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 2010
Justice and Mercy: Through the Mercy tradition we seek to act with love, fairness, tolerance and compassion to all.

Lent
This Wednesday the College marked the beginning of Lent with the distribution of ashes during our Commencement Mass. Ash Wednesday marks the commencement of the forty day period before Easter Sunday, a time when we are called to prayer and abstinence. I have included below a Lenten Reflection.

We are dust from our birth,  
But in that dust is wrought  
A place for visions, a hope that reaches beyond the stars  
So reflected the poet Elizabeth Jennings, and so too does the church as we enter every year into Lent, touched with dust.  
That this dust is “wrought” on our foreheads in the sign of our salvation reminds us that we are entering into the season which leads us “beyond the stars” to great vision and hope of Easter.  
At no time in our adult life is our Christian identity so visibly marked on our skin.  
The cross of ash is not the gentle and fragrant tracing of baptism: the cross which another brother or sister traces on us on Ash Wednesday is rougher, grittier; dirtier—because that is what our lives have become.  
The words spoken to us as we receive the ashes are also stark: “Remember that you are dust, and dust you shall return”.  
Through prayer, fasting and almsgiving in the Lenten weeks, we are preparing ourselves for Christ to cast his Holy Easter fire once more upon our forgetful discipleship, the dryness of our faith, the brittleness of our patience and peace.  
Mixed with waters of baptism, the promises of which we renew at the Easter Vigil, our dust and ashes become a rich and fertile soil for gospel seed.

Commencement Mass
On Wednesday, the College community celebrated the commencement of the school year with Mass at the McAuley Campus, Camperdown. Whilst the Eucharist we celebrated was for Ash Wednesday the College community also took the opportunity to focus on our school’s Vision and Mission statement. This year, through the Mercy tradition, we seek to act with love, fairness, tolerance and compassion to all. As a school community we will endeavour to:

- express our love for one another by appreciating the dignity of each person
- instil empathy and seek justice for the marginalized
- develop policies and procedures that are fair and compassionate to all
- further develop social justice awareness and action

At the conclusion of Mass, the presentation of our leaders and the formal installation of our College and House Captains took place.

School Captains:  
Joe Gleeson & Lauren Carlin
School Vice Captains:
Tom O'Loughlan & Anastasia Walsh

Social Justice Leader:
James Lenehan

Sports Captains:
Ebony Boyd & Xavier Gstrien
Performing Arts:
Captain: Lucy Keough

House Captains:
Frayne: Amy Henry & Luke Mahony
Markey: Grace Heffernan & Jordan Clarke
Ryan: Lauren Field & Eamonn O'Connor
Tindley: Alex Harry & Matthew Moloney

SRC Liaison:
Sam O'Flynn

Year Level Representatives:
Yr 7: Sam Carlin
Yr 8: George McMeel
Yr 9: Andrew Meade
Yr 10: Tom Watson
Yr 11: Ashley Ludeman

The College community also took the opportunity of acknowledging and congratulating the Dux of Mercy Regional College for 2009, Georgia Muir, who achieved an ENTER score of 94.70.

The following students were also recognised for their outstanding academic achievement for 2009 for achieving an ENTER score of 90+

- Matt Hinkley 94.15
- Jacqui Heffernan 92.9
- Jacob Monk 91.65
- Stacey Hall 91.6
- Michael Harney 90.95
- Rachael Broomby 90.75
- Milli Cabel 90.6
- Hugh Saunders 90.4

The Dux of each Unit 3 & 4 subject studied at Mercy last year were also presented with their academic prize.

Below is a list of recipients:

Accounting
Jacqui Heffernan

Biology
Jacob Monk

Business Management
Michael Pollock

Chemistry
Michael Harney & Jacob Monk

Design & Technology
Lucy Adams

English
Georgia Muir

Food Technology
Holly Smith

Health & Human Development
Rebecca Steel

History Revolutions
Bethany Evans

Legal Studies
Jacqui Heffernan

Further Maths
Milli Cabel

Maths Methods
Michael Harney & Matt Hinkley

Outdoor & Environmental Studies
Lauren Field

Physical Education
Matt Hinkley

Psychology
Jacqui Heffernan

Studio Art
Rachael Broomby

Congratulations to our academic prize winners!

I would like to thank Fr Matthew Thomas and Fr Eugene McKinnon for celebrating the Mass for us and Mrs Jo Saunders, Ms Mel Sadler, Mrs Janet Backhous, Mr Luke Bourchier for their preparation and organisation of the Mass and Danny Gordon, Mark Evans and Hugh Saunders for setting up the de Chantal Stadium.

Extended absences from the College
Wherever possible, extended absences from school for holidays and other commitments should be avoided. Where this is not possible, a written letter to the Principal, explaining the circumstances, is required. To send a message to school via your son or daughter informing the class teacher of a week's family holiday is not acceptable.
Swimming Carnival

Last Friday, the College held its Annual Swimming Carnival, with students participating in numerous events. The winners for the day were Frayne House. Age champions were:

13 Yrs Female Haylee Davis
   Male Jack Williams
14 Yrs Female Dana Rhode
   Male Jack Goold
15 Yrs Female Kayla Spicer
   Male Dylan Lee
16 Yrs Female Caitlyn Mitchell
   Male Daniel Unwin
17 Yrs Female Meagan Carlin
   Male Jack McKenzie
18 Yrs Female Lauren Carlin
   Male Xavier Darcy

Congratulations to all members of Frayne House and the Age Champions. I also thank Mr. James Castles for his outstanding co-ordination and organization of the Swimming Carnival.

Retreats and Camps

Last week saw our Year 12 students undertake their Annual Retreat, staying just on the outskirts of Dunkeld. Our Year 7 students went to Portland for their Orientation Camp. I was able to visit both the Year 7 Camp and the Year 12 Retreat during the course of the three days. I was most impressed with the way all students were participating in the programs and all teachers spoke very highly of the students’ behaviour and involvement.

The Year 11 Camp was held in Melbourne and the last day at the Noorat Community Centre. The first two days of the camp saw Year 11 students venture to Melbourne and inspect two tertiary institutions, RMIT and ACU, along with becoming familiar with life in Melbourne, such as catching public transport etc. The final day of the camp was spent at the Noorat Community Centre, hearing from Dr Brendan O’Brien a past student of MRC who is currently a Senior Lecturer of Human Movement and Sports Sciences at University of Ballarat and Shane Garner, also a former student, who specialises in the fields of individual and team coaching, team identification and development, leadership branding and development, time management and goal setting, which are all delivered with a sense of purpose, fun and enjoyment. The focus was on many and varied options that are open to students once they have completed their secondary education.

The camps and retreats certainly cannot operate without a team of dedicated staff. When staff volunteer to organise and attend camps and retreats this requires a significant sacrifice of personal time. It requires teachers to be away from families and other commitments for three days and while on camp being responsible for students 24 hours a day. With little sleep each night, our teachers are able to ensure that our students have a wonderful and worthwhile experience. I also think it is important to note that not one extra dollar is paid to staff to undertake camps and retreats.

I am indeed grateful to all the staff who have already organised and participated in our Camp and Retreat Program this year and those who will do so. I trust that both parents and students are grateful for their efforts also.

I wish to thank the following staff who gave up their time to allow the camping and retreat program to operate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 11 Camp</th>
<th>Year 12 Retreat</th>
<th>Year 7 Camp</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kerin Glennen</td>
<td>Lyn Davies</td>
<td>Tony Wynd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa Pope</td>
<td>Jenny Phillips</td>
<td>Darren Cheeseman</td>
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<td>Luke Bourchier</td>
<td>Fr Matthew Thomas</td>
<td>Jo Saunders</td>
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<td>Berni Sinnott</td>
<td>Melanie Sadler</td>
<td>Simon Horan</td>
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<td>Dean Ludeman</td>
<td>Justin Staunton</td>
<td>Fiona Sargeant</td>
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<td>Kym Penry</td>
<td>Rebecca McGarth</td>
<td>Sharyn Grinter</td>
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<td>Helen Kenna</td>
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<td>James Castles</td>
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<td>Sarah Hinkley</td>
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<td>Stacey Hillman</td>
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<td>Lachie Lee</td>
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Year 10 Work Experience

While our Year 7, 11 and 12 students were at camp or retreat, our Year 10 students participated in the Work Experience Program for the week. The reports from the employers have been overwhelmingly positive and I congratulate our Year 10 students on the way they participated in the workforce for the week.

Particular thanks and appreciation are extended to Mrs Lisa Pope, who was responsible for the organization of the Work Experience program, Mr Wayne Walsh, who worked with the students last year in preparing them for the week and Mrs Maureen Adeney for her assistance with the organization of the placements and the completion of the extensive paper work associated with Work Experience.

Student Diary

Each student has been issued with a College diary. Contained within the first 8 pages is information relating to the various school rules, regulations and policies. I would urge all parents and students to take the time to read these pages.
**Presentation Ball**

Once again, our Year 11 students will be participating in the Presentation Ball at the end of Term 1. The Presentation Ball this year will be a fully ticketed event. The need for this has arisen due to concerns that have been raised over recent years about the number of guests who attend. In particular, concerns relate to compliance with fire regulations at Glenormiston College, Occupational Health and Safety. There are issues for staff and parents who volunteer, as well as concerns about the number of un supervised children on the evening and the poor behaviour of some guests, along with general security concerns.

Therefore, each Year 11 family who has a child participating in the Presentation Ball will be allocated 7 tickets. With families, Year 11 students and staff the total number of guests for the 2010 Presentation Ball will be in excess of 800 people. This is a number that can be catered for, comfortably, by Glenormiston College.

**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 by 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 proudly.

In relation to the boy's shirt, students in Year 7 & 8 should only be wearing the white shirts. These students have not had the option of purchasing the old green shirts. For students in Year 9 - 12 the transition period from green shirts to white shirts concludes at the end of 2010. Therefore, at the commencement of 2011 boys will only be permitted to wear white shirts, regardless of the year level. I would recommend that during the year white shirts are purchased for Year 11 boys so they can have close to two years wear of these.

**Lunch Passes**

Lunch passes are only issued to students who live close to the College and with a parent’s permission. Friends are not permitted to go with students who have been issued a lunch pass and a letter from parents is required before a pass will be issued. Lunch passes are not issued to students who wish to go down the street for lunch or to run errands for parents. There are significant legal liability issues surrounding the care of students during the school day, hence the need for all students to remain on school grounds during recess and lunch.

**Bus Passes**

Students who wish to have a bus pass must have a letter/note from parents detailing the reason for the bus pass. If there is no letter/note from parents a bus pass will not be issued by any of our office staff.

**Procedures for reporting absences to the College**

All absences need to be reported to the College, on the day of absence, by 9.00am. The College switchboard opens at 8.15am. Absences then need to be followed up with a note, to the homeroom teacher, the next day that students are at school. The College has a legal responsibility to be able to account for all students. Also, students who arrive late to school need to have a note from parents explaining the reason for late arrival. Parents' co-operation in these matters will eliminate the need for the College to make phone calls later in the morning. It should be noted that all absences are reported on school reports and the College has responsibilities to report student absenteeism to various educational authorities. Absences from school should be avoided where possible.

**School Photos**

On Wednesday, 3rd March, school photos will be taken. Year 7 & 8 students will have their photos taken at the O'Keeffe Campus. The Year 9 - 12 students will have their photos taken at the McAuley Campus. The College will arrange for the transport of students from the O'Keeffe Campus, to the McAuley Campus, for family photos. Students will receive a photo envelope in Homeroom next week. If parents wish to have a family-photo taken of all their children, please ask your son / daughter to collect a family-photo envelope from the office. On this day, students will have their photos taken with school jumpers on. Therefore, it is essential that all students have their school jumpers with them on this day. Needless to say, the rest of the uniform should as always be worn correctly. The polishing of school shoes prior to Monday would not go astray.

**PTFA Information**

The first PTFA Meeting will be held at the McAuley Campus, commencing at 7.30pm, on Monday, 21st February. So please come along and lend your support to the Committee. Also, letters were sent home to Year 10 parents requesting help in various ways with the Presentation Ball. Could parents please return the permission slip at the bottom of the letter as soon as possible.

**Along the Track**

I have attached to this newsletter, for your interest, on page 8, a reflection titled “Lent a Call to New Vision” written by Jim Quillinan from the Diocesan Catholic Education Office in Warragul. I hope you enjoy this reading.
Prayer
In conclusion, I offer this prayer for us to pray in the coming week:

All things look to you, O Lord,
to give them their food in due season:
look in mercy on your people, and hear our prayer for
those whose lives and possessions have been lost,
or are threatened by fire and flood.
In your mercy restore your creation and heal our land.
Protect those who fight the fires, and those who care for
them.
So guide and bless your people,
That we may enjoy the fruits of the earth
and give you thanks with grateful hearts,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Andrew Watson
PRINCIPAL

From the Business Manager
Lynn Wadley

Tuition Fee Accounts
All families have had their account posted out to
them last week. Parents are required to fill out a
“Tuition Fee Arrangement Form” and select a
payment method for the year. If parents are wishing
to pay by “Direct Debit” or “Credit Card
Authorisation”, forms must be returned to the
College office by Friday 19th February. Please
adhere to the timelines set as late application forms
will cause delays in deductions.

Education Maintenance Allowance 2010
Forms are available from the College office and
applications for Education Maintenance Allowance
must be submitted by Friday 26th February.

To be eligible to claim EMA, all applicants must hold
a current Commonwealth Health Care Card or
Pension Card which was valid from the 27th January
2010. The EMA is paid to eligible parents of students
up to the age of 16 years old.

We encourage those families who are eligible for
EMA payments to use this money towards payment
of school fees.

Reminder to Parents
There are a number of text book left over from the
book sale last year. If parents wish to claim these
books, could they please do so ASAP. If not claimed
within a week, these books will be sent to the
Missions to be transported overseas to help needy
students in poor countries.

COMMING EVENTS
TERM 1

Sunday 21st February
Presentation Ball practice 3.30pm – 5.30pm

Monday 22nd February
PTFA Meeting – 7.30pm McAuley Campus Staffroom

Wednesday 24th February
Year 8 Camp commences
Presentation Ball practice 3.30pm – 5.30pm

Thursday 25th February
Year 7 Injections

Friday 26th February
Year 8 Camp concludes

Sunday 28th February
Presentation Ball practice 3.30pm – 5.30pm

Wednesday 3rd March
School Photos
Presentation Ball practice 3.30pm – 5.30pm

Monday 8th March
Labour Day

Wednesday 10th March
MRC Athletics Carnival
Presentation Ball practice 3.30pm – 5.30pm

Sunday 14th March
Presentation Ball practice at Glenormiston College
3.30pm – 5.30pm

Tuesday 16th March
Board Meeting 7.30pm

Friday 19th March
Presentation Ball

Monday 22nd March
PTFA Meeting – 7.30pm O’Keeffe Campus Staff Room

Wednesday 24th March
Outdoor Education Surf Camp

Thursday 25th March
Outdoor Education Surf Camp
Parent/Teacher/Student interviews 4.00pm – 8.00pm
Student conclude Term 1

Friday 26th March
Parent/Teacher/Student interviews 10.00am-2.00pm
Careers Report
James Castles

The Age VCE & Careers Expo
Will be held on Friday, 23rd April 10am – 4pm and Saturday 24th and Sunday, 25th April 10am – 5pm at Caulfield Racecourse. The Age VCE and Careers Expo is in its 18th year. The Expo provides a unique opportunity for students and parents to obtain VCE, tertiary course, career information and resources. The seminar program features presentations on VCE subjects, course, career and study advice. $10.00 admission is valid for all 3 days of The Expo and includes seminars, a comprehensive Visitor Guide and The Age. A discounted admission of $5.00 per student (valid for 3 days) for groups of 5 or more is available on Friday 23rd April. On Friday, students can attend seminars on VCE English, Literature, Maths Methods CAS, Further Maths, Biology, Business Management, Economics, Health and Human Development and Psychology. Bookings close 16th April and for more information visit www.education.theage.com.au or check out “The Age” on Monday 19th April. Mr Castles has some complimentary entry tickets.

RMIT University
RMIT offers a number of events designed to give students in Years 10, 11 and 12 real experience and insight into the world of science, engineering and environment and health and medical sciences.
Health & Medical Sciences - Tuesday 29th June at Bundoora
Electrical & Computer Engineering - Wed 30th June & Thur 1st July at City Campus
Environment Science & Engineering – Tuesday 6th July
Aerospace, Mechanical Engineering – Thursday 8th July
Behind The Scenes Tour Medical Laboratory Visits – Monday 5th to Friday 9th July
Register online at www.rmit.edu.au/seh/experience for all of the above events.

Trial A Trade
In cookery, patisserie, baking, butchery, hospitality and confectionery. An opportunity for young people to learn new skills and experience a career for a day – Saturday, 20th March at William Anglis Institute Melbourne. Bookings 9606 2111 and for more information go to info@angliss.edu.au or visit www.angliss.edu.au

Dairy Farm Apprenticeship
If anyone is interested please see Mr. Castles.

Congratulations
Congratulations to Darci Unwin who has obtained a hairdressing apprenticeship at No Limits in Camperdown.

Structured Workplace Learning
Could all students going out on a work placement for 2010 please obtain a new Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement form from the office? For insurance cover, new forms have to be filled in for 2010.

Upcoming Career Days
March 21st- Veterinary Science Open Day - University of Melbourne (Werribee Campus) March 30th - Discover Deakin (Burwood, Waurn Ponds, Warrnambool)

For more information, please feel free to email the Careers teacher on info@mercy.vic.edu.au

Work Experience Report
Lisa Pope

The students at MRC represented our school well during their work experience. It was great to hear the feedback from the employers, parents and our students on the week and what our students managed to achieve. Once again, I would like to thank Maureen Adeney and Wayne Walsh for their work in preparing our students; this is a big job with quite the paper work trail, but from all accounts worth the effort! Thank you to our host employers, we are very lucky to have such hospitable hosts. Finally, could all Year 10 students please send their work experience evaluation forms to the office. We had very good feedback from all the employers so it is important that we have a copy to place in your school file and the original will be returned to you to help build your careers portfolio. Below are two reports from student’s experiencing Work Experience last week. Photos are on page 10.

Report by Millie Moloney
Last week from the 8th until the 12th of February, all of the year 10’s attended Work Experience. We all chose a workplace and worked there for the week. I was off to Coast-fm and 3YB. I completed tasks like copy, which is the writing of ads and production, which is the recording and editing of the ads. I also sat in while announcers were recording their shifts and also with the John and Jane Breaky Show one morning. Lois Chislett and Trent Hill showed me what it is like to work in the news room. I also helped out in the reception area and went out on the milk runs to primary schools and handed out free milk to them. I enjoyed my experience and can definitely see myself working there one day in the future.

Report by Simone
On the second week of school I had the opportunity to do Work Experience at the Bendigo Hospital. I have always had an interest in nursing and hope to pursue it as a career in the future. Each day, I worked at a different unit. These included the Children’s Unit, Orthopaedic Unit, Nursing Home, Inpatient Rehabilitation and the Medical Unit. During
this time I observed things such as naval tubes being placed down children’s noses, the struggles of putting IV’s into a young screaming child with the result of almost fainting on the first day. Only being a student, I was restricted from doing a number of things involving the patients. Some of the tasks I was able to carry out and to learn, were taking blood pressure, heart rate, temperature, blood sugar levels and also washing the elderly patients who were no longer capable of showering themselves. Although washing patients is not something you look forward to doing, it is the appreciation they show of being cared for that counts. My time at the Bendigo Hospital was worth the while and has given me many opportunities and built on numerous skills, such as my confidence and appreciation for the people who, everyday, look after and show their love to the people in need.

**Year 7 Portland Camp Report**  
*Samuel Watt (Year 7A)*

On Thursday, last week all of the new year sevens went on camp to Portland. On arrival at Portland, we met with the other group of year 7’s (7C and 7D), to go for a walk along the Cape Bridgewater section of the Great South Walk. As we walked the path we saw a few seals in the water below. We also saw many more seals resting on the rocks.

We were then split into two groups at the Maritime Museum. One group went sightseeing around Portland and the others stayed at the Maritime Museum. We were shown around the Museum by Janis who showed us a sperm whale skeleton, that had a horrible rotten smell. She told us about all the local shipwrecks and old maritime stories.

After the Maritime Museum, we all went to the pool it was great! As soon as we were changed, we all went straight for the water slide. We found the fastest way to go down the water slide was to lie dead straight and turn your rear towards the corner.

After swimming, we went back to the place we stayed, had tea and played games in groups. The games we played were a bit random but very good fun. We then had supper and went to sleep.

The next day, we went back to Port Fairy for a boat ride and then walked to the light house. On the boat ride we went out into the bay, getting very wet. After the boat ride, we went to Lake Pertobe for lunch. When we had finished our lunch, we went over to the flying fox which was great fun. We then returned to school later that day.

The camp was great fun and was probably better being split into two groups. Being split made us all branch out and make new friends. Thank-you to all the teachers who came with us.
As always, the relays played the key point in gaining house points. They are an exciting and fun way to end the day. The teacher versus student race proved to be popular this year, with both a female and male relays. The female teachers triumphed over the female sport captains, but the male students gained revenge by comfortably defeating the teachers.

Congratulations and thank you for all who helped make the swimming sports such a success and a special thank you to Mr. Castles for all the extra work he put in for making these days great.

### Sports Report

Report by Xavier Gstrein and Ebony Boyd

On Friday, 5th of February, the college began its sporting year with the swimming sports, held at the Camperdown pool. The day started with very ordinary weather, but like the competition, heated up as the day progressed. Everyone got into the spirit of the day. We witnessed unique and inspiring chants and many interesting costumes.

Large numbers of parents turned up to support their children and it was good to see so many people enjoying and participating in the excitement of the day. Standout performers on the day included Kayla Spicer, Daniel Unwin, Dylan Lee and Xavier Darcy, who all competed, won and broke records in their respective age groups.

Once again, the level of competition was high, and the age champions each fought for and deserved their titles:

- **13 year old female:** Haylee Davis
- **13 year old male:** Jack Williams
- **14 year old female:** Dana Rhode
- **14 year old male:** Jock Gould
- **15 year old female:** Kayla Spicer
- **15 year old male:** Dylan Lee
- **16 year old female:** Caitlyn Mitchell
- **16 year old male:** Daniel Unwin
- **17 year old female:** Meagan Carlin
- **17 year old male:** Jack McKenzie
- **20 year old female:** Lauren Carlin
- **20 year old male:** Xavier Darcy

These age champions and all other competitors strived and succeeded in earning points for their houses and contributed to such impressive results:

- **4th place:** Tindley - 943 points
- **3rd place:** Ryan - 994 points
- **2nd place:** Markey - 1028 points
- **1st place:** Frayne - 1218 points

Amy Henry and Luke Mahoney graciously accepted the 2010 Swimming Sport shield on behalf of Frayne and thanked all students involved in earning Frayne the winning points.

As always, the relays played the key point in gaining house points. They are an exciting and fun way to end the day. The teacher versus student race proved to be popular this year, with both a female and male relays. The female teachers triumphed over the

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**MUSIC NOTICE**

There are only two places remaining for any students wishing to learn piano or flute. Please telephone Michelle Mackinnon on 5592 2171 for further information.
Lent – A Call to New Vision

Lent is not a time of penance to appease a vengeful God. On the contrary, in the words of Pope Benedict, “We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution. Each of us is the result of a thought of God.” God loves us dearly. God already knows none of us is perfect. God already knows that none of us knows everything, that each of us struggles in developing a mature and open relationship with God.

We, on the other hand, can become so ‘self-satisfied’ as it were, we plan, we set our course, we become self-assured, complacent and even judgmental about others who don’t do things our way. We follow ‘the rules’ so surely God will love us more. Others can sometimes become fearful, timid and even depressed in our quest for perfection rather than focusing on God’s invitation, God’s free gift of grace. But “there is a crack in everything,” Leonard Cohen sings, “That’s how the light gets in.” Lent is not simply a timely reminder of our imperfections, our foibles and failures – it is a reminder that it is often in our weakness and in our failures that the light gets in, we discover our need for God. It is often in the unpredictable moments and events of life that we allow God in. God gets in through ‘the cracks’ in our lives.

All reality is sacred, “imbued with the hidden presence of God.” Lent is about trying to become more sensitive to God’s hidden presence and activity in our lives, about becoming more aware of God’s invitation to relationship, to friendship. Lent is about developing a sacramental perspective, one that “sees” the divine in the human, the infinite in the finite, the spiritual in the material, transcendent and the eternal in the historical. A sacramental vision “sees” God in other people, events, places, objects, the environment, the whole world. A sacramental vision understands that all these are actual or potential carriers of the divine presence, and that it is through these material realities that we can encounter the invisible God.

Developing this sacramental awareness invites us to feel our smallness, to feel our vulnerability, to feel our fears, to feel the cracks, as it were and to open ourselves up to God’s presence, God’s embrace. This sense of the sacred in our lives means taking time to look more closely at those things which dull our sensitivity to God’s presence, those things we often refuse to face – unnecessary busyness, our anger, our jealousies, our distance from others, our fantasies, our pomposity, our tendency to judge others (in place of God), our addictions, our unresolved hurts, our faith doubts, and our moral secrets, our indifference to others.

Developing our sensitivity to the sacred in our lives means spending time with God – there is no substitute for prayer. Listening and responding to God’s invitation requires time and patience. Spending quiet time with God enables us to be more aware of God’s presence in other parts of our lives. Prayer takes us into ourselves, into the depths of our being where there are no secrets, no illusions. Is it any wonder that Jesus told us:

But whenever you pray, go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father who is hidden. And your Father who sees from the hidden place will reward you. And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. (Mt 6:6-8)

Rather than imagining our prayers ascending to God, God already knows what is in our hearts, what is in our mind. Rather, prayer enables us to go deeper within, to place our imperfections, our foibles, failures, our weakness into the hands of God, not so God will take over but to discover in them God’s invitation to growth. Rather than our mistakes and failures being fatal flaws, they are opportunities for forgiveness, reconciliation and new beginnings. Our tendency to sit in judgement on others can become a catalyst for growth in understanding, a widening of our vision and our understanding that God’s message comes in many forms and through different people. Going deeper into ourselves through prayer makes us more sensitive to others, more sensitive to the events and places and people that make up our lives for it is through them that God calls us to renewal and relationship. Such a sensitivity can transform our lives:

Sin is a loss of sacramental vision. Sin has no imagination. No longer is the smallest particle of creation a theophany of grace. No longer is every moment a revelation of eternity…sin is blind. It is blind to beauty; it resists the light of openness. It controls by fear. It chooses to live in isolation. It cannot bless or celebrate or be passionate about anything. (Begin with the Heart p83)

Our lives are literally teeming with sacramental moments. Unfortunately we like the manageable and predictable God – we don’t tend to like imagination much, we like to paper over the cracks that let God in. It is easier to live by the rules rather than letting the God of wonder and mystery, imagination and joy rekindle our faith. That’s the challenge of Lent.

Regards
Jim Quilliman

Phone: 0401 933 023
Email: jquilliman@dcs.net.au

* Pope Paul VI, opening address before the second session of the Second Vatican Council in 1966

Lent – A Call to New Vision 16 February 2010
**Work Experience Photos**

Below are photos of Mercy Regional College students on Work Experience.
Year 11 Camp
Grace Kingston & Jackson Gaut

Day 1
We left school to go to Melbourne on the 10th of February, for our year 11 school camp. We arrived in Melbourne at about 11 o’clock and went straight to the RMIT University where a lady talked to us about different career paths and all about university life. We all gained much information about tertiary studies and uni life that was very important to us. ACU was our next destination and once again we furthered our understanding about uni life and courses.

After lunch we separated into two groups, one group heading to Hard Rock Rock-climbing and the other heading to the City Baths. Everyone thought that the rock climbing was a thrilling experience and a majority were able to reach the top of the course which was a great challenge in itself. The pools were also great fun and a relaxing way to spend the afternoon.

It was then time to settle in at our accommodation at South Yarra. After we had all unpacked we headed straight off in groups to Chapel Street to find a place to have tea then headed back into the city to Southbank. We finished off the day by a walk along Southbank then headed back to our accommodation.

DAY 2:
The next day we woke early to prepare for the big day ahead. The group split into our colour groups. Our group leaders were given a brown paper bag with a map, camera, pen and the list of places that we had to visit.

The groups green, pink, blue, yellow, brown, black, white, orange and red set of with their group leaders being the teachers. Each group went to different parts of Melbourne with all groups going to a hospital. Some of the places the groups visited included St Michael’s church, Luna Park, Melbourne museum, Lygon Street, Bourke Street, China town and many other exciting places!

We also visited the Mary McKillop institute to learn a bit about her life and what she has contributed to in Catholic Education.

Many of the students were new to the Melbourne experience and didn’t know what it was like to travel by public transport so it was exiting for all of us.

After we had completed the tasks we all met back at the Arts Centre for some lunch and free time. When the time was up we boarded the bus and headed back for Camperdown.

The Melbourne experience was fun and one that many of us will remember.

Day 3
On our last day we were bussed out to the Noorat Community Centre to receive a talk from Brendan O’Brien and Shane Garner. Brendan gave us a talk about his life and how he came to where he is today, as one of the leading sport scientists in Australia. He taught us about the variety of options we have when we leave school and how we can change pathways if all fails the first time. Shane gave us a talk about how he came to where he is today and about self-motivation and how we need to prepare ourselves for the oncoming year 12 and when we leave school. We all learned valuable tips about getting into good working habits and also to keep trying and never give up if things aren’t going the way we would like. Overall, the day was excellent in preparing us all for our futures.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Terang Mortlake Junior Football Training
U/16 starts Wednesday 24th Feb at 5 o’clock
Please bring your sneakers.
Coach: Nick Moloney 0437 921 744
U/14 & U/12 starts Thursday 18th March at 4pm.
U/14 Coach Paul Moloney 0408 529 942
U/12 Coach David Meade 0408 523 228
Thursday 18th March will be Registration Night for all teams & there will be a parent’s meeting afterwards.
We require all parent’s to be in attendance.
All Welcome to attend.
Any queries please contact Robert Arundell 0408 364 894 or Symone Moloney 0439 683 276

Terang Mortlake Junior Netball Training
U/15’s & U/13’s start training on Wednesday 24th Feb.
U/15’s start at 4.30
Coach Marie Bolitho 0409 435 526
U/13’s start at 5pm.
Coach Kerri Crawley 0400 388 466
Any queries contact Joanne Kenna 0409 517 739
All Welcome

Cobden Night Netball
Season commences 1st March 2010
A Grade Monday night 6.30pm
A Reserve & B Grade Wednesday night 6.30pm
VNA must be paid before taking court
Seniors (18 & over) $58
Junior (12-17 yrs) $40
Modified (11 & under) $30
Fax or email your team ASAP to Kelli Pekin
Fax – 55952053
Email – dkpekin@bigpond.net.au

Deakin Sharks: Junior Netball Training
Commences Thursday 18th February from 4:45pm - 6pm
All interested players (new and old) to meet at Teetree Lake in Mortlake near the bowling club.
Inquiries please call Peta - 0427 338 560
Mel - 5599 2178
Recreation Week 2010, ‘Give it a Go!’

It’s on again and this year boasts more than 65 events in all townships and for all ages.

From Saturday 27th Feb to Sunday 7th March.

You can try surf ski paddling, Ed Gym, horse riding, karate, football, fun runs, swimming, hockey, tennis and heaps more.

Or perhaps you would prefer picnics, walks and kite flying.

Recreation Week encourages Corangamite Shire residents of all ages and abilities to try a new recreation activity and enjoy the fitness, health and social benefits of participation.

There’s something on in various townships across the Shire and for all ages so there’s bound to be something for everyone!

For a full program of activities contact Council’s offices on 5593 7100 or go to www.corangamite.vic.gov.au

Parking
A request also from the local policeman before he starts to enforce!!!!

Vic Roads have placed a no parking zone opposite side of the road where the 5 buses arrive and depart from 8 till 9.30 in the morning and from 2.30 till 4 in the evening. This is for safety reasons.

The best places for parents to park waiting to pick up their “treasures” is on the same side as the buses south side of William Street or in Cunningham street near the police station.

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Strengthening Family Relationships
Warrnambool Term 1 2010

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<th>Program</th>
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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>Managing difficult behaviour in children -</td>
<td>For parents of children aged 2-12 yrs</td>
<td>Thursday March 4, 11 &amp; 18</td>
<td>10 am – 12pm</td>
<td>Centacare Warrnambool</td>
<td>$30 Concession available</td>
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<td>1-2-3 Magic &amp; Emotion Coaching</td>
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<td>• Encourage good behaviour</td>
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<td>• Lessen parental feelings of frustration &amp; stress</td>
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<td>• Help children to understand and better manage their emotions</td>
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<td>Parenting Adolescents</td>
<td>For parents of adolescents aged 10-14 yrs</td>
<td>Thursday 25 March</td>
<td>10 am – 12.30 pm</td>
<td>Centacare Warrnambool</td>
<td>$10 Concession available</td>
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<td>• Adolescent development</td>
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<td>• Building a strong relationship</td>
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<td>• Parental self care</td>
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Enquiries and bookings contact Carol on: 5599 3000

Sorry no child care available