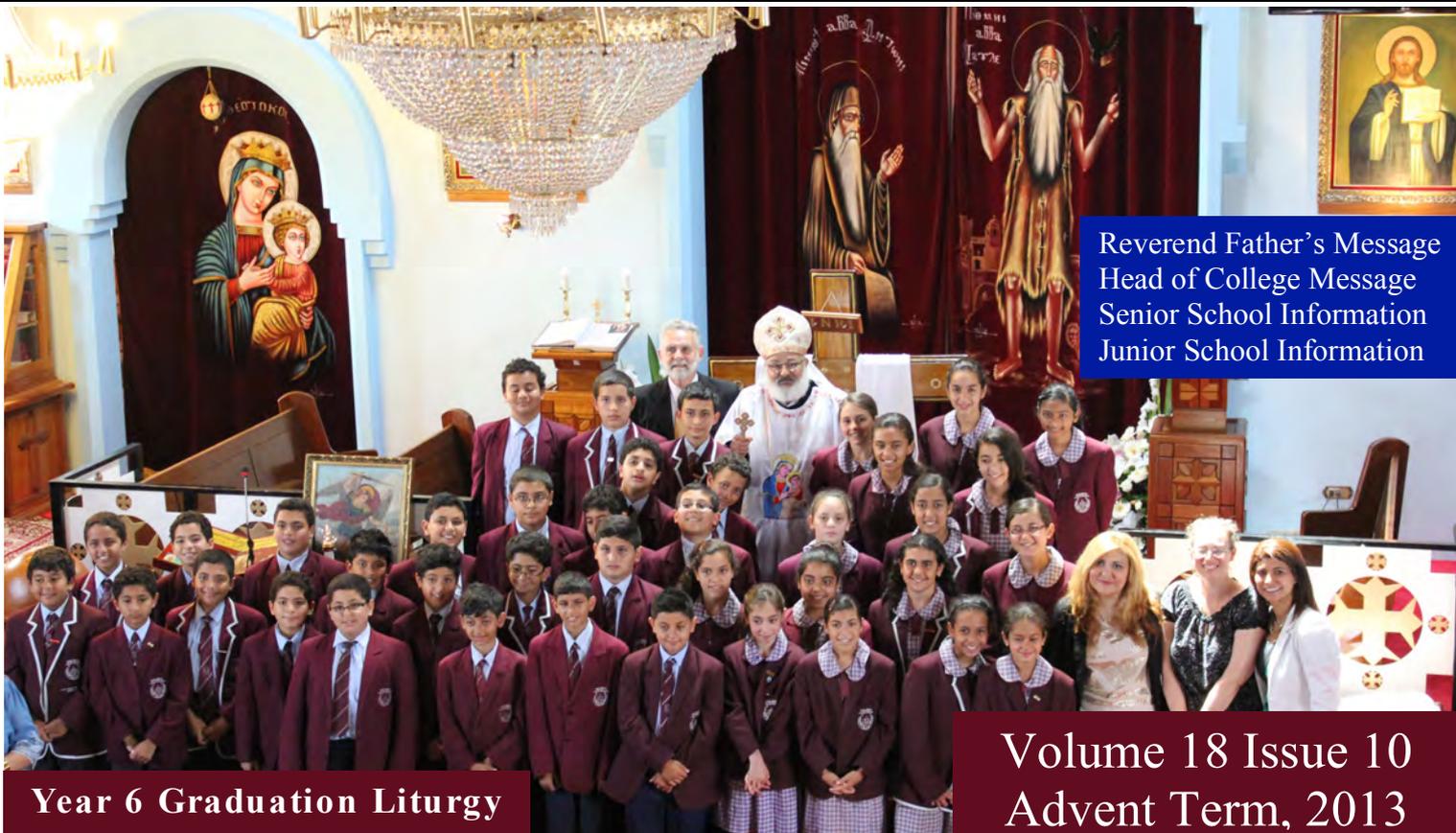




St Mark's College Newsletter

Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Sydney and Affiliated Regions



Reverend Father's Message
Head of College Message
Senior School Information
Junior School Information

Year 6 Graduation Liturgy

**Volume 18 Issue 10
Advent Term, 2013**



Our Proud Students

Year 12 Formal

St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox College

'To Live Is Christ'

Enrolling Now for 2014 Kindergarten to Year 11

Contact Mrs Sidhom on 9825 6768



St. Mark's College Newsletter

Coptic Orthodox Diocese of Sydney and Affiliated Regions

Friday 29th November, 2013



Volume 18 Edition 10

ABN: 67 796 481 099



Advent Term 2013

Presentation Day, Kindergarten to Yr4
K - 6 Swim Programme, Liverpool concludes
Junior School Christmas Carols Evening, 6.00pm
Speech Night, Yrs 5-12, Liv. Cath. Club, 6.15pm
Advent Term concludes
Staff Professional Development Days

Thur 28th Nov
Fri 29th Nov
Fri 29th Nov
Wed 4th Dec
Wed 4th Dec
6th & 7th Dec

Lent Term 2014

Staff Professional Dev. Day, 8.00am - 4.00pm
Lessons commence for Years 1 to 12, 8.30am
First day for Kindergarten, 8.30am
Parent-Teacher Interviews Yrs 8 - 12
Year 7 Camp at Port Hacking
CCOC Senior School Liturgy, St Bishop
New Parents' Welcome, 7:00pm
Parent Orientation Evening Yrs K - 7
CCOC Junior School Liturgy, St Bishop
Parents and Friends' Sausage Sizzle,
Junior Swimming Carnival
Senior School Swimming Carnival, Liverpool
Junior Athletics Carnival
Senior Athletics Carnival
Sem 1 Examinations commence for Yrs 11 & 12
Sem 1 Examinations commence for Yrs 7 - 10
Junior School K-6 Fun Run
Term concludes
Orthodox Easter Good Friday
Orthodox Easter
Orthodox Easter Monday
ANZAC Day

Tues 28th Jan
Wed 29th Jan
Thur 30th Jan
Mon 3rd Feb
Wed 5th - 7th Feb
Thur 6th Feb
Mon 10th Feb
Mon 10th Feb
Thur 13th Feb
Thur 20th Feb
Fri 14th Feb
Fri 21st Feb
Fri 7th Mar
Fri 28th Mar
Mon 31st Mar
Mon 7th April
Wed 9th April
Fri 11th April
Fri 18th April
Sun 20th April
Mon 21st April
Fri 25th April

Pentecost Term 2014

Staff Professional Development Day
Lessons commence for K - 12
Autumn Fair, 10:00am to 3:00pm
Term concludes

Mon 28th April
Tue 29th April
Sat 10th May
Fri 27th June

Theotokos Term 2014

Staff Professional Development Day
Lessons commence for K - 12
Term concludes

Mon 21st July
Tues 22nd July
Fri 19th Sept

Advent Term 2014

Staff Professional Development
Lessons commence for K - 12
Speech Night
Term concludes
Staff Professional Development Days
Office Closed Wed 18th Dec **Reopens** Mon 20th Jan
Office Hours 9.00am-3:00pm

Tue 7th Oct
Wed 8th Oct
Wed 3rd Dec
Wed 3rd Dec
5th & 6th Dec

Speech Night Wednesday 4th December (Compulsory Event for Years 5 to 12)

This Wednesday 4th December Speech Night will be held for Years 5 to 12 at the Liverpool Catholic Club and will commence at 6.30pm, sharp. All students must be present and seated by 6.15pm and attend in full school uniform including their blazer. For a student to receive an award they must be present and be in full school uniform. The uniform should be clean and pressed, shoes polished and boys must be clean shaven.

House Points

ST ANTHONY	ST DEMIANA	ST GEORGE	ST MARINA
3076	2920	2859	2793

'When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.'

Matthew 2:10



Giving With Love

During this festive season we reflect upon the special gift that God has given us; His only begotten Son who was and is our Salvation.

'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to the end that all who believe in Him should not perish but have everlasting life' (John 3:16).

The love that the Lord has shown to us, He wants us to reciprocate to those in dire need. Love is the key to displaying our Christianity to all, during this special time of Christmas, which signifies Jesus' birth, in humble surroundings, in a manger.

During this time of year we ask the Senior School Students to donate bags of groceries, canned food, clothes and books to the COCOS Service. COCOS cares for those who are homeless and impoverished families. Junior School students are asked to donate a shoebox full of soft toys, hygiene items, stationery and other things.

The aim of this gesture of goodwill is to give students the opportunity to share with others and to appreciate how fortunate they are to be showered with God's gifts and to pass them on to those in real need.

In the Christmas Season let us all give and teach our children that life is all about 'Caring by Giving'.

Uniform Shop

Opening Days During the Christmas Break

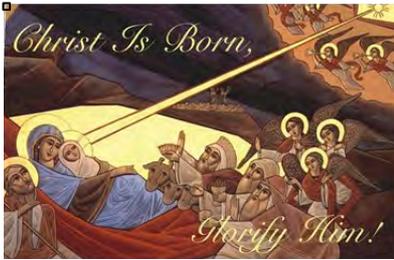
Tuesday 3rd December, 2013 Fri 6th December, 2013
Tuesday 21st January, 2014 Friday 24th January, 2014
Tuesday 28th January, 2014

The Opening hours are from 9:00am to 3:00pm.

Message from the Head of College

The year has passed quickly and it has been full of achievements for our blessed children from Kindergarten to Year 12. There have been numerous activities and events that have taken place at the College and our children have been the focal point in each. This year has truly been a blessing for all our students and it is an absolute credit to them and their teachers for their overall performance and in the way they have presented themselves. Sometimes we only focus on the academic performance of our students, but the purpose of the College is beyond just the academic, it is the manner in which they portray themselves as a Christian to the broader community and the way they display and practice the ethos and values of our Coptic Orthodox Faith. Our students do it instinctively for all to notice and we seek praise from the Lord for their reverence and respect for the Church.

I would like to extend my appreciation to the staff and students of the College for all their good work this year and to the parents for their support of the College. I wish everyone a Holy Christmas and may the Lord shower you with all His blessings and I look forward to everyone returning safely in the New Year.



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

The Advantages of An Early Enrolment

At the recent Year 6 Graduation Evening my address was on the significance of being enrolled from Kindergarten, at St Mark's College. Our current Year Six (6) is the last of the two stream system that existed at the College prior to 2007, which is interesting to note, as there are significant advantages for children entering the school from Kindergarten.

1. Spalding Programme

Firstly, this programme is unique and has brought about enormous improvements in the children's literacy levels. Almost every student has attained the appropriate NAPLAN Standard for 2013, in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

2. Specialist Teachers

These teachers from a variety of faculties teach in the Junior School from K to 6. These include English, Mathematics, Science, Music, PDHPE, Technology and Applied Studies, Visual Arts and Coptic Studies. This enables students to have specialist teachers within their given field to deliver skills and knowledge at the highest level. Currently in the 5/6 Programme the following Senior School teachers are involved:

English Enrichment

Miss Petrakis and Miss Greene

Mathematics Enrichment

Mr Micheal and Mrs Williams

Science Enrichment: Mr O'Connell

Music: Mrs Ibrahim

Coptic, Orthodox Studies and Hymnology

Mrs Morgan and Mr Aziz

PDHPE: Mr Helene, Mrs Holland and Mr Nestorovski

Technology: Mr Chen

3. Streaming

In Years Three (3) to Six (6) the College has streamed the classes to suit the academic needs of the children. It has created in some cases three distinctive styles of teaching and learning, with all classes learning the same content. But based upon the needs of the children, diversify the teaching and learning strategies that takes place, within each class. The Standard Class has the foundation learning of Literacy and Numeracy reinforced, while the Intermediate and Honour Classes have an extended programme that builds upon the foundations of Literacy, Numeracy and across the curriculum.

4. Academic

There is a distinct academic advantage for children who commence at our College from Kindergarten. The long-term prognosis is that as a collective group, they outperform those who join the College in later years. The later the enrolment the more difficult it is to do well in the HSC.

Why is this so? I suggest it has to do with acclimatizing to the culture of the school from a young age. The children know the expectations and they rise to these levels. There is no conflict between the values of the home and the school. A child is always comfortable in an environment where the parents' expectations are complemented by those from the school.

5. Pastoral Care

The College has a strong emphasis on the overall well-being of the child. The majority of the children who join us from other schools seem to articulate the difference in attending a school like ours. They often say it is a friendly, caring and safe environment where they feel they can happily get on with their studies and perform to their best.

6. Broad Curriculum

The school offers a curriculum package that is envied by many schools because our fee structure is quite low, compared to theirs. We offer an extensive suite of courses, including two years acceleration in Mathematics, a co-curricular programme which includes an ensemble, Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme, Chess, debating, etc. Schools that have a curriculum like ours, have a tuition fee structure that commences from above \$7,000 p.a.

Recently, I had a family transfer their children from another school and was overwhelmed by what St Mark's College offered its students, that enabled them to grow and blossom as per their talents. After a couple of weeks at the school they could see the advantages of being at St Mark's College and

■

wondered why the community was unaware of the wonderful things that it does. I ask parents to sell the positive attributes of the College to all within our community, because what we do collectively is just brilliant!

Presentation Day K to 4 and Speech Night

During this week and next, the College will hold the Junior School Presentation Day for Years K to 4 and Speech Night, for Years 5 to 12. These two events are the highlight of the College Calendar and rewards students for all their diligent work throughout the year. This is for students who have performed exceptionally well in a given field and are acknowledged on stage in front of their parents and fellow peers.

If a student doesn't receive an award at either of these two events, it doesn't signify a lack of success. I am sure each student has given of their best and may have improved significantly from their performance from the previous year or semester. This is just as important as receiving an award, but what better award for a child than to receive a positive comment from his or her parents. This is the greatest accolade that a parent can give their child. It signifies to the child that his/her parents have acknowledged their effort and they are satisfied with their achievement.

I ask that parents keep this in mind, as the approach we use in conveying our expectations, can make a significant impact upon a child. In the end, we want her or him to continue to do their best at all times and to be a happy and well-balanced individual who attends school.

Year 12 Formal



At this time of the year, there are a number of important events that take place and the students really look forward to them in quiet anticipation, as they make a memorable impact upon their lives while at school.

The first is the Year 12 Formal, which was held at the Grand Roxy in Brighton Le Sands. It has been a College tradition that parents attend this event with their child, to share this memorable moment together. The first formal was held in 2001 and the format that was created back then by Fr Antonios Kaldas, has remained until today. I was fortunate enough to have been present at this formal and was impressed by Year Twelve's (12) dedication to God and to their parents for reaching this wonderful milestone. This year's Formal was no different. The College Captains Matthew Magar and Monica Botros made an address that was respectful of their fellow peers and highlighted the important role played by their parents in their lives. This was followed by an address from the Vice Captains, Kyrillos Kaleeny and Jessica Guindi, as they reminisced those special moments with their Year 12 colleagues, while at the College. Both spoke eloquently and with such maturity, that everyone within the reception lounge were proud of their presentation. Fr Antonios made a memorable address that had everyone's attention. He spoke about being a productive citizen who contributes positively to society and to be an unselfish individual who utilises his/her talents for the common good of all.

■



An event like this cements the purpose of St Mark's College, as you see the wonderful all-round students who will be the future model citizens, within the broader society. Academic studies are important, but what is its worth, if a student doesn't have a strong faith in God and isn't willing to assist others, through serving.

Everyone present was proud of our students and we can be reassured that they have been well-prepared for their journey beyond school life. I wish them well for the future and thank the Year 12 parents for having faith in the College and for giving us the opportunity to educate their children. What an honour it has been.



I extend my appreciation to the Board Members and to the reverend fathers who gave their time so generously to be with us, but in particular our Director, Fr Antonios Kaldas. I would also like to thank Mr David for organising the event, as it was an exceptional evening, the catering was lovely, it was well organised and the event was enjoyed by all.



Year 6 Graduation

Last Thursday evening the Year 6 Graduation was held at the Skyview Reception Lounge in Liverpool, but in the morning a Special Liturgy was held at St Anthony and St Paul's Church at Guildford. Both the liturgy and the Dinner were well attended, with over 160 persons present.



The Captains, Mark Magar and Chantelle Beshara made a very responsible speech and thanked both their parents and teachers for the care they have received while in the Junior School. Mrs Shehata, Mrs Nada and Mrs Thompson replied with very sincere thoughts about their time with Year 6.

The parent comments were very appreciative of the evening and were proud of their children reaching this significant milestone. Congratulations to Mrs Shehata, Mrs Nada and Mrs Thompson for organising the evening, so well and we are all looking forward to the continued progress of the students of Year 6 while at the Senior School.



Parents and Friends' Association

This month at the Annual General Meeting, a new Parents and Friends' Executive Committee was elected to Office. The new parent body are:

President	Mrs A. Bestawros
Vice President	Mr R. Fahmy
Secretary	Mrs R. Tawadrous
Treasurer	Mrs M. Rouchdi

I would like to congratulate the new committee on their appointments and I look forward to working with them closely during their two year tenure.

I would also like to thank most sincerely Mr Rouchdi, Mr Malak, Mr Semaan and Miss Michael for all their good work and commitment over the past two years. They have introduced a number of initiatives, but in particular the one that stands out, is at our regular meetings, a special speaker is invited to present to our parents a specific topic of importance, that relates to children. Two that come to mind were; Cyber –Bullying and Monitoring Your Child, and The Challenges in Raising Children. May the Lord bless them for their service to the College and for raising much needed student resources.

Mr Rekouniotis
Head of College

Curriculum Matters

Mid Semester Break

The Senior School students have reached the midway point of Semester One (1) and have been working diligently throughout Advent Term in preparation for their assessment tasks for 2014. I would like to encourage the students to continue to review their notes over the Christmas break and prepare summary notes in readiness for their Semester One (1) Examinations in Lent Term.

On behalf of the Curriculum Committee I would like to thank all the parents and students for making this year a very rewarding one and I would like to wish you all a safe and holy holiday period. May the Lord God be with you all during this beautiful time.

Award Recipients

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the various award winners that will be announced during **Presentation Day and Speech Night**. It gives me great pleasure to see the students receiving their awards after a year of hard work, commitment and perseverance.

A special mention to the students receiving '**Most Improved**' awards for their commitment in Semester Two (2), after feedback from their teachers.

Time Management

Numerous observations have led me to believe that students of our College leave many of their assessments and study to 'the last minute'. Creating a home study timetable and instilling a more structured and positive study environment would benefit greatly.

This in turn will alleviate most forms of anxiety and stress and produce better results. Any student who wishes to have a **Study Timetable** created with assistance, should see their House Patrons or myself.

Year 12 – 2014 HSC Update

Positive reports from staff have indicated that the 2014 HSC students have been working quite well this term. Their level of commitment and work rate have stood out. I hope that they use the upcoming holiday break to revise the new content learnt and review the number of assessments that have been completed.

On another note, quite a number of students have made the decision to drop to the bare minimum of 10 Units of study. **As explained on a number of occasions, it is always advised to have a 'safety net' by undertaking 11 or 12 Units.** Statistically, students who achieve the best results are those with greater than 10 Units. They must use their time wisely and to study more diligently.

NAPLAN Results

The latest NAPLAN results have indicated a positive and obvious improvement. This is excellent news, as we do not 'coach' the students for these tests. Congratulations to the students and the Junior School Staff for their efforts. The College will persist with delivering quality literacy and numeracy programmes throughout 2014.

Textbooks

Some students are still missing their textbooks. It is essential for a student to have his/her textbooks if they are to achieve of their best. I would advise parents to contact Endeavour Education and enquire about their child's books. Teachers will expect students to have a textbook for the start of Lent Term, and in preparation for their upcoming examinations.

Mr Chahrozian
Curriculum Co-ordinator

Sport

Success at SWISSA Zone Tennis Championships

On Friday 1st November, St Mark's competed in the annual SWISSA Zone Tennis Championships held at the Auburn Tennis Centre. With a new look team across the boys' and girls' divisions, it would be difficult to see how the College would perform after experiencing a significant amount of success over the past two (2) years, at these Championships. From the outset, our girls dominated proceedings, only dropping two (2) matches throughout the whole tournament. Our girls would go on to win the intermediate and senior divisions, and the overall Girls' Championship Trophy.



2013 tournament.

Our boys were very competitive throughout the day, with a very young squad competing. Congratulations to all students involved, and a special well done to our girls on their successful

St Mark's Tennis Squad

Junior Boys: Mihailo Kalinic, Kaushik Desphande
Interm. Boys: Michael Boctor, Krutik Nayak
Interm. Girls: Mirna Golub, Maria Golub (Champions)
Senior Boys: Danilo Miletich, James Tawdrous
Senior Girls: Melissa Pavlovic, Chantelle Perin (Champions)

Wibur Shield Cricket



On Wednesday 30th October, St Marks took to the cricket field for the first time in a 40 over game. This was a new experience for

our boys as in the past we have only played in the Super 8's tournament.

The Wilbur Shield Competition is open to teams of boys from schools across NSW. Our opponents were the Malek Fahd Islamic School. After losing the toss, St Marks were put into bat and started promisingly. In hindsight, our team would have benefited to field first and get used to the conditions and see off some of the anxiety and nerves.

There were some glimpses of talent on show as our batsmen created small partnerships. However, the inexperience of playing the longer format of the game got the better of them and we were eventually bowled out for 57 runs.

Even though they were defending a small target, the St Mark's team showed a lot of character out in the field – both in the bowling and fielding departments. Our two frontline bowlers were Sathvik Bindiganavile and Albert Abdelsayed. Both of them had pace and really tested their batsmen. This was followed later by Theo Theofelus who also had a good run with his bowling. Our team managed to pick up three wickets in the run chase. In the end, Malek Fahd won by 7 wickets.

Although we were outplayed by a more experienced team, St Marks put on a great performance. Some of the other notable highlights include Sanjit Joseph's cameo innings; Alex Sipka's catch over his head and Theo's wicket-keeping skills. The umpire also made mention of how professional our school team looked in their whites and blazers. Thanks to all the boys who trained hard and to Vivek Rao who helped with the coaching.

St Mark's Cricket Squad:

Albert Abdelsayed, Sathvik Bindignavile, Karthik Harish, Sanjay Joseph (c), Sanjit Joseph, Atharava Karle, Andrew Mahouz, Joshua Masih, Naradha Samarasundara, Alex Sipka, Theo Theofelus, Aaron Masih and Krutik Nayak.
 Assistant coach – Vivek Rao

*Mr Helene
 Head of Sport*

Junior School News

Advent Term

During Advent Term all the classes have been working diligently and producing wonderful work. I would like to congratulate all the students and the dedicated staff on a great term. We consider it a privilege to share in your child's educational journey and we look forward to working

together to provide an environment that is spiritual, positive, stimulating and focused on learning in 2014.

Semester Two (2) Reports

On the last day of Advent Term all Junior School Reports for Kindergarten to Year 6 will be posted to parents. The report will outline your child's performance across the courses s/he has studied throughout Semester Two (2). The A to E grading scale is used to outline a child's performance, **with the 'C' grade being the most common and acceptable grade.** Grades 'A and B' are for exceptional results and Grades 'D and E' are results where students haven't reached the standard, as yet. These grades are few in number as most students will have attained the appropriate 'C' grade.

Uniform

The students are expected to come to school dressed in their full summer uniform. The girl's dresses must be below the knees and have the correct socks. The boys must have their tie and correct socks. Please refer to the school diary before your child returns to school, in the New Year.

It is very important that the students learn to adhere to the school's rules and expectations. Your support in this is highly appreciated.

Why is homework so important?

Homework bridges the gap between learning at school and learning at home. It reinforces work done in class. It helps develop skills such as research and time management. Homework helps to establish the habits of study, concentration and self-discipline. Parents/caregivers have the opportunity to see the progress of their child. Homework provides challenges and stimulus to gifted and talented children.

What can parents/caregivers do to help?

1. Take an active interest in your child's homework.
2. Support your child in setting aside time each day for homework.
3. Provide a dedicated place for homework and study if possible.
4. Assist teachers to monitor homework by signing completed work if requested, and be aware of the amount of homework set.
5. Communicate with teachers on any concerns about the nature of homework or your child's approach to homework.
6. Encourage your children to read and take an interest in current events.

*God bless
 Mrs Shehata
 Junior School Dean*

Year 5 and 6 Camp to Bathurst

Congratulations to all the students on their excellent behaviour on the Camp. The students enjoyed the many learning experiences such as; panning for gold, guided tour inside the Jenolan Caves, treasure hunt, the tour to the underground mining and Hill End Village.

The students also enjoyed the activities and games organised by Mr O'Connell. However, the highlight for most of the students was the roasting of the delicious marshmallows on the campfire. The students displayed excellent Christian attitude throughout the duration of the Camp and they are to be commended.

I would also like to thank our dedicated and caring teachers for their efforts in making sure that the students were safe and happy.

*God bless
Mrs Nada
Junior School Deputy Dean*



Bathurst Camp, A Student's Perspective

Students in Stage 3 went on Camp to Bathurst. The days were filled with adventures and fun. The students had the opportunity to see a real gold mining village as it would have been in the 1850s, when Australia was in the middle of a gold rush. We had a chance to pan for gold and some lucky people found gold and kept it as a souvenir. This is what some students in 5/6T remember most about the Camp.

- We went down into a mining cave and had to climb a ten storey ladder.
- We watched an animal show where they introduced us to different breeds of cattle and sheep.
- We had lots of fun at the Blue Mountains and the Three Sisters, where we rested and ate recess.
- At the Jenolan Caves the guide turned off all the lights and some people were scared. We had to climb 2598 steps to get into the cave.
- On the long bus trip we watched movies and played games with our friends.
- We completed a treasure hunt at Hill End. We didn't care who won, we were just happy to be having so much fun.
- The food was really nice, we even got dessert.
- The temperature was freezing and we all had to wear lots of jumpers to keep warm.

We would like to thank all our parents who drove us to school at six o'clock in the morning, Mrs Nada who organised the enjoyable camp for us, and all the teachers who gave up their time to supervise us.

Students of 5/6T

Swim Programme

The Swim Programme has been a resounding success and our children have benefited greatly from their involvement in this programme. I thank the children for their wonderful progress, excellent behaviour and for their commitment to improving their swimming skills.

CAREERS

Accessing 2013 HSC Results

Results are released online and by SMS from 6am on Wed 18th December. HSC Credentials should arrive in the mail on Tue 14th January 2014. Students should ensure their contact details are correct in the My Details section of *Students Online*.

<http://www.2realise.org.au/images/Accessing%20HSC%20results.pdf>

Khan Academy

This website features an extensive video library, practice exercises, and assessments. It covers K-12 math, science, finance, history and more. Students can learn and study from the comfort of their own home. www.khanacademy.org

The Job I Love Guide

'The Job I Love' allows students and jobseekers find out about occupations and careers within the service industries. It has information about qualifications, how to find training, and what course goes with what job. <http://www.serviceskills.com.au/the-job-i-love-careers-guide>

How to Become a Naturopath

This article by the Australian Institute of Applied Sciences provides information about the field of alternative medicine called Naturopathy. It covers what a naturopath does, what skills are required, and why people may want to pursue a career in naturopathy.

<http://blog.aias.com.au/index.php/careers/how-to-become-a-naturopath/>

How to De-stress During Exams

Bond University has released this funny video which is filled with tips to de-stress during exam periods. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4IHCwY838s>

Avant Card Artist Project

The Avant Card Artist Project gives artists a way to display their art to a wide audience. Avant Cards are distributed around the country, and this project invites artists to submit their artwork to be printed on Avant Cards. Both 2D artists and short filmmakers and animators are invited to submit work. <http://www.avantcard.com.au/index.php/resources/art/>

*Mrs S. Gerges
Careers Adviser*

Special Announcement: Enrolments for 2014

The College has introduced enrolment waiting lists for 2014 and 2015. Parents who have children enrolled in the Junior School (K to 6) will be better placed in future for siblings to be enrolled, but if left late, a place maybe unavailable.