The Advent Season
Last Sunday, December 1, commenced the Advent Season. Advent is the season that often gets lost as we view the month of December as the Christmas Season - preparing our homes with Christmas decorations, shopping and planning and preparing the Christmas feast. While these are great traditions in themselves, we often, neglect to prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ. One way to do this is deepening and growing in our relationship with God.

All powerful and loving God, increase our strength of will to do good so that we can each of us. May your love for each of us bring us ever closer to you.

Amen

In this last newsletter for 2013 I would like to thank you for your continued support. I wish you peace and happiness this Christmas. Merry Christmas.

College Captains and Deputies 2014
Following the Student Leadership Camp last week it gives me great pleasure to announce the College Captains and Deputy Captains for 2014.

College Captains – Jeremy Ford and Meg Garsney
College Deputy Captains – Austin Spencer and Ashley Steele

Office Closed
Please be aware that the College office will be closed on Friday, December 20. It will re-open on Tuesday, January 28, 2014.

Book and Stationery Lists for 2014
For 2014, Birchalls will be handling all of the back-to-school requirements for student text books and stationery. Book and stationery lists for 2014 will be sent out to all students in the next few weeks, along with an information sheet including Birchalls’ opening days and times. Birchalls have a well established back-to-school operation at the Royal Hobart Showgrounds where parents and students can select their text and stationery requirements.

Assessment and Reporting Flyer
Please find attached to this newsletter an Assessment and Reporting flyer distributed from the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office. This information provides an overview of the end of year reports for all students in Catholic Education.
ST JOSEPH CERTIFICATE

Brooke Amos, Katie Armstrong, Amy Breen, Nicola Bresnahan, Bianca Burgess, Chloe Chatterton, Olivia Chatterton, Demi Clark, Alana Cooper, Dylan Dysart, Bridget Foale, Amy Gadd of Anglican, Gallagher, Aggie Gill, Rachel Hay, Alice Hope, Britnee Kelly, Emily Kerslake, Aisling O’Driscoll, Brooke Quinn, Jemima Robertson, Caitlin Stalker, Benjamin Webb, Katelyn White, Ellen Williams, Connie Woodward.

COMMENDABLE EFFORT AWARDS

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
Congratulations (in alphabetical order) on his selection to represent Tasmania in the National All Schools Athletics carnival being held this week in Townsville. All the best, Jack and Rudy.

Congratulations to Rudy Davis (8 Gold) and Tobi Fasnacht (9 Gold) on their selection to represent the state at the National Surfing competitions being held this week in Hobart. All the best, Rudy and Tobi.

STAFF NEWS
This time of year is when we farewell staff and the departure of staff generates something of a mixed response. Certainly there is happiness for staff who are embarking on new and exciting phases of their careers and lives. At the end of the year we will bid farewell to a number of staff who have made a significant contribution to the lives of the College during their time here and they go with our collective blessing. We bid farewell to staff who have filled positions on short term replacement contracts and include Mr Christopher Nettelfield-Roberts.

At the end of this year the College bids farewell to Ms Sharyn Wilson. During her 9 years at MacKillop Catholic College, Sharyn has been the Year 7 coordinator, Aboriginal Support Teacher, foundation member of the SWPBS team, role model, mentor, friend and caring teacher. Ms Wilson, in her various roles, has guided and coaxed her students to great levels of achievement at the College. Ms Wilson leaves us with a deserved reputation as a highly professional and dedicated teacher and we wish her all the very best in her retirement.

Mr Justin O’Brien is taking leave from the College for the 2014 academic year. I would like to wish Justin for all his hard work, wish him every blessing for the year ahead and we look forward to his return to MacKillop in 2015. I would like to wish all our departing staff the very best for the future and thank all staff for their wonderful contribution through the year that was 2013.

Dr Sally Towns PRINCIPAL

FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

This year as we prepare to welcome the Christ child into our homes, we thank those who have helped us this year. In the context of our College, it may be the Home Room and subject teacher, the person in the canteen who always has that extra smile for you, or even the person you sit next to who keeps you on track and focused. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my best wishes for the Christmas season. May God bless you and your families for the coming holidays and the year ahead.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS ABOUT PARTIES
Attending parties is an enjoyable and important part of life for everyone. During the years of secondary school, there are some important issues for both parents and students to confront in relation to parties. The vast majority of parties hosted for teenagers are successful, safe and enjoyable.

We would like to provide you with some information in regard to the hosting of, and concern for, young people attending parties. In a world of rapid change, and in light of media focus at present, it is important to be aware that recently the legislation in Tasmania in regard to providing alcohol to anyone under the age of 18 changed.

“It is now illegal to supply alcohol to someone under 18 years on private property, without the direct written permission of their parent or guardian.”

“This puts the onus back onto the people who are hosting the party, and who cannot, without the direct written permission of the parent or guardian. A signed note in the planner or a phone call to the office is required.”

Unfortunately, social media also plays a role in all aspects of one’s life today and we have become increasingly conscious of the number of young people uploading video and photo footage from parties. We must always be conscious that our digital footprint is accessible to anyone who surfs the net but, more importantly, to future employers. Recent statistics indicate that approximately 8% of Australia over 55% of all future employers now check the Internet, Twitter and Facebook accounts of prospective employees. On our College website we have also provided a general advice document around the best hosting and planning for parties.

SCHOOL BUS TIME TIMETABLE FOR 2014
At present, we are working with all of the bus companies to provide the best possible service for our students in 2014. Before the end of the year, we hope to upload onto our website bus arrangements for next year.

EASTLANDS/SHORELINE/CITY
I remind parents in the hectic lead up to Christmas that all students must have an Eastlands or City pass if going to Eastlands without a parent or guardian. Whilst the majority of our students do the right thing, unfortunately some draw attention to themselves in a manner that lets all members of our community down. As stated in our College Planner, if students need to go to Eastlands, Shoreline or the city after school, they must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. A signed note in the planner or a phone call to the office from a parent or guardian is required.

ACTIVITY DAY YEARS 7 TO 9
The final day for Years 7-9 students will be an opportunity for the year group to have an afternoon together away from the College. Parents will receive a letter from the Year Level Co-ordinators outlining the details of arrangements for this day.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND IN MOVING INTO 2014

• Students must retain their locker passbook to use next year.
• The College has a strict policy in regard to facial piercing. No student can have visible piercings other than one in the lobe of each ear.
• All students should have black lace-up school shoes that provide support for feet and the ankles.

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MINISTRY

Mr Nicholas Lahey, DIRECTOR OF STAFF WELLBEING

STUDENT LEADERSHIP TRAINING RETREAT
The ten newly elected student leaders went on their leadership retreat last Thursday and Friday to Blue Lagoon, Delves Ferry. The camp aimed to prepare our students for their responsibilities next year and allow them the opportunity to build positive group dynamics for the newly-formed leadership team. Various workshops were run weekly to focus on personal development, team building, goal setting, organisation, public speaking skills and planning and delivering special student led initiatives. A highlight was certainly some of the beach led activities. A big thank you to Miss Rider for all her assistance.

2014 COLLEGE CAPTAIN ANNOUNCEMENT
Candidates were interviewed on site by a panel consisting of Mr Towns, Mrs Howard and Mr Lahey. Congratulations to our new College Captains and Deputies as announced at our Assembly on Tuesday afternoon and mentioned in Dr Towns’ column. Both Jeremy Ford and Meg Garney, as College Captains, will now get the terrific opportunity in February to travel to Sydney to visit Mary Mackillop House and participate in a week long, national training program called JAMM.

PEER SUPPORT 2014
This year we have had an excellent response from many Year 9 students wanting to participate in the 2014 Peer Support Program. Next Thursday 31 students will undertake a training day at Citywide to prepare them for their important role in the College. One of the first meeting for these assistants will be to discuss the introduction of the new Year 7’s on Orientation Day on Thursday, February 6, and then facilitating a series of small group based workshops to assist the Year 7’s in that transition from primary school to high school throughout Terms 1 and 2 in 2014.


SPORTS HOUSE CAPTAINS
Yesterday, Year 9 candidates presented their speeches to their House Members during Personal Development time. Students and staff in each House cast their vote to determine the successful House Captains for 2014. House Captains will be announced during the final week of school.

FINAL YEAR LEVEL ASSEMBLIES
Each year level will have the opportunity to reflect, acknowledge and celebrate the year during their scheduled final year level assemblies on Tuesday, December 17. The whole College will come together for a final assembly on Thursday, December 19 prior to going on their various last day activities.

CHRISTMAS WISHES
I wish all students and their families a happy Christmas and a safe and restful break — essential for everyone’s healthy wellbeing!

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF STUDENT WELLBEING

MRS SUZIE HOWARD
DEPUTY PRINCIPAL