

MERCY REGIONAL COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 2-4

Friday, 8th June, 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

Although some of our nation's efforts to pursue reconciliation with the indigenous people of this land and its islands have been inconsistent or sporadic, there are elements of the relationship that Australia can be very proud of. I think that we are seeing one of these each year in the AFL's celebration of the Indigenous Round; year upon year, new aspects are included and are well received by those present at the games as well as the millions watching on television. Perhaps, in this instance, the AFL has lessons that need to be learned by government.

My prayer this week is a traditional Aboriginal prayer of thanksgiving:

God of Holy Dreaming, Great Creator Spirit, from the dawn of creation you have given your children the good things of Mother Earth.

You spoke and the gum tree grew.

In the vast desert and the dense forest, and in the cities and at the water's edge, creation sings your praise.

Your presence endures at the rock at the heart of our Land.

When Jesus hung on the tree you heard the cries of all your people and became one with your wounded ones: the convicts, the hunted, the dispossessed.

The sunrise of your Son coloured the earth anew, and bathed it in glorious hope.

In Jesus, we have been reconciled to you, to each other and to your whole creation.

Lead us on, Great Spirit, as we gather from the four corners of the earth; enable us to walk together in trust from the hurt and shame of the past into the full day which has dawned in Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Upcoming Student Free Days

In addition to next **Monday 11th June** when we all enjoy the Queen's Birthday public holiday, there will be a student free day on **Thursday 21st June**. This day will provide teachers with the opportunity to complete remaining semester one corrections and to detail these assessments on PAM and SIMON. The Correction Day is also part of the new entitlement that Catholic school teachers have to four professional practice days annually.

Mercy Parents' Consultative Group Meeting

The term two Mercy Parents Consultative Group (PCG) meeting will be held on Monday 25th June from 5.00 – 6.30pm in the McAuley Campus Board Room. As I have mentioned in previous newsletters, the Mercy PCG provides an opportunity for me as Principal to consult on the major issues affecting the College and vice versa. I will send out the proposed agenda with the next newsletter.

Recent Professional Development

In recent weeks, I have attended a couple of quite significant professional development programs:

- Along with hundreds of other diocesan school staff and principals of Victorian Catholic Secondary Schools, I was able to spend time with Professor Thomas Groome in Ballarat last month. Prof Groome is a world-renowned theologian from Boston who has contributed enormously to contemporary models of Religious Education including developing the model of Shared Christian Praxis which underpins all RE in the Ballarat Diocese.
- Last week, I joined around 100 staff from Ballarat Diocesan primary and secondary schools at the annual diocesan Colloquium where a series of workshops were held exploring opportunities for schools to work more closely in partnership with each other. One of the most pleasing aspects of this dialogue was the

chance it gave me and others to celebrate our Hampden Catholic Schools Network as a leader in modelling such partnerships already.

Response to St Patrick's Day Fires

The College remains acutely conscious that although the dark days of March are now four months past, the challenges that they pose for the families and businesses of our communities remain.

The College has received significant donations of vouchers, gift cards and money and has distributed of those across families in need. 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.

End of Semester Assessments and Reports

As I mentioned above, the next few weeks in most classes and subjects will see the completion of first semester units and tasks. With the College's ongoing transition towards assessment and reporting for learning, where assessment and teacher comments provide feedback for students' future learning improvement, reporting is a process directed towards year-round learning growth.

With the publishing of reports this semester, parents and families will note a couple of significant changes:

- With much greater emphasis on a paper-less world, we will be trialling electronic release of semester reports. Parents and families will be able to request hard copies if they wish.
- We are moving towards a common 'look' across Years 7 – 12 that will assist with consistency through all Mercy reports.

More details on these changes will be published as the end of term approaches.

Staff and Student Activities

The last couple of weeks have been amongst the busiest for students and staff in terms of the range of co-curricular activities occurring:

- Our staff were joined by around 30 staff from St. Patrick's PS for a joint presentation on our students' responses to the questions and topics posed by the Resilience Project. This information is a key focus for both schools in the area of wellbeing this year and will be followed up by a series of programs within classes and by dedicated student and parent forums in third term.
- Our Year 9 students enjoyed Try a Career day at South West TAFE last Monday.
- Year 10 & 11 students were challenged around the risks associated with poor decision-making when driving through the "Carmen's Story" presentation on Wednesday.
- Social Justice has been a major focus with Tuesday hosting the "Beanies from Brain Cancer Day", the post 2018 Cambodia review evening combined with a 2020 Information session on Wednesday evening and preparations well underway for the Vinnies Sleepout which is happening in the de Chantal Stadium on Thursday 28th June.
- Plenty of sport on with students excelling in Year 9 and Senior Football, GW Cross-country and HSSSD Junior Netball.

Well done to all.

Yours in Mercy,



DR. DARREN EGBERTS
PRINCIPAL



On Wednesday May 31, all Mercy staff were presented with some results from the student survey conducted earlier in the term and an outline of the curriculum that runs alongside the project resilience initiative. Students from year 7-10 will participate in the program during pastoral care lessons over the next few terms. These lessons are based around empathy, mindfulness, gratitude and emotional literacy. Each student will have a journal and they will work through a series of lessons with their teacher and peers. Senior students will be involved in a presentation in August. Parents are encouraged to ask their child about the program and to come along to parent information session. Please put the dates below in your calendar so that parents too can be a part of this whole school initiative.

Save the Date – Resilience Project Parent session on Tuesday, Aug 21, 7.00pm - 8.30pm. The aim of this session is to empower parents and deliver a presentation that provides practical strategies to help build your son/daughters resilience.

St Patricks Bushfires Students Sessions

Recently Shoni Reimert and Emily Stephens have recently conducted sessions at both campuses for students affected by the fires. A number of students attended these sessions and we hope that it was beneficial for the students. Shoni will be available for students if they require any follow up. If you are concerned about your son or daughter, please contact Emily Stephens and she will organise for Shoni to meet with your child.

Year 12 Guest Speaker

Last week our Year 12 cohort listened to guest speaker, Paul Watkins from Warrnambool. Paul spoke about his life and his experience in an ultra-marathon, 'The Arctic Ultra 6633' in 2017. This marathon is billed as the toughest, windiest, coldest marathon on earth!

Paul's important message for the students was about not giving up, changing things when things don't work out, pushing the limits and resilience. He was well received by our students and the overall feedback from the students was excellent.



Thanks to Emily Stephens for the contact and Matt Harkin for the organisation of this presentation - such a beneficial and helpful activity for our Year 12 students.

Sex, Young people and the Law

On Friday June 1, Sally Westwood, Senior Civil Justice Lawyer from Victoria Legal Aid, Warrnambool presented to all year 9 and year 10 students. This presentation outlined the laws around sexting, cyberbullying and consent. Sarah explained to the students the very real consequences of sharing and distributing inappropriate images online. Given the fact that many young people spend so much time on their smart phones and use this as a form of primary communication between peers, this session shared valuable information they can use and think about when communicating and posting online.

Carmen's Story Presentation

On Wednesday June 6, all year 10 and year 11 students attending a road safety message from John Maher. John spoke about his family's experience with road trauma particularly in the area of driver fatigue. As our young people begin to learn to drive and will make their way out onto roads with their licence in future year his message was most important for their safety.

School Uniform

Students are asked to wear only a navy blue or maroon scarf to school. School scarfs can be purchased from the uniform shop for \$15.

From the Assistance Principal – School Operations

Mrs. Berni Sinnott

2018 Rural Youth Ambassador

Over the years Mercy Regional College has nominated students for selection to be part of the Rural Youth Ambassador. This year's successful nominee was Ella Gleeson. Ella has already participated in 2 separate forums in Melbourne this term. A range of issues are discussed and implemented that aim to support students from rural settings; in their current locations and to support the transition to city life on completion of their Secondary Schooling. I strongly encourage students who may be interesting in a program like this to touch base with Ella.

Please read below some elements of what Ella is involved in with regards to RYA.

On Wednesday 18th April, I travelled to Melbourne to attend the 3-day Orientation Forum of the Rural Youth Ambassadors of 2018. The Rural Youth Ambassadors (RYA) is a program that has been running since 2011. It gathers 12-20 year 11 students from around the state, to identify and focus on areas in rural education that require improvement. During the first forum, we got to know each other and what exactly the RYA is. After the first forum, we used video link ups to talk about the issues we wanted to focus on and organise meetings with the Minister for Education, the Secretary of the Department of Education, the Shadow Minister for Education and world leader in education Steve Munby (UK). These meetings took place at our second 3-day forum beginning on Wednesday the 23rd of May, all the meetings proved to be very profitable with the group being asked by the departments secretary, Gill Callister to have by September a prepared vision of how schools can work together using technology, to provide more learning opportunities for all rural students. This program has provided me with opportunities to meet new people, people of power and have my voice heard on issues relating to me. I encourage all students upon reaching year 11 to apply, this program is a wonderful opportunity for any student to increase their knowledge and make a difference to things that matter to them. Please feel free to approach me if you have any questions regarding RYA or issues that we have raised or what you would like to see raised.

Ella Gleeson.

Senior School Report

Mr. Lachie Lee

VCE EXAMS

As occurred last year those VCE students who are studying Unit 3/4 subjects will be sitting the General Achievement Test (GAT) on **Wednesday 13th June**. Specifically, this will include those students from Years 11 and 12 who are studying a Unit 3/4 subject in 2018. All Unit 3/4 VCE exams in 2018 will be held at the Camperdown College Hall.

VCAA requires that all students from Years 11 and 12 who are studying one or more Unit 3 and 4 sequences are to sit the GAT. This task is sat over three hours in strict exam conditions. The results are used in helping the assessment of exams, particularly where there are difficulties in reaching an agreement over a specific result.

I quote below from the VCAA definition of the GAT's role and its importance:

'Although GAT results do not count directly towards a student's VCE results, they play an important role in checking that school assessments and examinations have been accurately assessed, and in determining Derived Examination Scores. So it is important to sit the GAT and do as well as possible on all parts of it. The GAT is used in these ways because achievement on the GAT is a good predictor of achievement on other assessments. If students have done well on the GAT, then their achievements are likely to be high on their school assessments and examinations.'

Clearly, some GAT questions relate more closely to achievement in particular studies. The VCAA takes this into account when it calculates students expected achievements in each study for each school. For example, GAT results in mathematics, science and technology play only a minor part in calculating students expected achievements in humanities studies.

- *Contributing to statistical moderation of School-assessed Coursework*
- *Reviewing school assessments in School-assessed Tasks*
- *Checking the accuracy of examination marking*
- *Calculating the Derived Examination Scores.'* (VCAA website)

Thus, it is important that all students sit the task and do so to the best of their ability. We have been giving the students, particularly those in Year 11, instructions regarding the GAT including some practice questions. The GAT is not something that can be studied for but it should be done to the best of the student's ability.

UNIT 1 AND 2 EXAM PERIOD

The Unit 1 and 2 exam period will be held in the period between **Monday 4th June and Wednesday 20th June**. This exam block will be held in class time by each subject. The students will be issued with a timetable of these exams. The end of Unit 2 Exam period will be held over three days in November and will lead into the Unit 3 Transition period for 2019.

As the term approaches its conclusion, students may be feeling quite stressed, therefore it is important that they are quite well organised and that those around them know what is going on. If you have any questions please contact Lesa Thornton, Matthew Harkin or myself at the school.

A Message from Social Justice

Caitlin Rix

St Vinnies Winter Appeal 2018



Mercy Regional College has always strongly supported the work of the St Vincent De Paul Society, and recognises the valuable work they do in our community and country.

This winter in Victoria alone, 22,000 homeless people will spend the cold nights sleeping rough – whether that be on the street, on a friends couch or in their car. 6,000 of these people are teenagers.



We are asking students to support the St Vinnies Winter Appeal by donating a pair of socks for those who are sleeping rough in our community or in our country.

Please bring along a pair of **new** socks on the last day of term (June 29th), or alternatively a gold coin donation, which will be donated to our local Vinnies to distribute to people in need this winter.

Junior School Winter Sleep Out 2018

Another exciting initiative the Social Justice Group is running this winter to support the work of the St Vincent De Paul Society is a Junior School Winter Sleep Out.

The Winter School Sleep out is designed to give students at years 7-8 the chance to gain a deeper understanding about the issue of homelessness. There is an opportunity for 40 year 7 and 8 students to 'sleep rough' for the night. Students will hear from guest speakers from St Vinnies as well as participate in activities ran by the senior social justice group, before bunking down for some soup and a night on the gymnasium floor.

The Winter Sleep out will be held on Thursday 28th June – with a 7:30pm start

If this sounds like something you might be interested in, please see Melissa Brisbane or Caitlin Rix for more information.

Expression of interest forms are also available at the O'Keeffe reception.

RIST Wool Overview Program

This was a great opportunity for a small number of our Year 9 students to check out the wool industry first-hand. This program was run by RIST at Mt Elephant station over three days (23rd to 25th May) and this year we had ten students attending the event.



RIST – Wool Overview Program Report (Sheridan Heath)

Last week I had the pleasure of going to a wool program at Mt Elephant, along with 9 other students from our school.

We learnt how the shearing shed works, the responsibility that comes with owning sheep, as well as the expenses involved and income to the farmer. The second day was awesome, as we learnt how to communicate with each other and the shearers during a typical day in the shearing shed. We worked well as a team, helped with all tasks, had a yarn and were happy to be there. Not only did we class the wool, but we learnt to shear, yard the sheep, and how to handle them e.g. we learnt how to pull them out to be shorn. The shearing team manager said that he would give us all a job, as our shearing technique was a little rough, but the final appearance of the sheep was good. I think it is safe to say that we would all do this program again if we could and if any students get this opportunity in the future, they should take it, because you become closer to those around you and have a good time with the shearers, making as much noise as you like! We also learnt about wool quality and how to judge the price of wool. We learnt about different breeds of sheep and how the wool of cross breed sheep compares to that of pure bred Merino sheep, which have higher quality wool. We also learnt about the wool industry and how there are many things you can do with wool and sheep - you don't have to be the farmer, as there are many other opportunities in this industry.

It was great having Matt and Raelene explain things so well, because most of us come from dairy farms and now we understand a lot more about sheep and the wool industry. In conclusion, I believe if you want to get a wider perspective on your future in Agriculture, this program is defiantly a great option.

RIST – Wool Overview Program Report (Riley Scanlon)

On the 23rd and 24th May, I was lucky enough to go to Mount Elephant Station. This property is at Derrinallum and has a big shearing shed. On the first day, we lost power to the shed, so we did an audit to made sure that everything met the health and safety regulations. We got power back at lunch time and this is when the fun started. We then started penning up sheep and shearing. Only a few students shore some sheep this day, but the next day we all got that opportunity. On the second day, we had morning tea and got straight into it. We were told to pen up 10 to 12 sheep and my group nailed it, getting 12 sheep exactly. We all had a go at shearing and it was great fun. We had morning tea and lunch provided each day and this was an added bonus. The program concluded on the Friday, but I was away representing the school at golf.

Try a Career Day

All Year 9 students attended the SWTAFE Try a Career Day on Monday 29th May at Sherwood Park Warrnambool. Students selected their three preferred sessions from a wide range of options which included: automotive, building, hair & beauty, community services, sport & recreation, arts and allied health. This was an ideal opportunity for students to try a variety of course options that can lead into VETIS programs, trades, or further study.



Try a Career Day Report (Zoe Marsland and Jordyn Steele)

On Monday, 28th May, the year 9 students attended a 'Try A Career Day' at the Sherwood Park campus of SWTAFE. Everyone had selected three different activities to try that day, from three different areas. We were joined by Year 9 students from four other schools and had combined classes. After participating in our three activities, we went into Warrnambool, to the TAFE city campus. There, we ate lunch and were given a tour of the property. We all enjoyed the day, getting an insight into possible future career choices.

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.

COMING DATES

TERM 2

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

Thursday 28th June

Mercy Winter Sleepout

Friday 29th June

Term 2 concludes (2.15pm)

TERM 3

Monday 16th July

Term 3 commences for Staff & Students

Tuesday 17th July

GWR Netball: Middle & Senior Girls

Wednesday 18th July

GWR Netball: Junior Girls

Tuesday 24th – 27th July

Unit 2 Outdoor Education Snow Camp

Friday 28th July

Archie Fusillo – visiting author to O'Keeffe Campus

NOTICES



2019 Enrolment Applications

The closing date to submit Year 7, 2019 enrolment applications:

Friday 29th June, 2018

If you require further information about enrolling your child at Mercy Regional College please contact Mrs. Sue Bohm at the office.

Phone: 5593 2011

Email: office@mercy.vic.edu.au

MRC Uniform Shop

We have MRC scarves and gloves available to purchase for these cold, frosty mornings.



SCARF - \$15 ea.

Year 11-12 (Navy)

Year 7-10 (Maroon)

Gloves (Maroon) \$8.50 ea.

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

2019 applications NOW OPEN



Do you have students who could use a helping hand?

The Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Student Scholarship Program is designed to assist young people living in public or community housing, or those at risk of homelessness, get the support they need to stay in education and achieve their full potential.

The DHHS Student Scholarship Program is administered by Kids Under Cover on behalf of the Department and provides funds for items such as text books, computer equipment, public transport, disability aids or other specialist equipment.

The scholarships, and an exciting award ceremony for successful applicants, recognise the effort students put into attending and engaging with their place of learning. Schools are asked to apply on behalf of the students they believe will benefit as students are not able to apply for a scholarship directly. Schools will also be asked to be accountable for student expenditure and report on outcomes through a streamlined online process.

The application process is straightforward and can be completed online through the Kids Under Cover website (kuc.org.au) via SmartyGrants.

Applications open Monday 21 May 2018 and close Friday 29 June 2018.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for a scholarship the student should meet all of the following criteria:

- under 21 years of age at 1 February 2019;
- an Australian citizen or permanent resident;
- experiencing financial hardship;
- living in social housing (i.e. public or community-managed housing) or at risk of homelessness;
- studying in Year 11 or Year 12 at a Victorian Government school, or the equivalent at a Victorian TAFE for the 2019 academic year;
- have the potential to achieve a good attendance record and a successful educational outcome in the 2019 academic year;
- supported within the school / TAFE by an appropriate staff member such as a well-being coordinator or counsellor.

Together we can help them build a solid foundation for their future.

Keep **our Courthouse** in community hands & help shape our town's future



SIGN THE PETITION! BECOME A MEMBER!

Membership \$2, which gives you voting rights to determine who & how the new community group that will run the courthouse will look like.

SIGN UP TO ENSURE YOU, YOUR FAMILY, YOUR SCHOOL OR YOUR CLUB FEEL REPRESENTED.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE! SIGN UP AT:

THE COURTHOUSE

HERE HOME, STYLE & DESIGN

THE CAMPERDOWN NEWSAGENCY

SNOUT IN THE TROUGH FOOD CO

Plus other outlets across Camperdown & Surrounds

NEXT COMMUNITY GET TOGETHER

Tuesday 19 June @ Courthouse 6:30pm

Wine, cheese, local talent. Bring your positive vibes & learn where the process is at

ALL WELCOME!

• LOOK FORWARD • GET INFORMED • GET INVOLVED • INCLUSIVE • WELCOMING • CREATIVE • VIBRANT • ALL AGES •