

MERCY REGIONAL COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 2-3

Friday, 25th May, 2018

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 2018

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

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Already this newsletter finds us approaching the end of May and almost halfway through the year, quite extraordinary. The month of May has always been sacred in the liturgical calendar as the month devoted to Mary, the mother of Jesus. And, although Marian devotions are not common in many parts of Australia, they form the centrepiece of the religious practices of many European and Orthodox communities. Today's prayer focuses on the most important and famous scripture passage about Mary, the Magnificat, where Mary exclaims her faith and devotion upon learning that she will give birth to a son:

The Magnificat

*My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,
and my spirit rejoices in you, my Saviour.
For you have looked with favour
upon your lowly servant,
and from this day forward
all generations will call me blessed.
For you, the Almighty, have done great things for me, and holy is your Name.
Your mercy reaches from age to age
for those who fear you.
You have shown strength with your arm;
you have scattered the proud in their conceit; you have deposed the mighty from their thrones and raised the lowly to high places.
You have filled the hungry with good things, while you have sent the rich away empty.
You have come to the aid of Israel your servant, mindful of your mercy –
the promise you made to our ancestors –
to Sarah and Abraham
and their descendants forever.*

Vale Sr. Anne Arundell RSM



1983 CRC Staff Photo

In the Easter school holidays, a past Deputy Principal of the then Catholic Regional College, Sr. Anne Arundell RSM passed away. In her retirement, Sr. Anne had returned to Warrnambool after growing up in Garvoc. Sr. Anne spent time here in the 1980's and is fondly remembered by staff who worked with her at that time and by past students who had her as a teacher.

Long-time Mercy staff member, Jenny Phillips attended Sr. Anne's funeral and remembers her in the following way.

Sister Anne was an amazing, caring individual, who always had the welfare of staff & students uppermost in mind. I found the transition from St Columba's in Essendon to CRC very difficult and Sr. Anne was one of the reasons I survived my first year. At her funeral it was noted that she was asked to take up appointments as principal on a number of occasions but always refused. Her reason was always the same - she felt that as a principal she would get caught up in admin tasks and have less time to spend with staff & students. She combined her caring attitude with a good deal of common sense and a sense of humour. She taught Jan Smith RE and Jan said that Sr. Anne would take them outside and they would have circle time - this was long before circle time was named as such.

Catholic Education Week Dinner and Awards

Over the last week, all Catholic schools in the Ballarat Diocese have been celebrating Catholic Education Week with a variety of activities occurring at a diocesan and local level; the theme of the week is Jesus' message to his disciples early in the Gospel of John, "Come and See".

Catholic Education Week began last Friday with a Diocesan Mass and dinner in Ballarat. At the dinner, three Mercy Regional College staff were recognised:

- Mrs. Lesa Thornton and Mrs. Leanne Carpenter received 30 Year Service Awards recognising their length of tenure as teachers at Mercy (and CRC);
- Mrs. Tania Bruckner was presented with a special award, the Ballarat Diocesan Schools' Advisory Board 'Fullness of Life' Award which is presented annually to a teacher or staff member who has contributed significantly to leadership of educational programs directed towards students or professional development of staff. Tania's award recognised her leadership of a number of initiatives in learning and teaching at Mercy over the last six years and especially the College's teacher feedback and appraisal program, "Supporting Excellence in Learning and Teaching (SELT)".

Tania was also asked to present the keynote speech to those gathered on the night which she did with great poise and presentation.



Care of Student MacBooks

Over the last few weeks, our teachers and IT technicians have seen a spike in the number of MacBooks that are not being cared for appropriately or being misused. Could I ask parents to take note of the following two points:

- Like all modern electronic devices, MacBooks do not cope well with liquids of any form being in contact with their keyboards or even exterior. Students need to take special care not to have their devices close to liquids of any kind. Damage by liquids generally requires full replacement of the device.
- The College will **not** take responsibility for the repair or probable replacement of a MacBook damaged by liquids. Any costs incurred by such an event will lie with students and parents.
- Notwithstanding the best efforts of teachers and most students, we occasionally see negligent or deliberate attempts by students to damage another student's device. These incidents are dealt with urgently and seriously by the College and could result in the students at fault being held financially accountable for the **replacement cost** of the damaged device.

Please contact our IT Manager, Mr. Daniel Beard or Business Manager, Mrs. Jude Murfitt if you have particular questions on these matters.

St Patrick's Day Fires

The College continues to monitor the health and well-being of those in our community who were affected by the fires. Later in this newsletter is an article from our Wellbeing staff on further support sessions being offered in the coming weeks.

I urge any families who are struggling with shortages of anything or with school fees to please contact myself or Mrs. Jude Murfitt at the College. Alternatively, if you know of a family who needs assistance please contact us and we will endeavour to support them.

National Collection of Consistent Data (NCCD)

Over the last three months, a small group of staff has been working hard with guidance and support from the Catholic Education Office Ballarat to expand and roll out our response to the new National Collection of Consistent Data processes. These processes have been introduced by the Federal Government to facilitate the distribution of funds for students who are in need of adjustments or modifications to assist their learning or position at school. The NCCD scheme replaces the 'Students with Disability' provisions that we have been operating under for a number of years. We have included an information sheet on NCCD and its implementation as part of this newsletter. Please make contact with the College's Student Support Coordinator, Mrs. Clarie Walsh or your child's Head of Teaching and Learning if you have any questions.

Hampden Catholic Schools' Network Combined Boards Dinner

On Monday night, most members of the four HCSN's School Advisory Councils or Boards gathered to celebrate Catholic Education Week and to recognise the value of the HCSN to the broader educational outcomes of our schools. Our guest speaker on the night and former Mercy Old Collegian, Mr. Ben Harkin, spoke about his life experience and what he believes it offers to all people about the importance of resilience, determination and humour to a healthy mind and body.

Student and Staff Activities

- Later in the newsletter is an article detailing the development of a dedicated 'chook shed' at the O'Keeffe campus. I would like to personally congratulate the students mostly responsible for this, Charlie Poustie (8B) and Josh Sinnott (9A), as well as Mrs. Claire Walsh, Mr. Tony Wynd and other staff. It is a great credit to all involved. (See Charlie Poustie's article on page 10).
- In my absence yesterday, the school community celebrated the feast day of Australia's patron saint, Our Lady Help of Christians, with a whole school mass and assembly. It went very well. Thanks to Fr. Neville and Fr. Gerry for your presence and to all those who has a part in the organisation of the morning.
- Winter sports are in full swing with recent weeks seeing the HSSSD cross-country and the grass track motocross and a number of additional events next week.
- Last night, McAuley Campus hosted a number of VCAL students from Damascus College, Ballarat. The students and their staff slept overnight in classrooms between two days assisting BlazeAid in farms around Cobden and Terang.
- A number of Mercy teachers including me have had the opportunity over recent days to complete professional learning sessions with Professor Thomas Groome in Ballarat. Professor Groome is spending a week in our diocese which is especially significant as he was the author of the Shared Christian Praxis model of Religious Education that underlies our Diocesan RE document, Awakenings.



Damascus College Students



Feast Day Mass celebrated yesterday by Fr. Neville and Fr. Gerry.

Yours in Mercy,

DR. DARREN EGBERTS
PRINCIPAL

Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) on School Students with Disability

What is the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data?

Schools must now complete the *Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD)* every year. It counts the number of students who receive additional adjustments or 'help' at school because of a disability. The NCCD helps governments plan for the needs of students with disability.

Who is counted in the data collection?

To count a student in the NCCD, schools must think through some key questions:

1. Is the student getting help at school so that they can take part in education on the same basis as other students?
2. Is the help given because of a disability? The word 'disability' comes from the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) (DDA) and it can include many students.
3. Has the school talked to you or your child about the help that they provide?
4. Has the school kept records about the help they provide, the student needs and the reasons that the student needs this help? The school will need to keep copies of tests, student work, assessments, records of meetings, medical reports or other paperwork and information about how the student's learning is moving along over time.

Once the school decides that the student should be counted in the NCCD, they then choose a disability group and one of four levels of help that has been given to the student.

What does word 'disability' mean in the NCCD?

In the NCCD the word 'disability' comes from the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) (DDA). There are four types of disability that the school can choose from: sensory, cognitive, social-emotional and physical.

Many students who need help at school can be counted in the NCCD. For example, students with learning problems, e.g. specific learning disability or reading difficulty (sometimes called dyslexia), health problems (e.g. epilepsy or diabetes), physical disability (e.g. cerebral palsy), vision/hearing loss and social-emotional problems (e.g. selective mutism, Autism Spectrum Disorder, anxiety).

Letters from doctors or specialists can be very helpful for schools as they plan how to support students with their learning. Schools do not need to have these letters before they can count a

student in NCCD. Teachers can use all that they know about the child's learning and the records that they have collected over time to decide if a student can be counted in the NCCD.

What sort of help does the school give students?

Students need different types of help at school. Some students need a little help sometimes while other students need a lot of help nearly all the time. The type of help given depends on the needs of the student. The help can include changes to the school buildings or grounds (e.g. ramps or things like special desks or chairs), extra teacher help in classes, special learning programs, changes to the work they give the student or extra adult help.

How will the NCCD be different in 2018?

All schools have been counting students in the NCCD since 2015. The government will use the NCCD data as part of the funding to schools.

What will the school need to know about my child for the NCCD?

Schools work together with families to understand the needs of each student. It is helpful if families give their child's teacher a copy of any letters or reports they have. The letters or reports will help the school understand the student and the help that they might need. Letters from doctors, psychologists, speech pathologists and occupational therapists etc. can be very helpful for schools. These reports, along with information that the teacher has (i.e. school based tests, your child's work and learning plans), helps the school to understand and meet the student's needs.

What happens to the NCCD data? Who will have the NCCD information?

Each school principal must check the NCCD data in August of each year. The school will give the information to the Catholic Education Office. The school will work with the Catholic Education Office to make sure that the NCCD data is OK before they give the data to the government. The government will not be given the names of any students or any letters or records. Please ask your school for their privacy policy if you need to know more.

Does the school need me to agree with them about counting my child in the NCCD?

Changes were made to the law ([Australian Education Act 2013](#) and [Australian Education Regulation 2013](#)). Schools do not need you to agree to let them count a child in the NCCD. You cannot ask the school not to count your child.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions, you can ask your child's school for help. You can find out more by looking at these links:

- [NCCD national website](#)
- [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#)
- [Australian Government Department of Education and Training–NCCD](#)
- [2019 Students with Disabilities \(SWD\) Information Sheet for Schools, Parents, Carers and Guardians.](#)

From the Assistance Principal – Staff & Students

Mrs. Claire Wrigley

Bushfire - Open Student Session

In response to the devastating St. Patrick Day fires, the College has provided students and families that have been impacted with various avenues of support. With this in mind, we have had mixed responses to students taking up this support. However, through our monitoring of the students impacted by the fires, we are aware that some students may still have some concerns and we are providing an opportunity where support can be given to students in an informal setting. There will be a session for all students affected by the fires at McAuley campus and another for all students affected by fires at O'Keeffe campus.

The planned session with Emily Stephens (MRC Wellbeing coordinator) and Shoni Reimert (Psychologist CEOB) are designed to give the affected students some information about some of the common reactions/symptoms they may have been experiencing over the last few months, since the fires and to normalise these common reactions for the students, in light of the recent traumatic event they have experienced.

Attendance at the session is voluntary and students have been invited via email; however, if you do not want your child to attend, please let the College know. Please speak with your child about the session and we encourage all students affected by the fires to attend.

Following the session students will have the opportunity on that day or at another time to have a 1:1 session with Emily or Shoni if they feel a need.

We have invited Shoni as an external support since there might be students who feel more comfortable talking to him as opposed to a College staff member.

McAuley session - 12.30pm in the wellbeing room on Thursday May 31.

O'Keeffe session - 12.30pm in library on Wednesday June 6.

Uniform

Students are to be congratulated for the transition they have made into winter uniform. As the weather is getting cold, we request that all students have a jumper and expect that VCE students will all be wearing the blue VCE jumper. Students and parents are reminded that MRC spray jacket is for outside wear only and no 'camo' or Kathmandu jackets are to be worn at school.

Buses

Student and parents are reminded of our bus procedures. Students cannot get onto buses out of Cobden tech. Students caught on buses they should not be on run the risk being taken of their bus that transports them to school. Jumping onto buses for football training is not acceptable.

Limited bus passes are available on **Mercy contract buses only**. Students must apply for a bus pass by completing a request form which are available from reception or in homeroom tubs and they must be lodged 2 days prior when you want to travel on the bus. **The Camperdown to Cobden bus is full so students cannot apply for a bus pass for this bus.**

'Sex, Young people and the Law Project' Presentation for Year 9 & 10 Students

On Friday June 1, all Year 9 & 10 students will hear a presentation from lawyers and educators from Victoria Legal Aid. This project addresses the growing need for preventative legal education about sexuality for young people in their early teenage years. It is a highly collaborative project as it complements existing sexuality and healthy relationships programs in our school. The session will cover, age of consent, consent, cyberbullying and sexting. Parents are encouraged to speak with their son/daughter over the weekend after the presentation to open up conversations about this area of social media with children.

Career News

Mrs. Jenny Phillips

Attention students considering a career in Medicine or Dentistry!

On 8th June 2018, at 6.30pm, (venue: **MLC**- Methodist Ladies' College) the National Institute of Education will be conducting a **FREE** information session about **UMAT & Undergraduate Pathways into Medicine**. Use the link below to secure your **Free Ticket** and to **Register** your attendance.

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/umat-undergraduate-pathways-into-medicine-information-session-mlc-melbourne-vic-tickets-45794870691?idU=1>

Mock Interviews

On Tuesday 22nd and Wednesday 23rd May our Year 11 cohort of students undertook simulated job interviews. The students were given the opportunity to meet with and impress prospective employers in order to obtain a hypothetical job. The students had to apply for a job, by preparing and submitting in advance, both a cover letter and resume. Over the two days, twenty-five interviewers from the local community, generously donated their time and expertise to assist our students further develop their job application skills. The day provided valuable reassurance and constructive criticism for our students that they will be able to use in future job application and interview situations. Congratulations to all the participating students, as the positive feedback from the interviewers commended the students on their presentation and attitude. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those interviewers who made this process possible and Darren Mounsey from Westvic Staffing Solutions for providing preparatory sessions for the students.



Weekly Career News

This is available through the MRC Careers website:

<https://careers.mercy.vic.edu.au>

Please take the time to have a read of this valuable publication, which contains a vast array of information and opportunities to assist students with their career planning.



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Chooks, vegie garden and fruit trees

By Charlie Poustie

We finished building our chook house at the end of last year for our chooks.

It was a long wait to get the chooks as we needed to get a permit to house them at our school.

Now that, that has all gone through, we took delivery of our 4 chooks in the middle of term one from the Milroy's chook farm.

The chooks have settled in to the chicken house and now are laying eggs daily. We started of purchasing a bag of chook food and started giving them scraps from our vegie garden.

Once we have collected one dozen of eggs they are put up for sale in the staff room for the teachers to buy and we sell them for \$3 a dozen.



These were our first two eggs.

We check the chooks every day to check whether they have laid eggs and check on their food and water situation.

In our vegie garden, we have harvested our first crops of tomato's and capsicum and we still have pumpkins growing. We have made our first batch of tomato relish and green tomato chutney, we sold them to the staff for \$5 a jar.

On Thursday 3rd May we planted some garlic bulbs, and our next crop to plant we be Carrots, Leeks, Broccoli and Cauliflower.

Last week we bought our fruit trees which included two types of apples, a plum, a fig tree, an orange tree and a lemon tree.

We planted them over near the old basketball court, we have watered them, but today we have had heavy showers which meant I didn't need to water them today. We can't wait until the trees will produce fruit.



Sports News

Our Senior and intermediate netball teams had a very successful day at the HSSSD - Inter School Netball competition at the Terang stadium yesterday.

Our Senior 1 and Intermediate teams were victorious and now head onto GWR (Greater Western Region) in Ballarat on 17th July, while our Senior 2 team were Runners up.



COMING DATES

TERM 2

Wednesday 30th May

HSSSD Year 7 & 8 Netball
HSSSD Year 9 Football

Thursday 31st May

Science Competition

Friday 1st June

GWR Cross Country

Monday 4th June

Unit 1 Exam period commences till 20th June

Friday 8th June

Unit 1 & 3 Chemistry Excursion

Monday 11th June

Queen's Birthday Holiday – no school for staff & students

Tuesday 12th June

Year 10 STEM Excursion

Wednesday 13th June

VCAA GAT Exam

Friday 15th June

HSSSD Senior & Year 10 Basketball

Monday 18th June

GWR Soccer: Middle & Senior Boys/Girls

Thursday 21st June

Correction Day: Student free day

Friday 29th June

Term 2 concludes (2.15pm)

MRC Uniform Shop

Open Tuesday and Thursday from 12 noon to 2.40pm.

Payment by cash or credit card only.

**** Personal cheques are no longer accepted.**

PUBLIC NOTICES

CHOICES4CHANGE

Community workshop



CHOOSE YOUR WORKSHOP

Camperdown:

Wednesday 13th June,
Killara Room, Killara Centre,
10:00am - 2:00pm

Cobden:

Wednesday 18th July,
Senior Citizens Centre,
5:30pm - 9:30pm

Terang:

Monday 23rd July,
Rose Room, Terang Civic
Hall, 11:00am - 3:00pm

Timboon:

Tuesday 24th July, Supper
Room, Timboon &
District Public Hall,
10:00am - 2:00pm

WANT TO MAKE THE HEALTHY CHOICE THE EASY CHOICE – FOR OURSELVES, OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS, AND FOR OUR EMPLOYEES?

Choices4Change is about using a new and exciting approach to find ways to make the healthy choice the easy choice for people living in the Corangamite Shire.

These workshops are about the whole community coming together to make changes that will have a positive impact on our current and future generations.

All community members are invited to attend the workshop closest to you or the workshop most convenient for you. If your availability is limited but you still want to be involved, please get in touch with us.

Professor Steve Allender (Director of the World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention) and a team from Deakin University will lead the workshop and share their exciting approach to creating healthy long lasting change.

Be part of the change you want to see in the Corangamite Shire!



We acknowledge the traditional land owners of Australia and we welcome all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to attend.

REGISTRATIONS ESSENTIAL (for catering purposes) Contact: Laura Stevenson on 0466 005 801 or laura.stevenson@swh.net.au