ISSUE 4-5

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 2007
Community
Through the Mercy tradition we promote the uniqueness of the community and its heritage.

Advent
We are in the midst of the season of Advent, a very important time in the Church’s Liturgical Calendar. The season of Advent is symbolized by the Advent Wreath. The wreath is a symbol of growth and life. Traditionally adored with purple and pink candles, it reminds us of the power of the light of Christ overcoming evil in our world. The circle symbolizes the continuity of life. The word “Advent” means “coming” (from the Latin Adventus) and this is the time we wait in joyful anticipation for our God to come, yet again, to come and be born in our hearts. The season of Advent recognizes the coming of Jesus, the Son of God, in a special way. During Advent we are challenged to be open to the unexpected and ready for a few surprises! That is not always easy. The familiar is always more comfortable than the unfamiliar. God will not be boxed or labeled or “assumed”. God will be God and come amongst us in ways that we least expect.

   Lord, as we look to the birth of Jesus,
   Grant that the light of your
   love for us will help us to become lights in
   the lives of those around us.
   Prepare our hearts for the joy and gladness of your
   coming,
   For Jesus is our hope.
   Amen

End of Year Mass
On Thursday 13th December the last day for our Year 7-10 students we celebrated the Eucharist together as a school community at St Patrick’s Church, Camperdown.

This was followed by the presentation of the Year 7-11 Academic and Endeavour awards along with the Spirit of Mercy Award.

The Academic Award is presented to the student who achieved the highest academic marks across the board when all subjects are taken into consideration. The Endeavour Award is presented to the student who has demonstrated effort and commitment to achieve excellence in his/her school work.

This year the College is also presenting a Spirit of Mercy Award to be presented to a student who has demonstrated a commitment to the Core Values of Mercy Regional College as expressed in our Vision and Mission Statement.

The students will have:
- worked to ensure that Mercy Regional College is a welcoming and hospitable community
- supported and appreciated the need for social justice
- helped to encourage a climate within the classroom which values learning
- cared for all that are part of MRC in words, actions and deeds
- acted with compassion and tolerance to all
- strived to achieve their best in all aspects of school life – faith, academic, cultural and sporting.

I am delighted to announce that the following students have been presented with Academic, Endeavour and Spirit of Mercy Awards for 2008.

13th December, 2007
### Academic Awards
- Elizabeth Smart    7A
- Dallin Sonnet    7B
- Rachael Harney    7N
- Connor Saunders    8A
- Grace Evans    8B
- Jac Donnely    8N
- Lucy Keough    9A
- Jordan Clarke    9B
- Sarah Grendon    9N
- Grace Heffernan    9M
- Marnie Buchholz    10A
- Michael Harney    10B
- Hugh Saunders    10C
- Millicent Cabel    10C
- Adam Thulborn    11A
- Nicholas Stephenson    11B
- Bernard McLeod    11C

### Endeavour Awards
- Kerry Geppert    7A
- Michael Krybolder    7B
- Nicholas Bourke    7N
- Ashley Bradley    8A
- Laura Ryan    8B
- Anna Kemp    8N
- Rebecca van den Eynde    9A
- Amy Henry    9B
- Megan Johnstone    9N
- Melinda Corona    9M
- Emily Baird    10A
- Matt Hinkley    10B
- Georgia Muir    10C
- Sarah Kemp    11A
- Marley Binder    11B
- Ebony Brewer    11C

### Spirit of Mercy Awards
- Nicholas Bourke    Yr 7
- Grace Kingston    Yr 8
- Matthew Absalom    Yr 9
- Jacqueline Heffernan    Yr 10
- Tom Collins    Yr 11

### Other Awards Presented -

### Australian Defence Force 2007 Long Tan

#### Leadership & Teamwork Awards
- Jacqueline Heffernan    10C
- Roseleen Lenhan    11A

#### Sports Award
- Jahd Anderson    8A

#### Performing Arts Award
- Hugh Saunders    10C

#### Textiles Award
- Lucy Keough    9A

### 2008 Year 7 Orientation Day
Tuesday 4th December was the Year 7 2008 Orientation Day. The day provided the opportunity for our 70 new students for next year to see how Mercy operates, meet their teachers and the other students who will be in their homeroom for 2008. The day involved some testing for English and Maths and a chance to sample Music, Drama and Physical Education as well as a BBQ lunch. Thanks to Mr Tony Wynd for his organization of the day and the other teachers and students who assisted in various ways. We look forward to welcoming our new students at the beginning of next year.

### New Staff 2007
The following staff have been appointed to teaching and administration positions at the College next year:

- **Mr Simon Horan** comes to us from Padua College where he has been teaching in the Design Technology and Woodwork area. Simon is a past student of Mercy who completed teaching rounds here in 2006. We welcome Simon back home!

- **Mrs Margaret Jeffery** will also join the staff next year in a part time capacity. Margaret has worked at Mercy during the course of this year filling in for a number of teachers who have been on leave. Prior to undertaking relief teaching at Mercy, Margaret had worked at St Patrick's School. She will teach Year 7 & 8 classes in 2008.

- **Mrs Kym Penry** returns to Mercy after a period of maternity leave and she will be teaching English and Drama. We welcome Kym back to MRC.

- **Ms Pam Martin** will join our administration staff in the New Year. Pam will work three days a week in the reception at the McAuley Campus. Pam who has worked for the year in the office at St Patrick’s School will be a familiar face for our families with connections to St Patrick’s.

### Farewell
At the end of this year we will farewell Mr John Houlihan who has accepted a position at Parade College and Mr Michael Goss who returns to St Patrick’s College. Both John and Michael have been outstanding teachers at Mercy and have been instrumental in the development of a very positive learning and teaching environment during their time at the College. We wish John and Michael all the very best for the future.

### Year 12 Results, ENTERs & VTAC
Monday 17th December is the date for the release of the Year 12 results for this year. I am sure many of our Year 12 students are anxiously awaiting a text message, mail or information over the internet regarding these results. In many cases the results will reflect the amount of work and effort put into studies this year and will provide for a number of different opportunities and options for 2008. At the same time it is important to remember all is not lost if the results are not as expected.
There will always remain other avenues open to our Year 12 students for further work and study options. To assist our students with making decisions about the future all Year 12 teachers will be available for the week to consult with parents and students. Also each student has been allocated a staff member as a mentor. The role of this mentor is to initially make contact with the students and see what, if any assistance is required in terms of making some decisions about 2008 and beyond. Finally, best of luck to all our Year 12 students, I am sure your results will make the College very proud of your efforts this year.

**New Reception**

This week we have moved into the first of our new and refurbished buildings after a long wait. The new reception and associated meeting rooms and offices have now been officially handed over to the College. From all accounts the staff, students and visitors to the College are most impressed by our new facilities. When visiting the College the new reception area is adjacent to the west wall of the Convent as you enter the College from Henderson Street. I look forward to welcoming both parents and visitors to our new reception space in the New Year.

**Car Raffle**

I am delighted to announce that a record profit has been achieved with the Car Raffle. After a recent meeting of the Car Raffle Committee the final surplus for 2007 was $24,795.18. Our ticket sales were also at an all time high with 5193 tickets being sold. A big thank to all parents who assisted with the selling of tickets at various locations throughout the district. The above result is only possible with your support. My appreciation and thanks are extended to the Car Raffle Committee, in particular Mrs Maureen Adeney who undertakes the coordination of the raffle each year. Well done all!

**Performing Arts**

Our Performing Arts Faculty has been very busy of the last two weeks with the annual instrumental concert being held last Wednesday and the end of year musical - “History Never Repeats” being held on Tuesday night. All students involved in both events demonstrated their talents in the performing arts and they are to be congratulated on their efforts. It is great to see the performing arts being highlighted at Mercy. A special thank you to Mrs Maria Russell who has been instrumental in bringing together both the instrumental program and the musical. She has undertaken an enormous workload.

Thanks are also extended to our instrumental teachers, Mrs Helen Bourke, Mr Peter Sharp and Mr Matt Hewson. Finally thank you to the Mercy staff who all contributed in some way to “History Never Repeat”. Such events are not possible with a dedicated and committed staff.

**Commencement Date 2008**

The College office will open for 2008 on 21st January from 10.00am to 2.00pm. Normal office hours will resume 24th January (8.15am - 4.30pm) Teaching staff will return on Tuesday 29th January. Our Year 7, 11 and 12 students will commence on Wednesday 31st January. Year 8, 9 and 10 students will resume on 1st February.

**Office Closes**

Please note that the College office will close for 2007 on Thursday 20th December 2007.

Finally this newsletter will be the last produced for 2007. As another year at Mercy Regional College has draws to a close I would like to conclude by thanking staff students and parents of Mercy Regional College for your continued support and encouragement throughout the year. It is very much appreciated. In particular I would like to thank most sincerely the College's three Canonical Administrators, Fathers Denis Dennehy, Barry Ryan and Barry Stickland, Board Chairperson, Mr Peter Johnston; Director of Catholic Education, Mr Larry Burn; Director of Religious Education, Dr Liam Davidson and CEO Secondary Consultant, Mr Max Fletcher for their support, advice and encouragement during the course of 2007.

I thank particularly the members of the College Leadership Team: Mr Kerin Glennen (Deputy Principal), Mr Martin Ellul (Business Manager), Mrs Margaret Leahy (Director of Religious Education) Mrs Lisa Pope (Director of Learning and Teaching) Mr Michael Goss (Head of O'Keeffe Campus), Mrs Lyn Davies (VCE Coordinator) Mr Lachie Lee (Yr 9 & 10 Coordinator) and Mr Tony Wynd (Yr 7 & 8 Coordinator). They shoulder great responsibilities and I value their support.

2008 promises to be a very exciting year in the history of Mercy Regional College as we embark upon another significant building program at the O'Keeffe Campus as we move towards the establishment of a junior campus for our Year 7 & 8 students.

To all families and staff of Mercy thank you for the wonderful year and may you all have a very blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.

As 2007 marked the 150th Anniversary of the arrival of the first Sisters of Mercy in Melbourne, Ursula Frayne, in conclusion I provide you with the prayer written for this occasion:

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As 2007 marked the 150th Anniversary of the arrival of the first Sisters of Mercy in Melbourne, Ursula Frayne, in conclusion I provide you with the prayer written for this occasion:
Bless us,
O God of Mercy Regional College in this special year of remembrance,
with a deepening awareness
of the meaning of your mercy:
that faithful love and tenderness
that You have for each of us.

Help us in our efforts to be
people of compassion and merciful justice.
Challenge our hearts and minds
as we strive to live the Gospel values
of kindness, respect and service of others
Lead us to those most in need,
to places and situations gripped
by poverty and neglect.
Guide our world in the ways
of peace and tolerance.

May your Mercy be a light of hope,
a way of freedom,
a source of truth.

We make this prayer
In the name of God
the Creator and Sustainer of all,
Jesus the expression of mercy
and the Spirit who animates
and enables us on our journey.

Amen.

Coming Events

Monday 17th December
- Release of Year 12 Results

Tuesday 18th December
- Teaching Staff conclude

Thursday 20th December
- Office closes

2008 Calendar

Monday 21st January
- Office re-opens (limited hours 10 – 2.00pm)
- Collection of Books at McAuley Campus
  (10.00am – 3.30pm)

Thursday 24th January
- Normal office hours commence (8.15am - 4.30pm)

Monday 28th January
- AUSTRALIA DAY

Tuesday 29th January
- Teaching Staff commence
- Staff PD Day

Wednesday 30th January
- Staff PD Day

Thursday 31st January
- Year 7, 11 and 12 students commence
- Welcome and Introduction to Year 7 BBQ at
  McAuley and O’Keeffe Campuses
  commencing at 6.00pm

Friday 1st February
- Year 8 – 10 student commence
- Swimming Trails Year 7 - 9

Sunday 3rd February
- Presentation Ball Training

Friday 8th February
- MRC Swimming Carnival

Sunday 10th February
- Presentation Ball Training

Monday 11th February
- Year 10 Work Experience commences (all week)

Wednesday 13th February
- Year 7 Camp and Year 11 and 12 Retreats commence

Friday 15th February
- Year 7 Camp and Year 11 and 12 Retreats conclude
- Year 10 Work Experience concludes

ANDREW WATSON
PRINCIPAL
**Year 12 Graduation Awards**
In the last newsletter I listed the winners of the 2007 Graduation Awards and omitted the following students and the awards they received.
I would like to sincerely apologise to these students and their families for my oversight.

**Sue Bohm**

**Long Tan Leadership & Teamwork Award**
Matthew Gstrein

**Ken Jehu Manual Arts Award**
Nicholas Lenehan

**VET Excellence Award**
William Bradshaw
Amy Unwin

**Deakin University Achievement Award**
Darcy O’Sullivan

**Report on “Movember”**
*James Castles*

A number of the male staff members at Mercy Regional College took part in the Annual Movember Fundraiser. The way in which the Fundraiser works is by growing a mustache for the whole month of November and in the process receive donation.

The money raised by Movember will be used to create awareness, fund research and increase support networks for those men who suffer from prostate cancer and depression.

The school community was able to contribute $300 to the $12 million already raised. Thank you to all, for their generous support.

A picture of myself and John Houlihan sporting our moustaches.

**Outdoor Education Camp**
**Sea Kayak and Mountain Bike Ride**
*James Castles*

Throughout the year we have tried to give the students studying Outdoor Education an opportunity to experience different activities that can be done within the Victorian environment. The activities included,
- Surfing Camp at Torquay
- Bush Walking Camp at Wilsons Promontory
- Snowboarding/Skiing Camp at Mt Buller

We recently returned from our fourth and final camp where we had a Sea Kayak and a Mountain Bike Ride. The purpose of the camp was to understand how recreational activities can have an impact on the environment. Both activities were very demanding, but at the same time extremely enjoyable.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the students for their time and effort throughout the year. Everyone who participated in these activities had a fantastic time, although none of this would have been possible without the support of the parents. Thank you.
St. Patrick’s School
Christmas Carols & Farewell

Wednesday 19th December

BBQ at the Church grounds
6 ~ 7.30pm
St. Patrick’s Parents & Friends Association are supplying and cooking the BBQ. BYO salad, drinks and chairs.

7.30 ~ 8.30pm
Carols will be sung by each grade

All past friends and families of St. Patrick’s School are invited to join us for Christmas celebrations and farewell to our fantastic Principal Michael Saunders.

Michael has been principal at St. Patrick’s school for the past 13 years and will still be a part of our school network moving to St. Colman’s in Mortlake as Principal and teacher next year.

Michael’s first year at St. Patrick’s was also this year’s Year 12’s first year.

We will take this opportunity as a School community to thank Michael and wish him all the best.