au

The Need to Belong

16 June 2009
West Island Nursery
Fundraising plant order list
Quality Plants – Best Prices

This New Local Nursery is offering us some special prices on popular plants and the College also benefits. Phone or email through orders for delivery, also see website
www.winursery.com.au

OR to see full selection, come along to nursery and 10% of sale will go to school.
Phone for more information/orders
Sharon Adlam 55954207
04 37339888

WEST ISLAND NURSERY
45 RUTTERS RD BOORCAN
win@westvic.com.au

6" pots: $4.00
Liriope Purple or white attractive foliage and great filler $10 for $35
English Lavender
6" pots $5.50
Chysia ternata, great hedge
Boronia Pinkie, Rosemary
Pittosporum silver sheen, appealing evergreen shrub great screen hedge
Ughi Chilian quava great small hedge has flowers, foliage and fruit for jams

Large range of grevillea plants
5" pots $3.22
Protea, white, pink, red
Leptadenrons
Big selection of Natives from $5
FRUIT TREES

MERCY REGIONAL COLLEGE
FUNDRAISING VOUCHER
Mention this for 10% of sales to go to MRC fundraising
Volunteers Needed
If there are any parents who are able to assist in the canteen at the O'Keeffe Campus, Noorat, on a Monday, Thursday or Friday at lunchtime from 12.50pm - 1.20pm, could you please contact Maureen O'Loughlan at O'Keeffe on 5592 5353.