
St Mary's Catholic College Gateshead

BE SAFE, BE A LEARNER, BE RESPECTFUL

Newsletter 3.23

Friday 3 March 2023



Principal's Message

Dear Parents, Carers and Community Members

Lent - A time for educators (Parent/Teacher) to nurture the sacredness within our children/students

On Ash Wednesday, Students and Staff gathered to engage in a liturgical celebration to mark the commencement of the Season of Lent, that time of preparation for the glorious celebration of Easter. It is also a time to regain balance in our lives. A time when, as Christian people, we are challenged to evaluate our lives honestly to determine how they are aligned with the call of the Gospel. ***A time to fast from what is not of God and feast on what is of God.***

In this respect, there is an urgent need for our adolescents to experience the sacredness with themselves and Lent is an ideal time for this to happen. This demands as educators (parents and teachers) of adolescents that we encourage and support them in fasting from technology and feasting on silence and solitude. Why should we do this?

We live in a rapidly changing world. It is a world turning incessantly on technology, and this is especially the reality for our adolescent children/students. Their "love affair" with, and unfortunately in too many cases, their addiction to technology, and especially iPhones and gaming, is not only rewiring their brains, shortening their attention spans, reducing their memory and perception skills, but is also shaping their values and attitudes to life and starving them of the time, space, silence, and solitude, they need and must have to think, contemplate and nurture their inner being, the things of the heart, the things that nurture their wholeness.

We must care for our adolescents by encouraging and supporting them in creating sabbath spaces, sacred time, silent time or dadirri time in their daily lives. That is, times when they are free of the distraction of technology. Times of silence when they are able to listen to the things of their heart. We must encourage them to take time out to evaluate their lives and contemplate its meaning and purpose. Time to determine who they are and who they want to be in life. Time to reflect on what they are doing and whether or not it is what they should be doing in their life's journey. It is in answering these vital questions that they discover their identity and integrity and honour their sacredness.

For this to occur we must set boundaries around their use of technology. We must insist on and ensure that they turn off their computers, iPhones and iPads. They must have time to read, to gain adequate sleep, to write, to think, to ponder and contemplate on the things which keep them in touch with their spirit; a spirit which liberates them from a world where the focus of life is on what is best for self. Lent is a very appropriate time to nurture the things of the heart, and refocus their lives on caring for others.

As their educators (parents and teachers), we too must witness to our adolescents what it means to nurture our inner lives. There is an obligation on each of us, to escape from our preoccupation with "busyness" and the incessant demands of technology (emails and texts) and spend quality time with our adolescents. Furthermore, we must engage them in conversation about what constitutes a "good life", that is a life of true meaning and purpose focussed on the good and care of others, especially those in greatest need of our love and support.

Encouraging our children to give generously in support of Project Compassion during Lent is a splendid way for raising their awareness and consciousness to the plight of so many people and nations in need of our support by engaging in a simple and tangible act of donating to Caritas Australia's Project Compassion Appeal. An act which also honours our College motto: "Ready to Serve".

As educators in a Christ-centred community, we are called to nurture humanity's inner life. Lent is an appropriate time to do this by feasting on silence and solitude and fasting from busyness and the incessant demands of technology. We cannot stand by and allow our adolescents to be mere pawns in a technological world which has the real potential to, and is robbing them of their humanity, their dignity, and the rich potential and opportunity they have, to make our world a better place. A place more reflective of God's love.

Blessings

Larry Keating
Principal

PROJECT COMPASSION APPEAL

"Let us form in the heart of the child and the young person the lofty ideal of loving, of preparing oneself to serve and to give oneself to others"
(Archbishop Oscar Romero, 1978)

The call of "**Project Compassion**", to give of our finances in aid of the destitute and those who live in abject poverty in our world, is surely Christ calling us to reject the selfishness of our age, to reject the ultimate despair and drabness of materialism with all its egocentric messages and rise to "**new life**" by relocating our life's focus on the good and care of others.

To give of our finances during Lent, in support of Project Compassion, is a tangible expression of loving and our commitment to compassion. To encourage our adolescent children to do the same is fulfilling our responsibility to them as their Christian educators because we are forming in their heart the "**lofty ideal of loving**".

Project Compassion fundraiser

This Lent, we are raising money for the Caritas Australia Project Compassion fundraiser to help those facing poverty and injustice in our world. The theme for Project Compassion this year is '**For All Future Generations.**' which is all about the many simple actions we can all take to 'be more' for our world.

Each Week, Project Compassion is sharing stories of resilient people trying to 'be more' for their families and communities. You can read their inspiring stories of resilience, hardship, strength, and love on the [Caritas website](#).

Please Donate NOW

to make a difference in our world

Project Compassion is very close to our hearts, and we would love your help to reach our fundraising target! If you would like to donate, you can use card or cash at the business office. Your generosity makes a huge difference to the lives of those less fortunate – thank you!

Caritas Australia uses education, humanitarian aid and development work to help people become agents of their own change. Learn more <https://www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion>.

St Mary's Catholic college "Ready to Serve"

"In addition to the Scriptures, the Lord speaks to us through our brothers and sisters, especially in the faces and the stories of those who are in need."

Pope Francis' message for Lent 2023

During Lent, we too are called to reconcile ourselves with God and each other, to build relationships based on love, to have the courage to acknowledge our part in relationships which have failed, and to take the first steps in the reconciliation process. God is always waiting for us to take that step. As it says in Joel 2: 'Come back to me with all your heart'.

Again, we see the spirit of Dadirri calling us to be in the presence of God, deeply listening to God's desire for us to be whole and reconciled. It also helps us realise our ability to live sustainably and in connection with others and our environment.

Interestingly, the Pope's monthly prayer for March is to engage in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Let us pray that we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy and love of God.

And let us pray for Pope Francis as he seeks, in his vulnerability to bring peace to the world.

A Lenten Prayer

Lord, come with me into my wilderness. Speak to my preoccupied heart. Reveal to me where addiction to power, possession and gratification choke my path. Only when I am free from these can I be good news to others. Only then do I become part of the solution to the world's problems – source unknown.

DeAnna Addicoat
Ministry Coordinator



ENROLMENTS ARE NOW BEING TAKEN FOR:

YEAR 7 to YEAR 12 (2024)

Enrolment Packs are available from
St Mary's Reception or can be downloaded from the College website:
<https://www.gatesheadsm.catholic.edu.au/enrolment/enrolment-information/>

**Completed enrolment packs, with supporting documentation, are
being accepted up to Thursday 6 April 2023**

Year 7 (2024) Information Evening

The Enrolment Evening provides a comprehensive introduction to St Mary's.

It is designed to support parents/carers in gaining a deep awareness of what St Mary's offers students and, to this extent, will support parents/carers in a process of learning, discernment and decision-making about whether St Mary's is the right school for your child's secondary education.

You are invited to a presentation by members of the College's Leadership Team. It will include a detailed overview of the College's Learning Agenda, the Wellbeing process, the outstanding success of our first four HSC classes and the Campus refurbishment.

Our Enrolment Evening for this year, for the 2024 intake, is being held on:

Date: Tuesday 14 March 2023
Time: 7.00pm
Venue: The Josephite Centre (Hall)

Please register your attendance with Reception on 4944 4800 or admin@gatesheadsm.catholic.edu.au.
We look forward to welcoming you.

*Enrolment Applications will be accepted, for Year 7 (2024) from **Wednesday 1 March 2023 until Thursday 6 April 2023**.*

Application forms are available from the College Reception or can be downloaded from the College website, or the link below, and will be available at the Enrolment Information Evening.

<https://www.gatesheadsm.catholic.edu.au/media/rwipwgm/cso-enrolment-package-october-2022.pdf>

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL – LEARNING & TEACHING

NAPLAN 2023

Once again, it is time to prepare for NAPLAN testing and both Years 7 and 9 will be partaking in the NAPLAN tests commencing **Wednesday 15th March until Monday 20th March**. These dates are earlier than usual as a result of a decision made by Australia's education ministers last year, to ensure results were in the hands of parents and teachers earlier in the school year, enabling earlier intervention and planning for all students in their learning.

Should students 'prepare' for NAPLAN?

The [latest NAPLAN information brochure for parents and carers](#) prepared by the Australian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (ACARA) stresses that students are not expected to study for NAPLAN. ACARA also does not recommend excessive preparation for NAPLAN "or the use of services by coaching providers".

"You can support your child by reassuring them that NAPLAN is a part of their school program and reminding them to simply do their best," the factsheet says. Please take the time to read the information brochure and familiarise yourself with what is involved. Teachers will ensure students are familiar with the NAPLAN test site.

In 2023 our students will sit NAPLAN tests in - **Reading, Writing, Conventions of Language and Numeracy**. Please see below for the timetable:

	Wednesday 15 March	Thursday 16 March	Friday 17 March	Monday 20 March
Year 7	Period 1 WRITING 42 Mins	Period 1 & 2 (Part of) READING 65 Minutes	Period 1 LANGUAGE 45 Mins	Period 1 & 2 (Part of) NUMERACY 65 Mins
Year 9	Period 2 WRITING 42 Minutes	Period 3 READING 65 Minutes	Period 2 LANGUAGE 45 Mins	Period 3 NUMERACY 65 Mins

Our students will sit these online tests on their own devices. As a result, **every student in Years 7 and 9 will need to ensure that they have their devices with them and that these are charged. Students will also need to bring a pair of earphones each day.**

PLEASE NOTE:

- **Chromebooks are not supported by the Locked Down Browser** required to undertake the NAPLAN tests. Students with Chromebooks will be required to complete the tests on a school owned device.
- All students will be **required to download/update the latest version of the Locked Down Browser prior to the day of their NAPLAN Practice tests**. Information regarding this process has been **emailed to students by Mr Shane Abell**.

If you are interested in taking a look at the NAPLAN tests, or trying one out, please go to the following links for more information: <https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/the-tests>

You can see the types of questions and tools available in the online NAPLAN assessments at:

<https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/public-demonstration-site>

And, finally, if you wish to learn more about how the online test work – please see the following link:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/student-assessment/naplan-online/whats-changing>

Please do not hesitate to contact either Mrs Van Vlimmeren m.vanvlimmeren@mn.catholic.edu.au or me by email cathy.ogorman@mn.catholic.edu.au if you have any further questions regarding NAPLAN.

NAPLAN – Continued.....

March 2023

NAPLAN BROWSER - Get Ready for NAPLAN

Dear Parents and Students

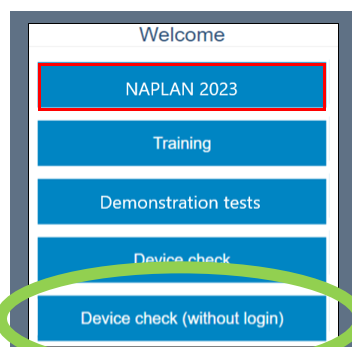
In preparation for NAPLAN testing, all students in Year 7 and Year 9 **MUST** install the '**NAPLAN 2023**' Lockdown Browser. The browser used for 2021 will not work.

Please use the steps in the short video created by Mr Abell in the link below to **Download the NAP 2023 Browser**.

[NAP Browser 2023.mp4](#)

Once installed, a **Device Check** will need to be completed.

To do this Click on the 'NAP 2023' icon. All other programs on the computer will automatically close.



This list of tasks should appear.

Select '**Device Check (without login)**'.

Students will be asked to check the sound and a visual.

Once the student has checked the device is functioning properly, they may exit the NAPLAN lockdown browser by clicking X at the bottom right-hand side of the browser.

Roll Call teachers will be checking student computers to ensure the browser has been installed during Week 7.

If you are having difficulty with this, please email Mrs van Vlimmeren - m.vanvlimmeren@mn.catholic.edu.au

Kind regards

Cathy O'Gorman
Assistant Principal – Learning & Teaching

Michelle Van Vlimmeren
Acting Learning Support Coordinator

NAPLAN

Information for parents and carers

2023

Why do students do NAPLAN?

NAPLAN is a national literacy and numeracy assessment that students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 sit each year. It is the only national assessment all Australian students have the opportunity to undertake.

As students progress through their school years, it's important to check how well they are learning the essential skills of reading, writing and numeracy.

NAPLAN assesses the literacy and numeracy skills that students are learning through the school curriculum and allows parents/carers to see how their child is progressing against national standards and over time.

NAPLAN is just one aspect of a school's assessment and reporting process. It doesn't replace ongoing assessments made by teachers about student performance, but it can provide teachers with additional information about students' educational progress.

NAPLAN also provides schools, education authorities and governments with information about how education programs are working and whether young Australians are achieving important educational outcomes in literacy and numeracy.

Your child will do the NAPLAN tests online

Schools have transitioned from paper-based to computer-based assessments. All Year 3 students will continue to complete the writing assessment on paper.

Online NAPLAN tests provide more precise results and are more engaging for students. One of the main benefits is tailored (or adaptive) testing, where the test presents questions which may be more or less difficult depending on a student's responses.

Tailored testing allows a wider range of student abilities to be assessed and measures student achievement more precisely. A student's overall NAPLAN result is based on both the number and complexity of questions they answer correctly. Your child should not be concerned if they find questions challenging; they may be taking a more complex test pathway.

What does NAPLAN assess?

NAPLAN assesses literacy and numeracy skills that students are learning through their regular school curriculum.

Students sit assessments in writing, reading, conventions of language (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy. The questions assess content linked to the Australian Curriculum: English and Mathematics.

All government and non-government education authorities contribute to the development of NAPLAN test materials.

To find out more about NAPLAN, visit nap.edu.au.

Participation in NAPLAN

NAPLAN is for everyone. ACARA supports inclusive testing so all students have the opportunity to participate in the national assessment program.

Adjustments are available for students with disability who have diverse functional abilities and needs.

Schools should work with parents/carers and students to identify, on a case-by-case basis, reasonable adjustments required for individual students with disability to access NAPLAN. Adjustments should reflect the support normally provided for classroom assessments.

To help inform these decisions, you may consult the [NAPLAN public demonstration site](#), the [Guide for schools to assist students with disability to access NAPLAN](#), or our [series of videos](#) where parents/carers, teachers and students share their experiences in using NAPLAN adjustments.

In exceptional circumstances, a student with a disability that severely limits their capacity to participate in the assessment, or a student who has recently arrived in Australia and has a non-English speaking background, may be granted a formal exemption.

Your school principal and your local test administration authority can give you more information on adjustments for students with disability or the process required to gain a formal exemption.

What if my child is absent from school on NAPLAN days?

Where possible, schools may arrange for individual students who are absent at the time of testing to complete missed tests at another time during the school's test schedule.

What if my school is closed on NAPLAN days?

Schools with compelling reasons may be given permission to schedule tests after the 9-day test window.

What can I do to support my child?

Students are not expected to study for NAPLAN. You can support your child by reassuring them that NAPLAN is a part of their school program and reminding them to simply do their best. Some familiarisation and explanation of NAPLAN is useful to help students understand and be comfortable with the format of the tests. Teachers will ensure students are familiar with the types of questions in the tests and will provide appropriate support and guidance.

ACARA does not recommend excessive preparation for NAPLAN or the use of services by coaching providers.

See the types of questions and tools available in the online NAPLAN assessments at nap.edu.au/online-assessment/public-demonstration-site.

NAPLAN timetable

The NAPLAN test window is 9 days. This is to accommodate schools that may have fewer devices.

The NAPLAN test window starts on Wednesday 15 March and finishes on Monday 27 March 2023. Schools are advised to schedule the tests as soon as possible within the testing window, prioritising the first week.

How is my child's performance reported?

Individual student performance is shown on a national achievement scale for each assessment. This scale indicates whether the student is meeting expectations for the literacy and numeracy skills needed to participate fully in that year level.

A NAPLAN individual student report will be provided by your child's school later in the year. If you do not receive a report, you should contact your child's school.

How are NAPLAN results used?

- Students and parents/carers may use individual results to discuss progress with teachers.
- Teachers use results to help identify students who need greater challenges or extra support.
- Schools use results to identify strengths and areas of need to improve teaching programs, and to set goals in literacy and numeracy.
- School systems use results to review the effectiveness of programs and support offered to schools.
- The community can see information about the performance of schools over time at myschool.edu.au.

Where can I get more information?

For more information about NAPLAN:

- contact your child's school
- contact your local test administration authority at nap.edu.au/TAA
- visit nap.edu.au

To learn how ACARA handles personal information for NAPLAN, visit nap.edu.au/naplan/privacy.

Test	Scheduling requirements	Duration	Test description
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 3 students do the writing test on paper (on day 1 only) Years 5, 7 and 9 writing must start on day 1 (schools must prioritise completion of writing across days 1 and 2 only, with day 2 only used where there are technical/logistical limitations) 	Year 3: 40 min Year 5: 42 min Year 7: 42 min Year 9: 42 min	Students are provided with a 'writing stimulus' (sometimes called a 'prompt' – an idea or topic) and asked to write a response in a particular genre (narrative or persuasive writing)
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be completed after the writing test To be completed before the conventions of language test 	Year 3: 45 min Year 5: 50 min Year 7: 65 min Year 9: 65 min	Students read a range of informative, imaginative and persuasive texts and then answer related questions
Conventions of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be completed after the reading test 	Year 3: 45 min Year 5: 45 min Year 7: 45 min Year 9: 45 min	Assesses spelling, grammar and punctuation
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be completed after the conventions of language test 	Year 3: 45 min Year 5: 50 min Year 7: 65 min Year 9: 65 min	Assesses number and algebra, measurement and geometry, and statistics and probability

Leaders of Learning – HSC Data Analysis Professional Development Day

On Thursday 16 February our Leaders of Learning Team attended a Professional Development Day in Sydney. The day, conducted for Catholic Schools NSW, by Dr John De Courcy, enabled our team to access and analyse our college data obtained from our HSC class of 2022. At the commencement of the day John talked very much about how we use data and emphasised that the purpose of the data is to open up conversation, to encourage questions and to focus forward – looking at the pedagogy that underpins the results, areas of strength and areas of opportunities/challenge. As the day unfolded we worked in small teams, exploring the tools available for us to use in our analysis whilst also framing questions about where to next.

In coupling this professional learning the college has also supported many of our teachers to attend the CSO HSC Analysis days. These days have enabled all teachers to access their NESA HSC class data from last year – looking again for strengths, areas within the exams that need further attention and once again, framing questions about what we can do differently or “better” for our students. There is much to be celebrate with some excellent results coming from the Class of 2022 and we are encouraged to maintain the direction in which we are heading.

I wish to acknowledge the staff involved in these professional learning days for their time and openness to learning. It is during these days that we are reminded of our own love of learning and our desire to consistently improve our practice. We look forward to putting our new learning into practice.



Assessment at St Mary's

Assessment

Assessment is the broad name for the collection and evaluation of evidence of a student's learning. It is integral to teaching and learning and has multiple purposes. Assessment can enhance student engagement and motivation, particularly when it incorporates interaction with teachers, other students and a range of resources.

NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)

Years 7, 8 and 9 (Stage 4 and early Stage 5)

At St Mary's Catholic College, assessment in Years 7-9 is **formative in nature** and is **centred on student growth**. Evidence of learning includes a variety of tasks, **for, as and of learning**, that are collated throughout the year by the classroom teacher AND the student (for example, portfolio; process diary; Learning Log.)

Students will receive written notification of any summative assessment tasks before the task being administered.

A Formal Assessment Schedule is only published for students in Year 9 who are undertaking 100 Hour RoSA (Record of School Achievement) Additional Courses. The number of formal assessment tasks in these courses is capped at TWO, with only ONE task allowed for formal examination.

Compass Learning Tasks are also used by some teachers to provide relevant and timely feedback to students and parents in the learning process.

The teacher's professional judgment is integral to the assessment process. This implies a deep understanding of the outcomes of the course and the use of the standards in the assessment and reporting process. Teachers work collaboratively to develop **Learning Intentions and Success Criteria**, create benchmarks, review work samples, and identify areas of strength and those students needing additional support. Data is collated by these learning teams – informing each teaching unit/cycle.

At the end of each semester a **report** is issued identifying an overall level of achievement for each subject studied based on the **Common Grade Scale**. These grades are awarded to each student based on the **evidence collected** throughout the learning process. Performance is measured against descriptors for A-E in that subject. Teachers collaborate in this process in professional learning teams.

Year 10 Stage 5

Assessment in Year 10 is still largely formative with **no more than TWO formal summative assessment tasks completed by each subject in Year 10 per year**. These two tasks per subject appear in a published Assessment Calendar each year and Formal Task Notifications are issued to students at least two weeks in advance. These two formal tasks **contribute** to the awarding of grades for the Stage 5 RoSA but are **NOT the only evidence** used to determine grades for the students. The gradual introduction of these formal Summative Tasks leads students towards an understanding of the nature and requirements of Stage 6 assessment.

The assessment and reporting principles outlined above for Stage 4 will also apply.

For Years 9 and 10 RoSA courses, Grades A-E based on the **Course Grade Descriptors** will be awarded for RoSA and submitted to NESA at the conclusion of the academic year.

Years 11 and 12 Stage 6

As per NESA requirements, there are mandatory components and weightings for the Year 11 and Year 12 courses. The maximum number of formal assessment tasks is THREE in Year 11 and FOUR in Year 12, with only ONE task being a formal examination in Year 11 and Year 12.

- Year 11 – Maximum THREE Formal Tasks (ONE exam only).
- Year 12 – Maximum FOUR Formal Tasks (ONE exam only).

The Year 11 Mid-Course and End of Course Report contains an A-E descriptor against achievement of outcomes and a Cumulative Assessment RANK in Course. Year 11 students receive a Grade A-E based on the Common Grade Scale for Preliminary Courses. These grades are then submitted to NESA as part of the RoSA accreditation process.

The Year 12 Mid-Course and End Of Course Reports contain an A-E descriptor against achievement of outcomes and a Cumulative Assessment RANK in Course. HSC Internal Assessment Marks are submitted to NESA each year in September.

Additional Reference: <https://www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/assessment/assessment-principles>

All Years 9 – 12 students now have access to their 2023 Assessment Handbooks via the Student Portal under Assessment. The Handbooks are also linked on our webpage (Under the Curriculum tab). The booklets contain all Assessment Schedules, calendars and due dates/weeks for our students. Formal Assessment Dates are also visible on the Compass Calendar for students. Please do not hesitate to email cathy.ogorman@mn.catholic.edu.au if there are any concerns/questions.

Cathy O’Gorman
Assistant Principal – Learning & Teaching

Ash Wednesday

Last Wednesday marked the beginning of the Lenten season, Ash Wednesday.

Ash Wednesday is a solemn day for Catholics and other Christians, and signifies our grief at having grown apart from God through sin and the pursuit of our own agenda.



Students and staff received ashes on their foreheads in the shape of a cross, symbolising their desire for reconnection and reconciliation with God through prayer, almsgiving and fasting (a form of penitence).

Assistant Priest, Father Anil, joined us for the liturgy, and provided a reflection on the beginning of Lent. Our music team accompanied us for the liturgy and as always, added a richness and beauty to the gathering. As well, a group of students from Year 8 read throughout the service. Lacey Joyce even provided a creative reflection of what Ash Wednesday was to her. For each of these people, and their service, we are grateful.

What is perhaps most profound to me is that these ashes are actually the burned palms from the previous year's Palm Sunday celebrations: Palm Sunday celebrates the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, and falls the weekend before Easter Sunday. Ash Wednesday then, as well as symbolising grief and sorrow, provides the Catholic with an opportunity for reconnection, reconciliation and rejuvenation.

Together with the staff and students at St Mary's Gateshead, I pray that this Lent you find God in the gaps of life. I pray that in your seeking him, indeed that you find him, as Christ promises us.

Be blessed,
David Luschwitz

Leader of Wellbeing & Engagement – Year 8

Year 8 is being encouraged to take the initiative and get involved in school activities and to find ways to contribute in a positive manner to the College Community. The students have shown this initiative in the following ways here at St Mary's:

Year 8 Basketball Competition

The Year 8 Basketball Competition has begun. The students from Roll Classes, 8.1, 8.6, .8.2 and 8.5 showed great enthusiasm and spirit in their respective games during Wednesday lunchtime. And students from Roll Classes 8.3 and 8.4 supported these classes by bringing their lunch and cheering on the students playing in the Josephite Centre. Many thanks to our new Year 10 Sports Leaders who have organized and led the competition. They have demonstrated leadership, kindness and a great sense of fun to our Year 8 students. Our Year 10 Sports Leaders:

Chisholm	Kenny	Simpson	Smith
Rori Williamson Ella Smith Dylan Dunkley James Bernosconi	Alice Taylor Emily Szauter Luka Doyle Stevie Botham	Abi Paterson Rhiannon Hinchcliff Ben Breasley Julian Egan	Lurneah Roberts Isabelle McCurdy Isabella Palamo Ava Corbett



We are looking forward to next week's game between Roll Classes 8.4 and 8.3!

CYBERIA – Year 8 Incursion

On February 20th, Year 8 all watched a performance called “**Cyberia**” from Brainstorm Productions. The play addresses issues including mental health, (cyber)bullying and the responsible use of technology. Year 8 reflected in groups this week and discussed what cyberbullying is and how to deal with cyberbullying. Here are some of their responses:

What is Cyberbullying?

“Cyberbullying is when you bully people or someone online” Kas and Bodie

“Cyberbullying is the act of being cruel to other people online” Nic and Lachie

How do you think it feels to be cyberbullied?

“It might make you feel alone, scared and unwanted” Lillian and Izzy

“It might be very upsetting and people might have to go and get help” Mieka and Bella

“Some people can become depressed because of the cyberbullying” Ruby and Poppy

List some tips for being safe online

“Think before you do” Angus and Cooper

“Think about what you’re doing and be kind” Macy and Matilda

“Report online bullying”

“Don’t talk to strangers”

“Never tell anyone online your location”

“Tell your parents” Mikaela and Hope

Finally, Year 8 had a fantastic day at the Swimming Carnival. They showed spirit and participated in lots of events.

Well done Year 8 in displaying such great spirit. We are off to a great start to our year in Year 8.

Ruth McCrae

Year 8 Leader of Wellbeing & Engagement

Basketball Competition

Our Year 7 and 8 Basketball Competition is off to a great start! This week 7:6 took on 7:1 and played an evenly matched game with a nail-biting 7-6 win going to 7:6. 7:5 had a resounding victory over 7:2 with a score of 20-0.

The Year 8 games were fast and furious. 8:6 had a win over 8:1 with 17-4. 8:2 played with great enthusiasm yet were defeated by 8:5 to the tune of 16-8.

Well done to everyone in Year 7 and 8 who played, shared the ball, subbed on and off, cheered enthusiastically and joined in a great community event. Many thanks to Year 10 Sports Captains who did a sterling job umpiring, scoring, organising equipment, adding music and providing a running commentary.

Great work team! Looking forward to the next round in Week 7.



Mrs Henderson and Ms Hatcher

Leader of Wellbeing and Engagement – Year 11

Year 11 Skills programs

We are excited about two initiatives being offered to Year 11 as they embark on their HSC journey.

Firstly, we are facilitating a course titled Study Without Stress that has been developed by Professor Viviana Wuthrich from Macquarie University for students undertaking the HSC. Why?

It is our experience that students can become overwhelmed by the demands placed on them. By successfully completing this course students will be better equipped to recognise and therefore minimise the impact of stress.

Our goal is to complete the course, which has a student workbook, by the end of term 1. To accomplish this, we will utilise the time available during period 4 on Friday of each Week A. In term 2 we will offer a parent/carer information session to share the key concepts, and how to support your child during their final stage of secondary education.

Secondly, Ms Tracy Carpenter is offering a Literacy Skills course for interested students. Literacy skills are needed for successfully accessing and responding to course work, assessment, and examination questions in every subject.

Year 11 attended a preliminary workshop a fortnight ago that looked at the foundations of sentence structure. The remainder of the course will work through skills in nominalisation, packed noun groups and using connectives to develop logical and coherently structured written answers. Literacy Skills will be offered, on an opt-in basis, and available Friday period 4 of each Week B. Staff have been generous with their time and have volunteered to assist with both initiatives to benefit our Year 11 students on their HSC journey.

Best wishes

Gerard Cushan

Year 11 Leader of Wellbeing & Engagement

Careers Corner

In 2023 the Careers Adviser role will be a job-share arrangement with Ms Finlay and Ms Dews. Ms Finlay will be available Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and Ms Dews Friday.

- **UCAT- Year 12**

The UCAT ANZ Consortium is the operating name of a group of universities in Australia and New Zealand who use the UCAT ANZ test for their **medical, dental and clinical sciences degree programmes**. The test helps universities to select applicants with the most appropriate abilities and professional behaviours required for new doctors and dentists to be successful in their clinical careers. It is used in collaboration with other admissions processes such as interviews and academic qualifications.

<https://www.ucat.edu.au/about-us/>

Key Dates and Test Fees: Candidates taking the UCAT ANZ in 2023 for entry to universities in Australia and New Zealand in 2024 should note these key dates. **Bookings open on the 1st of March 2023.**

<https://www.ucat.edu.au/about-ucat-anz/ucat-anz-test-cycle/>

- **UAC -Year 11 and 12**

The links below takes students step by step through the UAC process of applying, ordering preferences, ATAR etc.

<https://www.uac.edu.au/future-applicants/year-11-and-12-students>

<https://www.uac.edu.au/assets/documents/year-11-and-12/steps-to-uni-year-11-12.pdf>

Students are encouraged to read this information on more than one occasion, as, the more they become familiar, the better chance of understanding the process and the opportunities.

Throughout the year, students will receive emails as reminders of upcoming events and resources from the Careers Office. Information sessions will also take place throughout the year during the lunchtime, to minimise disruption to class time.

Throughout the year UAC update key events from institutions. Students can filter their search and register for webinars or be informed about Open Days. I encourage Year 11 and 12 students to subscribe to the UAC newsletter.

<https://www.uac.edu.au/key-dates>

- **Charles Sturt University (CSU)**

The Charles Sturt Advantage is your chance to get into university based on work you've already done and skills you already have. There are three rounds that you can apply for.

How it works; CSU look at two things: your Year 11 results and your **soft skills**. Soft skills are those personal attributes that will help you succeed at study – and life. Things like communication, resilience, empathy, and motivation to create a world worth living in. **Applications close for Round 1 offers on the 7th of April 2023.**

<https://study.csu.edu.au/study-options/pathways/charles-sturt-advantage>

- **White Card – Year 10 and 11** (The Work Health and Safety Induction Certificate Course)

The Work Health and Safety Induction Certificate Course is offered to any Year 10 or 11 student who is interested; however, it is a **compulsory** course for any student wishing to participate in **work experience** in the Construction industry or any Year 11 student studying **VET Construction**. This one-day course will run at St. Mary's in early Term 2.

Students have already been asked to complete an expression of interest form, so we can confirm numbers.

If any student has not completed the expression of interest form online, they have a second chance by attending a meeting on **Monday 6th March at lunchtime**.

CAREER SPOTLIGHT

Have you thought about a career in the **ENVIRONMENT (+ DATA JOBS)?**

Listed below are some of the careers you could consider:

- Data engineer: \$66K–\$133K
- DevOps engineer: \$65K–\$132K
- Geospatial analyst: \$58K–\$107K
- Environmental scientist: \$55K–\$90K
- Marine biologist: \$43K–\$101K

If you are interested take the time to review an interview with a climate scientist and see her pathway to her current job. The link also provides possible qualifications that are options.

5 minutes with a Climate Scientist:

<https://careerswithstem.com.au/climate-scientist-nandini-ramesh/#gsc.tab=0>

Ms Finlay/ Ms Dews
Careers Advisers

Creative Arts - Drama

Que Sera Sera – Does it have to be?

In 2022, Bronte Carrigan and Isobel Negus (now both in Year 12), developed a self-devised dramatic work that explores the nature of sexism, misogyny and domestic violence. Based upon the styles of Verbatim Theatre and Brecht's Epic Theatre, the piece draws on several texts – The 1950's Guide to being A Good Housewife, a collection of speeches from female leaders and a series of statistics in relation to crimes of a sexual and violent nature against women. Bringing these texts together, *Que Sera Sera – Does It Have to Be*, challenges the status quo and rejects complacency and acceptance of the alarming rates of domestic violence and misogyny as they currently stand.

Late in 2022, Bronte and Isobel entered their play into the Lake Macquarie One Act Play Festival, with the play being shortlisted for performance, selected from works that were submitted from around Australia and internationally. In 2023, Katelyn Dowling (Yr 8) joined with Bronte to perform at the Warners Bay Theatre last weekend, winning the Festival in the Best Play Category and receiving \$500 in prize money.

We congratulate all three students for this incredible achievement. Please see below for the Program Notes and photos of Bronte and Katie – we are so very proud of their achievements!

"Not now. Not ever."

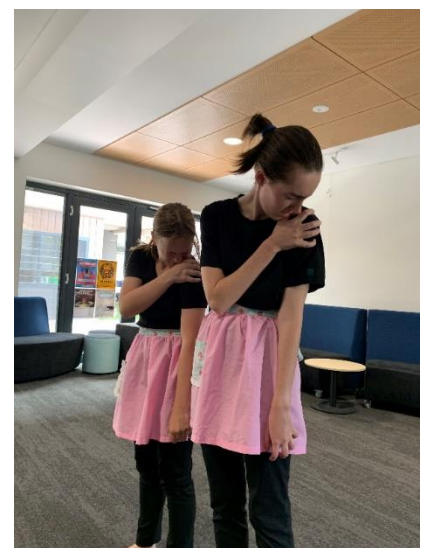
These were the words that resounded in 2012 as Julia Gillard, Australia's then Prime Minister, called out the misogyny that existed in Australia's parliament.

Ten years on, the need for women's voices to be heard is no less urgent.

As incidents of domestic abuse continue to escalate, as female voices are silenced and women are left repressed, abused and uneducated – it is time to question and challenge. Does it have to be? Women have been asking this question for a very long time ...

As voices grow stronger across the globe, it is time for questions to be asked and action to be taken. Now is the time to join the chorus of female leaders who seek to challenge apathy.

'Que Sera Sera' isn't going to cut it anymore!



Aboriginal Education

Welcome to Country Dance

The Aboriginal students in Year 9 gathered to learn a 'Welcome to Country Dance' this week. Levi Briggs, a strong Awabakal man and former student of St Mary's, taught the students and played the yidaki. The students then presented the dance to two roll call groups to commence their assembly. Small steps! Hopefully the students gain confidence to lead the school community at future assemblies and events!



Personal Learning Plans

All families of students who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander are invited to participate in a goal setting meeting for their son or daughter. These introductory meetings will take between 20-30 mins and will involve the student, family member or members, one classroom teacher and myself. Please contact school to arrange a time to meet next week or the week after.

Paul McKay
Aboriginal Education Teacher

GIFTED EDUCATION UPDATE

Virtual Academy has started this week!

The Virtual Academy has been designed by the CSO to support highly and profoundly gifted students in Years 5-8. It offers students the opportunity to be challenged through inquiry and develop skills across disciplines to solve real-world problems.

This year we have 5 students from St Mary's participating in the Virtual Academy:

Annie Hardie (Year 7)
Abbie Morris (Year 7)
Wil Schneider (Year 7)
Lacey Joyce (Year 8)
Laura Smith (Year 8)

Last week our Year 8 students attended an Induction Day at the Catholic Schools Office. They met with other participants in the Virtual Academy and learnt IT skills for their on-line classes.

Mrs Louise Henderson
Gifted Education Coordinator



Standing in Solidarity: Prayers for Peace

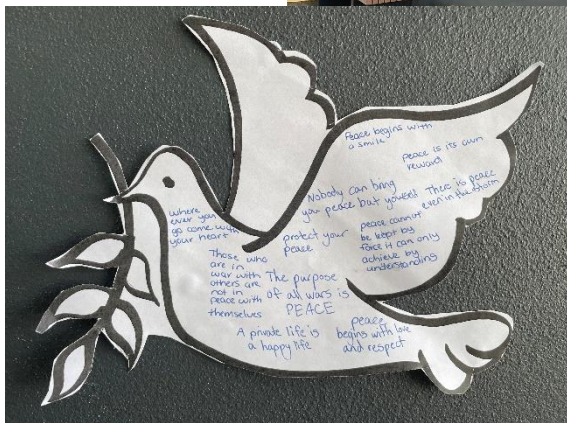
Friday 24th February marked the one-year anniversary of the invasion of the Ukraine by Russia. The Russian invasion changed people's lives and caused many to question the world's political security. The day was a day of commemorations, reflections and tears for many, though it was also a time we could engage with students to stand in solidarity with those who are in need of comfort and peace.

A small number of senior students constructed the Prayers for Peace Wall with Peace Doves using the Breezeway as the canvas for this Awareness Campaign. The wall was created to engage students and staff in prayer for the Ukrainian people, as we remember they struggle for peace and unity, and for the earthquake victims of Syria and Turkey.

Classes from 7-12 were approached to contribute a prayer or reflection to the wall in solidarity with those suffering despair, loss, and grief. This is a small way we can allow students to build their connections to those in need and enhance their own humanity and stand in unity through the power of prayer.

The colours used in the Awareness Campaign were blue/yellow for Ukraine and red/green/white for Turkey and Syria.

Joanne Meagher
Vinnies Coordinator





St Mary's Catholic College
invites you to join us for our annual

International Women's Day Breakfast 2023

Date: Wednesday 8 March 2023

Time: 7.30am

Venue: Ready to Serve Café

Cost: \$10 – please pay at the Finance Office
(includes breakfast)

Guest speakers include:

Detective Superintendent - Deb Wallace

Barrister - Mary Keaney

Employment Lawyer - Wendy Manning

Please RSVP and make payment by contacting our Finance Office on 4944 4804
Everyone welcome!

International Women's Day Breakfast – Introducing our Speakers

Deborah Wallace: Detective Superintendent

Often referred to as “the gang buster”, Detective Superintendent Deborah Wallace, has delved into the dark underbelly of crime investigating and dismantling some of the State's most feared gangs. Throughout a stellar career spanning more than 30 years with NSW Police, Deb has faced murderers, drug manufacturers and extortionists - to name just a few - armed with her trademark heels and colourful suits.

Currently Commander, State Crime Command Gangs Squad, Deb is a self-described diehard Parramatta Eels fan and proud "westie". Her pragmatic approach, tenacity, sense of humour and ability to separate her work and personal lives, has enabled Deb to thrive in high pressure police operations. The recipient of numerous awards including the Australia Day Achievement Award, the Australian Crime and Prevention Award, and the Australian Police Medal, Deb is strongly committed to community endeavours and is a long-time supporter of Youth off the Streets.



Mary Keaney: Barrister

Admitted and commenced practice in 2005 in general litigation practices. She practised law in criminal law 'in house' at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Aid Services in Alice Springs, NT, and Brisbane QLD, as well as in private practices in the ACT, NSW, and QLD and was a Legal Aid Queensland accredited Duty Lawyer. For two and a half years during the term of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse she worked for Knowmore Legal Service providing advice, assistance and referrals in relation to engaging with the Royal Commission and claims for compensation and related matters.



Wendy Manning

Employment Lawyer

- *working towards gaining equality and equity for women in the workplace
- * worked in providing changes to Domestic Violence Advocacy in the workplace
- * Changes to Leave Laws for Employment Issues.
- * Student at St Mary's Gateshead 1994-1998

Mr Larry Keating - 50 Years in Teaching

"As some of you may know, this year marks 50 years for Mr Keating in education. We would just like to say a few words on behalf of the students for Mr Keating... I promise I will keep this short..."

On behalf of the students of St Mary's, past and present, we would like to thank you for everything you have done not only for our college community but the community around us.

You have guided our school through the transition to a 7-12 HSC college.

We all remember your epic basketball skills when you versed last year's year 12 and your exceptional push up form supporting the push up challenge!

The construction workers may have built this college but Mr Keating, you have built the community we are all so proud and grateful to be a part of... so thank you."

Mia Egan
Student Leader 2023



NEWS

A life of leadership

Principal reflects on 50 years

BY HELEN GREGORY

PRINCIPAL Larry Keating has prioritised one thing above all others in the 50 years he has spent at schools across the Hunter.

"My mantra with staff is relationships before curriculum, before everything else, you have to get to know your students as people to get to know them then as learners," said Mr Keating, principal of St Mary's Catholic College Gateshead since 2004. He has overseen the school's expansion to years 11 and 12, two stages of its ongoing five stage redevelopment and its focus on the environment. "Caring for people has to be number one." The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle recently presented Mr Keating with a 50 Years of Service Award, alongside Our Lady of Lourdes Tarro principal Cheryl Henderson and its manager of school infrastructure John Tobin. The father of four and grandfather of 11 said he was filled with "gratitude". "Professor Thomas Groome says to be an educator is a sacred privilege and an awesome responsibility," he said. "You're dealing with human beings, the most precious gifts parents have, their children, and we get to share in that precious relationship in terms of raising kids to be responsible and caring adults."

"I don't take an autocratic position, it's servant leadership, I'm here to serve the needs of everybody entrusted



College leaders Mia Egan and Ben Dezelak said Larry Keating (middle) "always puts his students and staff in front of him" and reminded them all to "never see a need without doing something about it". Picture by Simone De Peak

to our care.

"I love dealing with adolescents, I love their honesty, their love of life, they keep you young, they invigorate you. I love their preparedness to challenge, their desire to search and discover what's life about."

Education has also been a gift in Mr Keating's own life. Two of his children survived "tragic incidents". "It's those tragedies that always happen to somebody else, it never happens to you," he said. "It just changes your life." Eight years ago his wife Anne fell at home and became a quadriplegic. She spent 17 months in hospital. He said he drew strength from her "courage of endurance". "It's pretty hard," he said. "This job - I don't see it as a job, I see it as a privilege, it's a ministry - has been my saviour, and the wonderful people I work with." He was at the end of six months leave following his wife's accident when it was time to announce the school

was expanding to senior grades. He'd been reading Joan D Chittister's *Scarred by Struggle Transformed by Hope* and decided to return to the role he relished. "She says in life there are things you must do and things you want to do and I don't believe in dichotomising. I say to the leadership team here all the time 'Let's think about the 'and' - forget about the 'or' - try and get a win-win'," he said. "When I came here the community wanted to build a hall and above all else they wanted to go to years 11 and 12, so that's been the goal."

Mr Keating's father worked on the railways and he attended schools in Coonamble, Koorawatha, Capertee, Portland - his first introduction to the Sisters of St Joseph - Blackheath and Lithgow before his family moved to Kotara in 1966. He went to St Pius X High for year 11 and 12. His economics teacher, Father James Saunders, was a "big influence". Mr Keat-

ing said he wanted to study economics law, but received a four year Department of Education teaching training scholarship. He studied a bachelor of arts majoring in economics and a diploma of education at the University of Newcastle. During his degree he helped Father Saunders teach first level economics. He did a placement at Broadmeadow Boys High School at the start of his diploma and blocks at Newcastle Boys High. "There were a number of teachers who were really passionate about education," he said. "They took me under their wing and gave me guidance and advice and I appreciated that. I think [Father Saunders] might have been sewing a seed and I never knew it."

His wife was working in hospital administration and needed to be in a major city to advance her career. He told the department this, but it said he was needed to fill vacancies across the state.

When they couldn't reach an agreement he resigned, days before the couple's 1973 wedding. They were on their honeymoon when Father Saunders called and asked if he wanted a job teaching economics at St Anne's and St Pius X. He said at the time teachers at Catholic schools were paid 15 per cent less than their government colleagues and didn't receive superannuation. But he felt he could make a difference. "The first pay day came around and the bursar said 'Look, we have not got enough money to pay you today but by the middle of next week we will have, so how much do you need for your groceries?'"

Around the same time he met with then acting director of schools Father Frank Coolahan to explain that he had a \$1000 bond he needed to repay. He'd saved money working as a winder at Bradmill Cotton Mills Kotara at nights in case he needed to cover it, but

knew that would help buy a house or car. "He said 'When you get a subpoena to pay the bond back come and see me and I'll support you'... he said 'We're getting a cheap teacher, someone else paid for the training and we have to be prepared to contribute something back'."

The investment paid off. Mr Keating rose from teacher to social science coordinator and deputy principal and oversaw St Pius X's first intake of girls and the end of the cane. He was one of the founding directors of Australian Catholic Colleges Rugby League in 1979. He moved as deputy principal to St Mary's in 1985 and was one of the first two lay executive staff members, the first male in leadership and reconnected with the Josephites. He was assistant principal at St Paul's Catholic College Booragul in 1990 before taking on his first principal role at St Clare's High Taree, where he stayed for 13 years. He returned to St Mary's in 2004.

He said the school previously had periods of low enrolment, but after expanding to years 11 and 12 and redevelopment could "double our numbers in year seven if we were wanting to do that". He said in the past week the school had received requests for enrolment for 2027, 2028 and 2034. "The quality of education is improving too because of the intensive professional learning and this is attracting teachers who want to teach in the school." Mr Keating has had colleagues follow him between schools and supported others to lead their own schools. He said his time at the diocese wasn't over yet. "I haven't put an end point on it," he said. "I started a [redevelopment] project and I'd like to see it through."

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A Celebration of Teaching - Mr Larry Keating, Principal

In honour of Larry's 50 years in teaching, he was presented with a Long Service Achievement award at the Call to Serve Mass held at the Sacred Heart Cathedral on Tuesday 7 February 2023. Larry received his award and congratulations from Mr Steve Lemos, Head of Catholic Schools and Fr John Lovell.



The Mass was followed by a celebration dinner at Bella Italia – much to the surprise of Larry who thought he was dining with his brother!

The following day, a lunch was held at St Mary's, to recognise, thank and honour our wonderful Principal. Larry was surprised, humbled and a little embarrassed by the attention but he spoke about how thankful he was for a career he has been passionate about throughout his years in education. Many congratulations to you Larry on such a wonderful achievement.

Thank you Larry

Thank you for being who you are, thank you for being our guiding light. For your experience, your enthusiasm, your knowledge, your generosity, your passion, and your support – we thank you.

Congratulations on the most wonderful achievement of 50 years in education.



HUNTER REGIONAL NSW DA VINCI DECATHLON 2023



CHAOS

"In the midst of chaos, there is also opportunity" Sun Tzu

Decathlon resources
www.davincidecathlon.com

Further details will be published on Compass

Tuesday 9 May 2023
Years 7 and 8

Wednesday 10 May 2023
Years 9 and 10

Thursday 11 May 2023
Years 5 and 6

Proudly hosting by Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College



Term 1 Calendar 2023**Week 7 (A Week)**

Tues 7 March	College Assembly
Wed 8 March	International Women's Day – please contact Finance Office to purchase tickets

Week 8 (B Week)

Tues 14 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 7 (2024) Information Evening – 7.00pm - TJC • Year Assemblies
Wed 15 March	NAPLAN Testing window – 25.03.23 to 27.03.23
Fri 17 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletter – 4.23 • Bishop Michael Kennedy – Installed as Bishop Maitland-Newcastle Diocese – Cathedral 5.40pm

Week 9 (A Week)

Mon 20 March	Harmony Week – 20.03.23 to 26.03.23
Tues 21 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmony Day • College Assembly
Fri 24 March	Athletics Carnival - Glendale

Week 10 (B Week)

Tues 28 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year Assemblies • Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences
Wed 29 March	Year 10 Girls' Talk – PP&E
Thurs 30 March	Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences – Years 7 to 11 - 3.30pm to 7.00pm
Fri 31 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences – Years 7 to 11 – No classes* *Year 12 classes as per timetable • Newsletter 5.23

Week 11 – (A Week)

Tues 4 April	College Assembly
Thurs 6 April	Holy Thursday Feast Day Celebrations – Liturgy, Stalls, Colour Run
Fri 7 April	Good Friday – Public Holiday
Sun 9 April	Easter Sunday

Term 2 Calendar 2023**Week 1 – Term 2 (A Week)**

Mon 24 April	Term 2 commences ANZAC Day Ceremony – Noon
Tues 25 April	ANZAC Day Public Holiday
Fri 28 April	Newsletter 6.23

Please note any TBC dates – this is due to evolving COVID protocols. Arrangements will be continually updated on this page.



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