



Saint Mark's Coptic Orthodox College - Newsletter

Volume 25 Edition 3 - June 2020

Welcome to Saint Mark's Coptic Orthodox College eNewsletter



From the Head of College

Kindergarten & Year 7 2021 - 2025 Enrolments

All parents are advised that vacancies for both 2021 Kindergarten and Year 7 have been filled, completed and closed, with 2022 enrolled to a approximately 50% at this stage.

For 2021 all Primary and most Secondary years are closed. Positions therefore will only occur once students from respective years withdraw to create a vacancy.

Again this year, it has come to my attention that there are possibly some existing parents that have yet to enrol their Kindergarten child for next year, thinking that as they are existing parents their children are automatically enrolled.

Whilst this is partly correct, all existing families WILL get given first priority however, All families still need to apply and register their children well in advance. The school cannot assume you are going to enrol your child even if you have other children here as parents sometimes make the choice for alternate schools depending on their circumstances.

Any further Applications will be placed on the Waiting List only. As vacancies occur, offers will be forwarded accordingly according to a date recorded priority order so that equity is afforded to all on the Waiting List in same/similar situations.

So, I encourage ALL families to please Apply and Register your children at your earliest convenience to avoid being informed that your child will have to be placed on a Waiting List as I cannot remove a Registered child from the class list just to place the late applicant's child in.

Applications and Registrations are currently being taken for KINDERGARTEN & YEAR 7 - 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025

All SMC Year 6 students are automatically enrolled in Year 7 2021 at the school. However, if you are not considering continuing at SMC for Year 7, PLEASE advise the school at your earliest convenience in writing as available vacancies are limited for external applicants.

Head of Secondary Students

It is with great pleasure that following an extensive process of external and internal interviews and assessments of applicants, I am able to announce the successful appointment of **Ms Mary Williams** to the position of **Head of Secondary Students**, effective commencement of 25 May, 2020 and in action from Term 3 onwards.

This is an exciting addition to our College and school Executive and comes from an initiative and decision from the previous Board last December 2019 who wanted to assist and improve our College with a further focus on the College's pastoral program by establishing an executive position whose responsibility will be purely centred on the overall pastoral and behaviour management of secondary students along with pastoral development implementations.

The position will also drive suitable and complimentary programs to be implemented that would enhance and relate closely to the ethos of the College, and in line with the focus of the position, be accountable and respond to student issues in a thorough, timely, and a manner that would reinforce the values of the College and what we all want and expect within our values.

Possible student disciplinary measures therefore are within this position's brief and as a member of the Executive, that these measures are delivered with a just and fair outcome taking all aspects into account including procedural fairness. Whilst the position is permitted to issue discipline measures as required, including suspensions there will continue to be consultation with the Executive on more serious and severe cases.

In accepting this promotion position, there will be some adjustments made to Ms Williams' Mathematics classes and also her current position as House Patron St Marina. Regarding the latter, we offer our congratulations to **Mrs Tarazi** who will replace Ms Williams as House Patron St Marina commencing next term for the remainder of the Semester 2 2020 period. The College is currently working on a Year Coordinator/Stage Coordinator structure to be introduced for the commencement of the 2021 academic year.

We sincerely thank the previous Board for this initiative and know that the addition of this executive position will enhance the College substantially. We ask you to join us in congratulating Ms Williams, one

of our own dedicated Staff who was successful in this position on merit from a bank of amazing applicants from within SMCOC, and external from the College under the direction of our educational consultant, Mr David Bartlett of Resolve Education Services.



From the College Chaplain, Very Rev Fr George Nakhil

Feast of the Pentecost

On 7 June 2020, Orthodox Churches celebrate the Feast of Pentecost (Fiftieth day); One of the Seven Major Feasts of our Lord is the descending of the Holy Spirit on His holy disciples. On this day, the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples as tongues of fire, through which they were able to speak in different tongues and preach the good news entrusted to them by our Lord Jesus Christ.

This gift is the promise of the Father to the human race. After the Son reconciled the Father with the human race by giving Himself up as a sacrifice on the Holy Cross, and after giving our human body the capability of living with God through His Ascension, God the Father poured on us the grace and blessings of the Holy Spirit, allowing us to live by the Spirit with God while we're still on earth.

The feast is called "the Feast of Pentecost (Arabic: Ansara)," a Hebrew word that means, "feast." Originally this day was a Jewish feast, which was one of their three major feasts: the festival of weeks, the first fruits of wheat harvest, and the festival of ingathering at the turn of the year (cf. Ex. 34:22). On this day,

the Jews thanked God for the ingathering, and they came from various countries around the world to Jerusalem for this feast (cf. Acts 2:5).

In the New Testament, the Church celebrates this day by commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples: "And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts. 2:2-4). In the Dioscolia (chapter 31), it is written: "After ten days from the Ascension, let there be a great feast, for on this day, in the third hour, our Lord Jesus Christ sent us the Paraclete, and we were filled with His gifts and spoke in new tongues." Also, in the Canons, it is written: "Do not work on Pentecost day, for the Holy Spirit descended on the believers through Christ."

This day commemorates the institution of the Church and its true beginning, and it marks the beginning of the true service and the preaching of the Apostles and disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. For this reason, the day has a special place in the life and rites of the Church

Sources

(St. Mary Church, S. St. Paul, Minnesota).

<http://www.suscopts.org/resources/literature/139/the-holy-spirit-in-the-mysteries-of-the-church/>

Upcoming Dates

Term 2 - 2020

JUNE

| | |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| Thu 4 Jun | Earlybird Liturgy 6 - 8 am |
| Fri 5 Jun | Periods 1 & 2 = Stage 2 Liturgy |
| Sun 7 Jun | Holy Pentecost |
| Mon 8 Jun | Apostles' Fast commences |
| Mon 8 Jun | Queen's Birthday Public Holiday |
| Thu 11 Jun | Earlybird Liturgy 6 - 8 am |
| Fri 12 Jun | Periods 1 & 2 = Yr 7 Liturgy |
| Thu 18 Jun | Earlybird Liturgy 6 - 8 am |
| Fri 19 Jun | Periods 1 & 2 = Year 8 Liturgy |
| Thu 25 Jun | Earlybird Liturgy 6 - 8 am |
| Fri 26 Jun | Periods 1 & 2 = Stage 1 Liturgy |

Fri 26 Jun Last Day of lessons for K - 12. End of Term

During the 3-Week Winter Break, the Campus & Office will be open daily between 9 am - 3 pm for fees payment, uniform purchasing on the Uniform Shop's normal opening days/times, HSC tutorial lessons for Yr 12.

JULY

Sat 11 Jul Final day of fasting for Apostles' Fast

Sun 12 Jul Feast of the Apostles

Mon 20 Jul Staff Professional Day

Tue 21 Jul Lessons commence K - 12

Thu 23 Jul Early Bird Liturgy 6 - 8 am

Fri 24 Jul Periods 1 & 2 Stage Liturgy - Yr 11

Thu 30 Jul Early bird Liturgy 6 - 8 am

Fri 31 Jul Periods 1 & 2 Stage Liturgy - Kindergarten

AUGUST

Thu 6 Aug Early bird Liturgy 6 - 8 am

Fri 7 Aug Period 1 & 2 Stage Liturgy - Year 10

Curriculum News Years 7 - 12 Mr Peter Joseph

Years 7-10 Exam Week (22-25 June)

Students have been issued with their timetable for the Year 7-10 exams. Parents have also been sent this timetable via a separate letter. *The noticeable change to this exam block* is that we are allowing students to go home to study on **Tuesday 23 June** at the conclusion of the HSIE examination just after 11 am.

If parents wish to give their child permission to go home early on this date, the online form should be completed (refer to the letter emailed on 1 June).

I encourage all parents to read the examination procedures and rules relating to assessments (also found in the College Assessment Handbook).

Year 10 HSC Minimum Standards Seminar

On the final day of this term, Year 10 will participate in an introduction seminar to the HSC Minimum Standards tests. This seminar will prepare students on what to expect and how to study. The actual tests will be completed at the beginning of Term 3. More information will be sent closer to.

Helping students transition back to full-time schooling post-isolation

Some tips for parents:

1. Research with your children about their expectations. Encourage them to ask their teachers about what to expect.

1. Be gentle with expectations for quite some time Everyone (parents, teachers and students) will be affected differently by the experiences this year and for different periods of time. We need to remember that this anxiety can manifest in many ways and therefore be gentle. We are better to err on the side of being uber-supportive this year. If you are concerned about your student's level of anxiety, reach out and seek help from a professional.

2. Keep lines of communication as open as possible Students who are anxious often will bottle up their worries and concerns. Without being annoying (and it is a fine line) we need to let students know they can talk about what is worrying them. Both parents and teachers need to create opportunities that give students permission to share in a non-threatening environment.

3. Minimise news consumption and pandemic discussion or direct focus to encouraging statistics If students are anxious, over-exposure to constant negative news can wear them down. Highlighting the positive and encouraging news and statistics can help students to focus their thoughts in a constructive direction. Make positive plans together for the future so students have good things to focus on instead and focus more on what they can control rather than what they can't.

4. Re-focus on the pillars of health: exercise, sleep, healthy eating Even though we will no longer be in complete lock-down, students still won't be able to do all of their usual activities for some time. We need to ensure students are still exercising in some way, perhaps snacking a bit less and more of a focus on healthy eating. Good sleep has been proven time and again to contribute to happiness, health and academic success.

5. Allow students lots of opportunities to re-connect We need to be over-generous in allowing students to spend time with friends and extended family members for the rest of this year. Students may find the school day overwhelming and exhausting at the moment. After so much 'family' time, don't be hurt if they aren't that keen to socialise when they get home and just want to go to their room. Don't let them be a complete hermit, but do let them have time to themselves to decompress from the day. Many students will need to renegotiate the dynamics with their peers and this readjustment may be stressful for some students.

6. Reset the routine & daily schedule Routine creates certainty in an uncertain world. Having established routines and guidelines to follow is reassuring for students. Giving students a chance to contribute to the decisions as to what the new routine should be (such as bedtime) is also important. This will include starting to dial back screen time if it was increased during the last few months. In line with our 'take it slow' approach, you won't be going back to how things were earlier this year yet. It is more about reducing the screen time to make way for the schoolwork that will need to be done.

7. Look for ways to support students' studies After they have been back at school for a week or so, ask your student directly if there is anything they have fallen behind in or need help with. Of course many students won't tell you, so if you do have concerns contact the school - either a form or roll teacher or a subject teacher directly. While we do want students to start getting into good working habits again, it needs to be a 'gently gently' approach. This means they may not be doing as much work at home as they did earlier this year, and that is ok for now. The exception is our senior students. We want these students to get back into their regular study patterns as soon as they are able. If this means that parents are making extra snacks for Year 12 or googling to find a study guide for them, then so be it.

Learn more this year about how to improve your results and be more efficient and effective with your schoolwork by working through the units on www.studyskillshandbook.com.au .

Our school's access details are:

Username: stmarks

Password: 52success



A Message from Exodus Youth Worx - SMC Pastoral Care Partners

Dear family and friends,

The wonderful staff at SMCOC have allowed us the privilege and blessing of coming on board to spear head a new Pastoral Care program for our High School students.

We are really excited to work with the College to implement a program that encourages honest and candid conversations with the students that may traditionally be considered as taboo or shameful. The aim is to broaden the students understanding on a variety of topics and themes in a safe and comfortable environment, linking all the issues to our Christian ethos.

For those who do not know who we are, Exodus Youth Worx (EYW) is a non for profit youth organisation incorporated in 2007. Our organisation consists of highly trained and experienced youth workers, counsellors and teachers who work very closely with Coptic Christian families as well as servants, parish priests and bishops.

For over 14 years, we have supported thousands of young people and their families by providing them with a community they can trust. We aspire to empower our clients by providing services that support and encourage emotional, physical, mental, social and spiritual growth. We provide access to casework, counselling & psychology, art therapy, social meetings and outings, assistance with food &

accommodation, employment training, education workshops and advocacy services.

Many of the families that Exodus Youth Worx serves, face an array of challenges such as domestic violence, trauma, neglect and abuse, drug and alcohol dependency, exclusion from school, unemployment, homelessness. We support young people and their families as they work to turn their lives around to overcome these immense personal challenges.

Majority of our clients have faced judgement and exclusion in very toxic environments that have made them feel worthless and uninspired. We encourage an extremely inclusive community that is not only informative but filled with the love and acceptance that our Lord Jesus Christ exemplified in His time among us. Practicing unwavering compassion for one another is what we dream for our young Coptic people who are the future of our beautiful ancient culture.

The Exodus Youth Worx Pastoral Care program removes all stigmas and misunderstandings around who or what society tells our children they should be. Together with families, friends and educators joining forces, let us build a young nation of pioneers who can be bold and courageous in a tumultuous world.

"Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity".

(1 Timothy 4:12)



Technology updates

BYO-CB (Chromebook) for Years 5 & 6

As we are all facing challenges during this time with COVID-19 and trying to have the students at home on the remote learning platforms. One of the biggest challenges and common questions that we get every day is that the students in Years 5 & 6 do not have their own device at home and also what device they should use.

As a Google school and everything we use around the G-Suite platform; Chromebook is the most suitable & affordable device for their age and needs.

Also, it is our recommended device for Years 7-10 at St Mark's College. Which makes it useful for them for the coming few years.

So, if you are thinking of buying a device for your child in Year 5 or 6, we strongly recommend Chromebook for the many reasons outlined below.

- To enable students to use technology to enhance their learning;
- To provide the opportunity for teachers to continue to tailor lesson delivery so that students can use their devices in online Google Classroom tasks uploaded regularly by staff (once COVID-19 is well over we may allow students in Years 5 & 6 to start bringing their own Chromebook after signing a BYO-Chromebook Policy that we have available on the College website).
- To encourage the bringing of a computing device to school by all students in Years 5-12 and to learn individual responsibility towards its use and safety.
- To provide a safe environment in which students can achieve Objective 1 5. To ensure a minimum standard of device compatibility.
- To provide the opportunity for teachers to continue to tailor lesson delivery so that students can use their devices in and out of class.

Octave8 Instrumental & Vocal Tuition @ SMC

Meet our new vocals teacher...

Since young, Faith has always been passionate about music. When she was 12 years old, she began taking vocal lessons. This led her onto a path of turning her passion into a career. From then, she has become a trained vocalist and a dynamic performer with 7 years of experience interpreting and performing songs across a variety of genres and styles such as Pop, Jazz,

R&B/Soul, Rock and Classical. These skills she has developed have enabled her to perform in competitions such as talent shows, showcases and in venues across Sydney with various bands. She has received a band 6 for Music 1 in the HSC and received a nomination for Encore, a concert held in the Sydney Opera house for High Achievers in Music 1. She is currently studying in her second year at the Australian Institute Of Music in Sydney completing a Bachelor Of Music Contemporary. Faith enjoys passing on the musical skills and abilities that she has learnt over the years onto those students who are also looking to unlock their inner vocal talents.

Miss Faith

VOCALS TEACHER - OCTAVE8

If you would like to learn how to sing at
St. Mark's College after school
try a lesson with us - call 9731 0263 or email
carlene@octave8.com.au to book

LESSONS COMMENCE 4 JUNE 2020



Octave8 welcome their new Vocals Instructor

Write4Fun 2020



May, 2020

000007
St Mark's Coptic Orthodox College
PO Box 747
MOOREBANK NSW 1875

RE: 2020 SCHOOLS WRITING COMPETITION

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

Write4Fun is proud to announce that **St Mark's Coptic Orthodox College** had 10 or more students successfully progress past the initial judging in the 2020 Schools Writing Competition.

This year, the competition was held throughout primary and secondary schools within Australia and we received over 7,000 entries! Your school has been recognised for outstanding student writing as less than 5% percent of schools showed this level of achievement.

Please find enclosed a Certificate of Excellence for your school.

The winners of the competition will be announced on Wednesday 24th June and can be viewed on our website at www.write4fun.net. Best of luck!

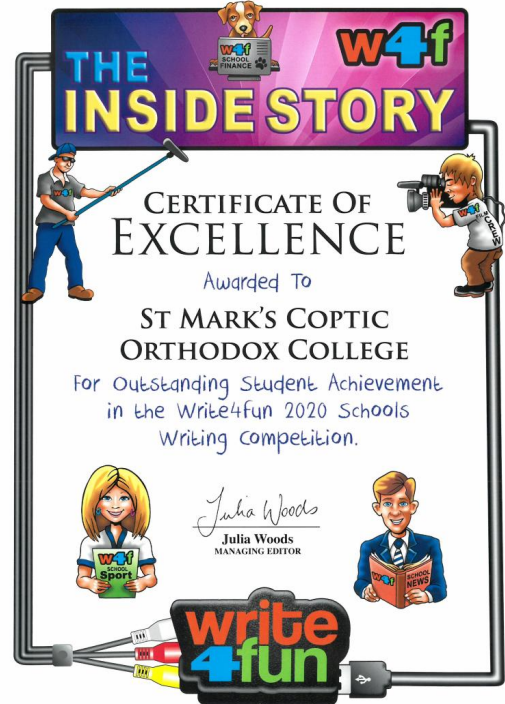
Once again, congratulations on your school's achievement.

Kind regards,

Julia Woods
MANAGING EDITOR



www.write4fun.net
PO Box 2734
Nerang QLD 4211
Ph: (07) 5574 3622 Fax: (07) 5574 3644
Email: admin@write4fun.net
ABN: 67 654 747 264



Saint Mark's Coptic Orthodox College

BUILDING THE FUTURE...

📍 52 Australis Avenue, Wattle Grove NSW, Australia

☎ +61298256768

✉ office@stmarks.nsw.edu.au

🌐 www.stmarks.nsw.edu.au/

📘 [https://Facebook @stmarks.nsw.edu.au](https://Facebook@stmarks.nsw.edu.au)

📷 [@stmarkscopticorthodoxcollege](https://www.instagram.com/stmarkscopticorthodoxcollege)