

St Mary's College Gunnedah

November 2018 Edition



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents, Staff, Students and Friends,

This week saw the beginning of the Senior School Experience for Year 10. The Year 10 courses have been completed and Year 10 Grades have been submitted to NESAs to be entered onto the students' Record of Student Achievement. The Senior School Experience Program is designed to give the Year 10 students a taste of what the study demands of Senior school will be like next year when they return to begin Year 11 and to give them an opportunity to upgrade some of the skills that will be required. All indications are that the students have taken up the challenge and the feedback from teachers and students is that this is a very worthwhile initiative by St Mary's and one which will help prepare them for next year. Some of the students who are not returning next year have taken leave from school in order to pursue various avenues that could be open to them next year as they plan to leave school.

Last week the College was visited by 93 Year 6 students who attended the Orientation Day for the new intake into Year 7 for 2019. This will make the largest intake into Year 7 at St Mary's for many years. The day was well planned and ran very smoothly, with positive feedback from the visitors. The day helped to alleviate many of the apprehensions associated with starting high school and many commented on how much they are now looking forward to starting at St Mary's next year.

This Sunday is the first Sunday of Advent, a time of preparation for Christmas. Another year is quickly coming to an end as we rush to prepare for the festive season and the summer break. The Gospel warns us not to get so caught up with the cares of life that we become asleep to the essentials of a happy life.

'Watch yourselves, or your hearts will be coarsened with debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of life ...

Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen.

Lk 21:34,36

Mao Quirk

Principal



REFLECTION



*A little bit of mercy makes
the world less cold and
more just.*

Pope Francis

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 3 December to 7 December - Year 10 Work experience
- 11 December - Year 7-11 Presentation Day
- 19 December - Last day Term 4

2019 Term Dates

Tuesday 29 January - Staff return
Wednesday 30 January - Year 7, 11 & 12 Return
Thursday 31st January - Year 8, 9 & 10 Return

LIONS YOUTH OF THE YEAR

7 St Mary's Year 11 students participated in the 2018 Lions Youth of the Year competition.

Carter Cameron, Stephanie Eveleigh, Bella Gallagher, Connor Phillips, Angus Taylor, Bayley Williams and Arielle Worthington all made it to the Interview stage of the competition. This requires students to answer questions about their cultural, sporting and academic interests and achievements. They were also asked to respond to a number of current news issues.

From this, 4 students were selected to participate in the Public Speaking aspect of the competition, held last night: Steph Eveleigh, Bella Gallagher, Angus Taylor and Bayley Williams. The students participated in 2 impromptu speeches and 1 prepared speech. Topics ranged from suicide culture and cyber-bullying to role models and drug cheats in sport.

All the students spoke eloquently and confidently and were a credit to their school. Congratulations to Stephanie Eveleigh, who was named Public Speaking winner and also won Lions Youth of the Year. Angus Taylor was the runner-up for Lions Youth of the Year and Bella Gallagher was the runner-up for public speaking.

Congratulations to all the students involved, and we wish Stephanie the best of luck in March next year for the next stage of the competition.



SPORTS NEWS

2018 Australian Schools Tennis Challenge

The Australian Schools Tennis Challenge is organised by Tennis Australia with support from School Sport Australia. The event aims at providing a secondary schools competition for school sport association champion schools to come together to play each other for the national schools' championships. The St Mary's College Boys Tennis team was invited to participate in this year's event following their win at the NSWCCC event earlier this year.

The teams format involved six matches with the top four seeds playing singles before two doubles matches. Teams in both boys and girls consisted of four to six players. The singles matches were the best of two sets with a traditional tie break at 6 games all. At one set all, a match tie breaker (first to 10 points) was played as the deciding set. Doubles matches were the best of two short sets (first to 4 games) with a traditional tie break at 4 games all. At one set all a match tie breaker (first to 10 points) was played as the deciding set.

The St Mary's College team consisted of the following four players - Aaron Osmond, Cooper Wilkinson, Luke Bradfield and Vitorio Sardinha. On Day 1 of competition St Mary's lost to Kelvin Grove College Brisbane 5 - 1 in the morning session before losing to Applecross SHS Perth 6 - 0 in the afternoon session. The morning session on Day 2 saw St Mary's defeat St Peter's College Adelaide on a countback on sets after drawing 3 matches all. The afternoon session St Mary's played Prince Alfred College Adelaide losing 5 - 1. Day 3 began under threatening skies with St Mary's playing the Combined Albury High School's team in their final pool game. The Albury team was put together following a late withdrawal by an ACT team and consisted of the best local secondary school tennis players. St Mary's won this tie 6 - 0 to finish 5th in their pool entering the playoffs. With rain threatening the playoffs commenced with St Mary's playing Barker College Sydney who finished 6th in their pool. When rain finally put to a stop to play on Day 3 the tie was delicately poised with Barker ahead 3 - 2 and the final doubles match underway with St Mary's up by a set and leading 2 - 0 in the second set. Day 4 saw the completion of the tie against Barker with St Mary's securing the final doubles match to draw the tie 3 - 3 but win on a countback on sets 7 - 6. That win saw St Mary's enter the playoff for 9th/10th against Marryatville High School Adelaide. The wet weather saw the singles matches reduced to two short sets [first to 4 games] with short deuce while the doubles remained the same format but with short deuce. In a very close tie St Mary's won 3 - 3 on a countback. With the matches level at 3 - 3 and the sets also level 6 - 6 it went down to games with St Mary's ahead 39 - 36 to claim 9th position in the tournament. A great team effort by all players with the most pleasing aspect being the compliments from the other Team Managers on the humility and politeness from the boys both on and off the courts.

Sport Representatives

Congratulations to the students from St Mary's College who either won a medal at NSWCCC Championships or were selected in a NSWCCC team this year -
Aaron Osmond Tennis
Andrew Osmond Tennis
Ben Northey-Baldwin Tennis
Cooper Wilkinson Tennis
Eliza Perkins Netball
Joshua Coker Athletics
Samuel Hibbert Athletics
Yasmin Thomas Athletics

Congratulations as well to the St Mary's College Boys Tennis team that finished 9th at the Australian Schools Tennis Challenge -
Aaron Osmond, Cooper Wilkinson, Luke Bradfield and Vitorio Sardinha.

SPORTS NEWS CONTINUED

At the conclusion of the tournament some special awards were handed out including the John Newcombe Sportsmanship Award. The “Newk” Award is a 4-week scholarship to the John Newcombe Tennis Academy in Texas, USA and is awarded to one boys and one girls team during the competition. The award is judged on the players and coaches conduct and sportsmanship, both on and off the court during the Australian Schools Tennis Challenge. The voting is split with 50% of the vote coming from the participating teams and 50% from the Tournament Officials. St Mary’s College Gunnedah was announced as the Boys winner of this year’s John Newcombe Sportsmanship Award.

This was an outstanding achievement by the team but not unexpected as throughout the tournament the opposition Team Managers were going out of their way to praise the boy’s on their attitude and behaviour. The opposing Team Manager in the early stages of the final match said,

“Win, lose or draw I just wanted you to know how great your kids are. They are just so humble and so polite - they’re just wonderful kids. You should be very proud of them.”

Cricket

The Year 7 - 10 Cricket team only got to play one game this term following a forfeit of our home game from St Philomena’s Moree. As it turned out that game would have been washed out anyway so it wasn’t too disappointing. The team did get to play an away game against McCarthy College Tamworth despite the wet weather. The game was delayed following a morning storm and when play did commence it was only possible to bowl from one end due to the wet conditions. The 20 over a side game was reduced to 16 overs a side. St Mary’s batted first and with the ball skidding through scoring was difficult in the early overs. Openers Kaleb McIlveen and Lachlan Straney batted well to put on a 50 run partnership with Kaleb dismissed for 22 and Lachlan 19. Wickets fell steadily before Aaron Osmond [12] and Alistair Wheeler [11] batted through the final overs with St Mary’s finishing on 9/96 from their 16 overs. McCarthy’s innings started with storm clouds gathering and the St Mary’s bowlers struggling to bowl straight resulting in a lot of extra deliveries. Lachlan Straney was the pick of the bowlers taking 3/9 from his 3 overs to complete a good all-round performance. Jim Muller completed a good fielding session with a great run out in the final over of the game and Kaleb McIlveen and Wil Patterson gave plenty of advice from behind the stumps. McCarthy scored the winning runs just before the inevitable storm hit the ground with the players running for shelter after shaking hands. While the team may have lost the game they certainly played well and enjoyed the opportunity to finally play a game.



SPORTS NEWS CONTINUED



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MENTOR GROUPS IN TERM 4?

Mentor Group Vision

Mentor Groups is timetabled from 8.45am to 9:07am. It is an important part of the day where students are encouraged to prepare for the day and week ahead and engage in academic and pastoral activities with the goal of improving the learning culture of the College. Two teachers are allocated to each room and these teachers are actively involved in mentoring the students with their pastoral and academic needs. While there is some time designated each week for personal study, students should not consider this as an opportunity to complete class homework each morning, rather to engage in the pastoral and academic activities that are designed to improve student engagement.

Pastoral focus for Term 4

The College will be making a move to a new diary for students next year. This diary has a pastoral and academic focus with lessons on a wide range of issues that are designed to address some of the wellbeing issues that concern students as well as providing information on learning strategies that may help students in many of their classes.

In order to determine how best to integrate the diaries into our Mentor Group program, a number of classes, in conjunction with teachers from a Professional Learning Team, are trialling some of the activities in the last four weeks of term. These groups will participate in the following program:

Tuesday - Diary based activity eg. *Sleep and Thriving*

Wednesday - Task related to diary based activity

Thursday - Silent reading

Friday - Personal study

At the conclusion of the four week program students will complete a survey to provide feedback on the program.

Stage 5 Boys Mentor Group

Recently a PLT (Professional Learning Team) analysed data in regards to the performance of our boys. We found that there was not a significant difference in the performance of our boys and girls in their Naplan results. However, when analysing our HSC data, specifically looking at the students growth, our boys over the past three years on average have negative growth. This term to address the performance of our boys we have created a boys mentor group, targeting stage 5. (Years 9 and 10). All boys had the opportunity to apply for this program as a trial for next year. We received an overwhelming amount of nominations to be a part of the program. From the nominations we selected 20 students based on data, by looking at their Naplan results and their school report. The target group are students who are underperforming academically. The goal of the program is to improve the learning outcomes of our boys. The focus will be teaching study and organisational skills, literacy, numeracy and science. We will evaluate the success of this program at the end of the term to assist our planning for 2019.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MENTOR GROUPS FOR TERM 4? CONTINUED

The proposed program is as follow:

Tuesday: Study/organisation schedules

Wednesday: Literacy focus, with selected novels and discussion activities

Thursday: Numeracy/Science activities

Friday: Numeracy/Science activities

Year 10 Senior Experience Mentor Group Focus

This term as part of the Senior School Experience a team of teachers will be working with Year 10 students to prepare them for their transition into Stage 6. The focus will be on effective goal setting, study and organisational skills. The team will prepare strategies and lead groups of students in implementing and trying the strategies. This focus will be aligned with our Senior School Experience.

PASTORAL CARE AND WELLBEING

Mrs Hannaford and Mrs Mooney recently attended a *Generation Next* conference focusing on mental health issues and wellbeing for teenagers. Generation Next provides education and information about the prevention and management of mental illness in young people and the wider community.

Some interesting statistics provided at the conference included:

- 96% of teens access screens in the hour before bedtime
- Active screen activity (phone, games) are worse than passive TV
- Only 8% of teenagers turn their phone off at night
- Teens average 34 texts per night
- 72% of teens feel the need to immediately respond to texts, social networking messages or other notifications
- 50% of teens feel addicted to their devices
- 78% of teens check their devices hourly - FOMO (fear of missing out)
- Teen sleep deprivation has doubled in the last 15 years from 35% to 70%
- Teen mental health problems increasing @ 27% per year = a tripling since 2008
- Meanwhile learning outcomes are heading south. Data indicates that Australia's learning outcomes have dropped from the top 12 to 39th out of 41 high/middle income countries.

Generation Next facilitate webinars for parents and carers on a range of issues. Parents and carers can access the website at <https://www.generationnext.com.au/> and subscribe to their regular newsletters which notifies subscribers of webinars and events that may provide useful information and support for parents on issues relevant to their children.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) NEWS

This year has been an interesting and successful one for our VET students. They have participated in a variety of courses and workplaces.

Information and Digital Technology

Robert Leggart - Information and Digital Technology. Robert has recently returned from a week of work placement at Honeywell.

“Through the TVET course, I have done over the past year I have had the opportunity to travel to Sydney to do work experience. The company Honeywell took me under their wing, showing me how computer code is written and constructed then implemented into a product to be installed on customer sites. Doing work experience with Honeywell gave me the opportunity to see how a large corporate business operates, and this was made possible through my TVET course”.

Saloon Assistant

Courtney Draper - Saloon Assistant *“I have enjoyed the opportunity to do the course and it has given me a head start on my career. The teachers and students have been very supportive”.*

Certificate III in Animal Studies

Jessica Mckechnie -Certificate III in Animal Studies after completing Cert II in 2017.



VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) NEWS

TVET courses in 2019

There are a number of students planning to begin TVET courses in 2019 and we will bring you details of their progress next year.

Wil Patterson and **Bailey Stewart** in Electrotechnology.

(Connor Bishop from 2017 HSC class has almost finished his first year of his apprenticeship at Whitehaven after completing the Electrotechnology course in 2016-7.)

Carrisa Eather in Beauty Services, (Alex Jones who completed this course in 2017 has secured an apprenticeship at Etcetera and has almost completed her first year of her apprenticeship).

Sam Hibbert in Fitness

Jacinta Benson in Early Childhood Education and Care

Nathan Gardner in Automotive

Teagan Myers in Animal Studies

Katelyn Eyles in Hospitality

Belinda Easey in Saloon assistant

Traineeships

Kate Bishop has secured a School Based Traineeship in Retail with Riley's Furniture

Corey Bennett has secured a School Based Traineeship in Health Administration at Narrabri Hospital

McKenzie Jones has been successful in securing a School Based Traineeship in nursing at Gunnedah Hospital for 2019.



CHINESE NEWS

Year 8

This term the students moved from the Chinese classroom to the food technology room.

The students benefited from the wonderful support from Mrs Hunt who taught the students how to cook Chinese food including spring rolls, fried rice and honey chicken.

The students had a great time and enjoyed putting into practice what they have learnt in class and of course the meals they cooked were delicious.



Year 9 Elective Chinese

The Chinese department at St Mary's has been able to establish a friendly relationship with St Clare's Girls School in Hong Kong. This Cantonese speaking Catholic school has kindly agreed to be "pen pals" with our Year 8 and our Year 9/10 elective students. Another great example of how learning a language can open up opportunities for St Marys students. The students will be writing letters in Chinese to their new friends introducing themselves and will then be given a letter back from a student from Hong Kong who is also learning Mandarin. Watch this space for more exciting developments with our relationship with this school.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

8.1 Mckenzie Leader

Jemma Williscroft

Caludia Hamblin

8.2 Hayley Rankin

Harry Grant

Charlotte Foody

8.3 Sienna Miller

Harry Fairfull

Charlie Lawrence

Year 9 Tom Snape

Madelin Marmara

Keliana Browne

MOST IMPROVED

8.1 Jarrod Ferguson

8.2 Austin Bryers

8.3 Myah Irwin

Year 9 Maddison House

ANH DO 'THE HAPPIEST REFUGEE' LIVE SHOW

On the 27th of October, a number of Year 11 students and St Mary's teachers watched a live performance of Anh Do's The Happiest Refugee at the Tamworth Town Hall. This was a valuable opportunity, as Year 11 Standard English had studied the novel as a part of the Preliminary English course and it enabled the students to consolidate their understanding of the text. The performance was highly emotive and engaging, as it covered the perilous boat journey from Vietnam to Australia, cultural differences, Anh's accomplishments and his love for family. The students and teachers thoroughly enjoyed the show and would highly recommend it!



ENGLISH EXTENSION 2 WORKSHOP

On Wednesday of week 6, the four English Extension 2 candidates at McCarthy Catholic College in Tamworth, visited St Mary's with their mentor, Mrs Melanie Thompson, to participate in a workshop with our own Extension 2 students and their mentor, Mr Adam Thompson. Designed to give an insight into the process of developing a Major Work in English, the day was organised and run by Mr and Mrs Thompson (the English Extension 2 mentors of St Mary's and McCarthy, respectively - and, yes, they are married), with a guest appearance by Miss Patsy Stanley. Starting at 9am, the four students from McCarthy and the four from St Mary's - Bella Gallagher, Steph Woods, Rob Leggat and Dylan Power - along with their mentors, worked through a series of workshops that focused on each aspect of the course. Although English Extension 2 has been a long-standing elective at McCarthy, the 2019 HSC cohort marks only the second group of students to undertake the course at St Mary's and so the day proved a valuable insight into the requirements and rigours of the course. Given the option to produce a major work in a literary form of their own choosing, across the eight students there was a diversity of projects and literary focuses that included a speech, critical interpretations, creative narratives and even the script for a short play. Overall, the workshop proved an overwhelming success, with our students walking away feeling confident and inspired in their desire to pursue both English as an elective subject, but also as an opportunity to dip their toe in the creative world of writing, for the sake and enjoyment of writing. That, and they gained some great insights into the creative minds of not just their fellow students enrolled in the course, but those of their fellow travellers at McCarthy Catholic College in Tamworth.



MACBETH

A group of Year 10 students, and a couple of honorary Year 11 students, attended an excursion to 'Macbeth' earlier this term. The play was performed at the Pop Up Globe Theatre in Sydney. This theatre is a replica of the Globe and is built for each performance. It was amazing to see the stage layout and the 'pit' where audience members were amongst the action.

Watching the play brought the drama to life and it certainly opened our eyes to the impact theatre can have on the understanding of texts in English.



MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

October was Mental Health Month and the theme this year was once again 'Share the Journey'

We hope that the time spent at these BBQs assist students to reflect on the importance of being mentally healthy and if concerned feel more comfortable seeking help.

Students enjoyed a bacon & egg roll thanks to the wonderful Gunnedah Combined Catholic Schools P&F

Thank you to our guests, Linda, Jayde & Rachael for coming along to meet with the students and help out.



CATHOLIC IMMERSION TRIP TO BORNEO

All the best to the students and staff from St Mary's, McCarthy and O'Connor who have travelled to Borneo for Catholic Immersion.

We look forward to hearing about their experience when they return



WE ARE IN THEIR PRAYERS

This year the Gunnedah community along with much of Australia, has suffered from the harsh realities of drought. Local communities have rallied together to provide assistance in any way that they can, and we have been heartened by the outpouring of assistance from communities from coastal and metropolitan areas.

At St Mary's College we have undertaken fundraising to contribute to the drought appeal; our Year 9/10 Food Technology class cooked biscuits fortnightly for a term and these were distributed to farming families through Gordon Barry Farm Supplies. Our parish and school have made 'rain to drought affected areas' a significant focus of prayer and many members of our school, church and wider community have contributed in their own personal way.

What is wonderful to know, is that through these hard times, we are also being thought of, prayed for and supported by communities in the city. Mr Quirk received a large envelope in the mail which contained prayers, cards and caring thoughts from the students at St Theresa's Primary Catholic School in Lakemba.

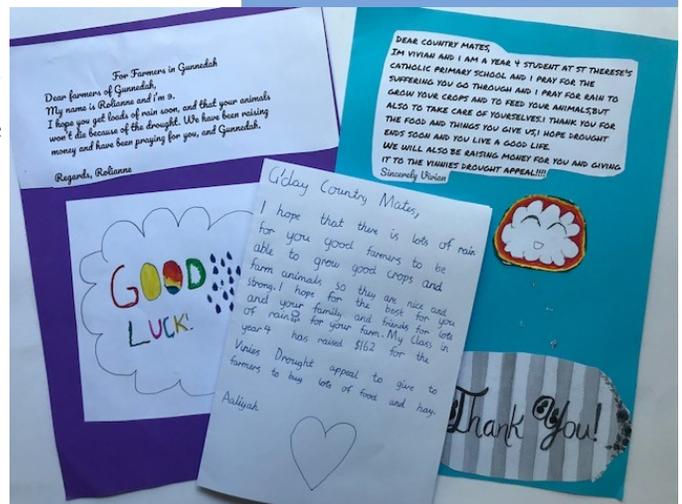
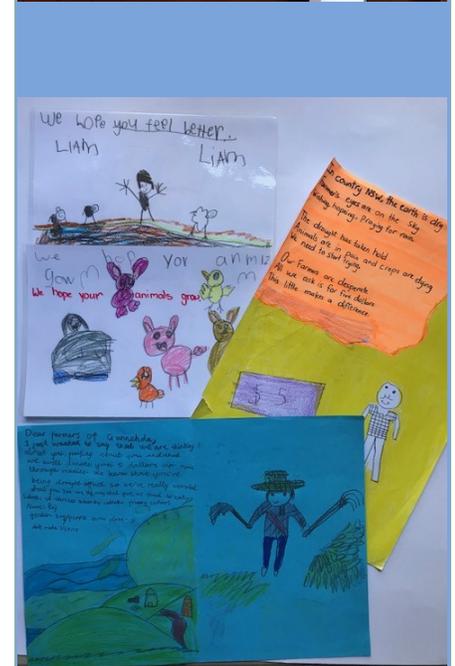
A selection of these have been included in our newsletter and others have been displayed in St Joseph's Church. Included were prayers, poems, good luck wishes and stories of donations made to drought appeals for the Gunnedah community. It is humbling that in times of hardship, others are thinking about us and doing what they can to show their love and support. Their prayers and ours have been answered with some good falls of rain even though we know that more follow up rain is needed to keep our farms going.

Let us rejoice in the knowledge that we are in the minds and hearts of others. We thank the students and staff from St Theresa's, they are truly giving witness to the teachings of Jesus.

It is not how much we do, but how much love we put in the doing.

It is not how much we give, but how much love we put in the giving.

Mother Theresa





St Mary's College

Founded by the Sisters of Mercy 1879



2019 ENROLMENTS CLOSING SOON



Enrolment application packages are still available from St Mary's Office and

www.stmaryscollege.nsw.edu.au

Limited vacancies in all Year levels for 2019



CHRISTMAS CHARITY GOLF & FAMILY FUN DAY

SUNDAY, 9 DECEMBER 2018
GUNNEDAH GOLF CLUB

4 Person Ambrose + 4 Ball Par +
Supreme Team Challenge

Heaps of prizes to be won, novelty games, live music and family activities. What a fun way to end the year with your work colleagues and mates!

SAVE THE DATE!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

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