

LAVALLA CATHOLIC COLLEGE

NEWSLETTER



20 FEBRUARY 2009

Dear Parents, Students and Teachers

From the Principal's Desk

During the bushfires overwhelming displays of community grief and awe inspiring scenes of optimism and raw courage are imagined that will remain with us for a life time. On the one hand, stories of survival and rescue ignited our hearts and at the same time inconsolable sadness as we listened to the number of dead increasing. People affected experienced the best of human nature with men, women and children reaching out to their neighbours offering support, love and care.

Last week I informed our community of the 10 families that had their homes destroyed by the bushfires in our surrounding areas. These students have now returned to school and with very generous donations from other schools and some individuals most of their immediate school needs have been met. Staff members who were affected are also back at work and while we all understand that the healing will take some time yet, we are for all intent and purposes back to our normal rhythm.

Supporting our Young People

Children and young people are particularly vulnerable during traumatic experiences like the one we have all lived through over these last few weeks. At these times it is very important to come together as a community or family and offering support and security in the hope to return to normality as soon as possible. Some children will need to express their sadness, confusion and horror and many will do this through writing or drawing and/or the need to talk things through. Some children will display this through changed behaviours like withdrawal, aggression or regression and denial. Should you notice these signs then professional help is recommended and our College counsellors are available to all our families.

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There are many helpful websites that can assist parents at this time as well http://www.earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au/disasters_children/ is one such site which provides information and resources that further explain the impact that disasters have on children and young people and what support can be offered to them. Another is <http://www.office@parentingideas.com.au>.

We have already seen at the College how resilient our young people can be and we are encouraging of their strength, optimism and hopefulness.

Postponed Events

Certainly everyone is well aware that Year 12 retreats, Year 7 camps and some information nights were postponed and we thank you for your understanding of this decision. Details will be provided closer to the date however please note:-

- Year 12 Retreats will occur between 4-6 May at the same camp sites
- Year 7 Camps will take place between 17-19 June at Phillip Island
- Year 7 Camp for Presentation Campus students will occur at the set date but due to the Wilson Prom fires the location has changed to Inverlock
- Year 7 information night for St Paul's students will now take place on Wednesday 11 March
- VCE and VCAL information night for students undertaking units 3-4 will take place at the Kildare Campus on Wednesday 18th March

For all the families affected by these fires, for the rescue workers and for the recovery crews we offer our daily prayers. We remember too, the families affected by the Boolarra fires the week before.

Ms Erica Pegorer
Principal

The Fires and the Lenten Season... a Reflection

Arriving at school on Monday after the fires that engulfed the Strezleckis and other parts of the State, the first reaction of the student leaders on the Kildare campus was for a time of prayer to be in solidarity with those who had suffered at the hands of the firestorms. Their first recourse was to draw close to God!

At times like this, our hearts cry out to God! Not because we think God sends fires. But because God is our way of speaking of the very depth of our being... and because God is compassionately engaged and knows us. We want to cry out to God and cry out with God. It is a conversation of the soul, our deep inner being.
O God, hear our grief! O God, help these people!

I think that what moves within us and surges for fulfillment is a deep compassion, the very being of God - an image for our co-humanity. Deep love for other people and for our world flows from within and joins us to each other and to God. God is an ocean of goodness, reaching our shore, yet far beyond our horizon and deeper than our profoundest thought. That surge moves us and we see the tide of generosity about us and recognise the life of God.

Moments of vulnerability give us the opportunity to reconnect to what really matters.

The Lenten Season which begins on Ash Wednesday, February 25th, offers us the chance to glance at the ground we have covered in the light of the Gospel. From the ashes of our past a new person can arise, hopeful for the future bright with possibilities and community. Ultimately, Lent is about connecting to God. To do so is to sense a surging passion for good and for change, a refusal to ignore the plight of people beyond ourselves, a willingness to be engaged for all humanity.

Despite the events of recent days being beyond our control, we can still give from what we have and we can listen and we can imagine and pray as our fellow Victorians engage the horror and grief of losing their own and seeing the destruction of their homes and communities. This reaction to the pain of others at is the heart of the meaning of Lent. By such compassionate action we can reduce to ashes some of our old selfish ways of being and move more confidently to a new compassionate rhythm with the God who loves us unconditionally.

O God, we cry! O God, hear our grief! O God, help these people! O God, help us! O God, help our community! O God, help us care about the world in which we live!

**Michael Hansen,
Director of Faith and Ministry**

Presentation Campus

Well so much has happened and so much has changed in the life of those in the Valley in these few days in February. What an incredible experience of strength and resilience; community spirit and compassion we have been invited into and seen so many respond to.

Likewise, the life of our Campus in its own small way has changed dramatically. Our Year 7s and students new into years 8 & 9 along with new staff arrangements and the personal growth of those with us in 2008, have re-formed who we are as a community.

The sense of welcome and inclusion and the manner in which staff and students have settled to the vital task of teaching and learning has set a very important tone to these early weeks.

It was a great pleasure to share our first meal with so many Year 7 parents at the BBQ on February 2nd. The chance to meet one another in this relaxed setting and to share the delicious fruit kebabs made by the students was a valuable one.

I congratulate **Katelyn Somerville** and **Simon Noy** who are very enthusiastic in their role as Campus Captains. They are already busy seeing how they, with other student leaders, can provide interesting opportunities to enrich the general school experience for students. As well, we have teachers who are dedicated to trying new ways of presenting curriculum so that your child's learning is

optimised. New ways of organising groups will be used in some subject areas and different styles of learning will be encouraged so that we best cater for the students and their individual abilities.

My thanks to those parents who were able to attend our first information evening focussed on year 9. Thanks also to Ms. Adriana Bianconi (Student Contact Person) and Mr Rod Williams (7/8 Curriculum Team member) who presented on the evening.

The Swimming carnival was a great success. Blessed with a perfect day everyone enjoyed the variety of events. Thanks to **Ms Kimberley Stewart** and our Sports Leaders for the preparation and organisation of our first school event.

Already this past week Years 8&9 have attended presentations about Teen Issues and meeting Life's Challenges. Whilst our year 7's were involved in a program about treating others with dignity and respect and they explored ways in which to skilfully approach conflict resolution.

As you can see, both a busy and exciting beginning to 2009!

**Mrs Leanne Mills
Campus Director**

St Paul's Campus

I wish I had a time capsule. If so, I would go back and change the events of the last two weeks. But I don't have that power, and reality must be faced.

The first week of the academic year 2009 began fabulously; staff and students moved smoothly into the college schedule. The Year 7s, who are a delightful group, settled in very quickly and so too did the Year 8s and Year 9s.

The second week brought the horrific bushfires, directly affecting our families and local communities. Some of our Lavalla families lost loved ones, some lost homes, others were evacuated and still others fought the fires. All of us have been affected by the bushfires, but those directly impacted will need ongoing support. Our hearts go out to all.

The response from our families and the general public has been terrific; people brought in uniforms, books, donations to help those students who had suffered losses. Their generosity has been touching. The college will continue to meet with our families and respond sensitively to the changing needs.

The staff has helped establish a sense of normalcy on the campus, which is what those directly affected by the bushfires asked for. This has supported all students, staff and parents in this troubled time. We are grateful to all.

Time and care are the great healers.

Uniform

The focus for the campus is to improve learning performance. To achieve this we have initiated a number of steps. Being stricter with uniform is one such step. By being in the correct uniform the students tells us he/she is prepared for the day; it reveals a positive attitude. No one need be out of uniform. Those who have been recorded as being out of uniform thrice in a term will do an after school detention.

Kildare Campus

Our building works have started!! There was a buzz around the campus this week as we saw the commencement of our Kildare Building Programme. The partial demolition of the old VCE Study Centre has commenced. At this stage the new Information Services Centre at Kildare will near completion in July. Students and staff have been made aware of the changes to procedures now that things are underway.

Teddy Drive

Our Teacher librarians at the College are using their networks to appeal for teddies for the children left bewildered by the events of the last week. The impact and success of the teddy appeal in Canberra in 2003 leaves us in no doubt of the power of these universal symbols of love and cuddles.

If you are able to help, then please send teddy bears to **Mrs Jeananne Brown** via the Kildare Front office. She will be coordinating this appeal for the region. Teddy bears will be distributed via the Relief Centres, schools and preschools

Clean up

We have begun a new yard cleanup system. A homeroom is put on duty for a week, which means it goes on duty only once in twenty-three weeks. The students are divided into six groups. Each group meets with the teacher on yard duty in one of the six areas, and the group cleans that small area towards the end of lunch. Generally it takes no more than 5 minutes. The result is that students are dropping fewer wrappers in the yard and the yard is cleaner.

Medical Information Update

It is important that parents submit medical plans to Mrs. Jean Jennings, the Registrar, or to the Front Office. This will help us better manage students with serious medical conditions.

Learning Management

We are committed to improving student learning. Therefore, we are sending an outline of the Year 7 topics for the term as well as some of the home study tasks. They will be sent out shortly. Year 8 and 9 will be sent out after that. This practice will continue in Terms 2, 3 and 4.

To help effective learning, I ask all parents/guardians to check student planners on a weekly basis; for example, on Friday evenings, or Saturdays. It will give parents/guardians an idea of the learning the child is engaged in and the tasks that need to be completed. It is another opportunity to be involved in the child's life. Teachers also communicate with parents/guardians through the planners and I recommend that parents use the planner to communicate with the teachers.

Year 7 Camps Rescheduled

Given the bushfires the Year 7 Camps at Wilson's Prom were cancelled. The camps have been rescheduled for 17th, 18th and 19th June. The plan is to take all the year 7s to camp over the three days to Phillip Island. The Co-ordinators are working out the details and will put them before parents closer to the date within Term 2.

Mr Chris Roga
Campus Director

Youth Olympics

We congratulate **Shannon McCurley** on her achievements at the Youth Olympics held over January in Sydney. Shannon represented Australia in cycling, winning 1 Silver and 2 Bronze medals. She came 5th in the women's individual pursuit. Shannon also took part in the Australian Championships in Adelaide in February. Shannon moved into the Under 19 age group and came 4th in the 5 events that she participated in. Well done Shannon and we look forward to your future achievements.

Australian Lawn Bowls Championship

Lisa Phillips recently participated in the Australian Lawn Bowls Championships and is currently representing Victoria in a Lawn Bowls events. Lisa is new to the campus this year and we congratulate her on being selected for the Australian and Victorian Teams. I look forward to hearing from Lisa on her return and seeing how she progressed in her events.

Mr Marco Di Cesare
Campus Director

Canteen News

As you may be aware the government have introduced new legislation regarding school canteens and the food they provide, and therefore there have been some changes to our menus for 2009.

Under the "Go For Your Life" Healthy Eating approved dietary guidelines for children, soft drinks and confectionary have been completely phased out and all other food and beverages must follow specific guidelines. This system is known as the Traffic Light System and is explained as follows:

Green:

These are described as everyday foods and should dominate menus. Examples include salad rolls, fresh fruit tubs and baked potatoes.

Amber:

These are select carefully or occasional foods. Examples include chicken burgers, potato cake rolls and low fat sausage rolls.

Red:

These are very occasional items and are not recommended for school food services. Examples include fried chips and lollies.

After much research and deliberation we have come up with a menu that adopts this policy with 1 Amber item on offer as a special on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Please note lunches are now strictly on an order only basis. No food will be available at lunch for students other than those who have placed an order at recess.

Please take the time to read the menu carefully and keep a copy handy for your children so they are well informed of the menu choices.

We realise that this will be a bit of an adjustment for all but we are confident in knowing we are providing a well balanced diet for your child in our school environment.

Education Maintenance Allowance Eligibility

The Education Maintenance Allowance is paid to eligible parents of students under 16 years of age who attend a State or a Registered School in Victoria.

The Education Maintenance Allowance will be paid in two instalments and to be eligible for the first instalment you must:

- be an eligible beneficiary of a Centrelink pension, allowance or benefit within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 2004: OR
- be a Veteran Affairs Pensioner (TPI), OR
- be a foster parent and
- submit your application to either Marcellin House or Presentation Campus by the date/s listed below

The application form must be lodged at the school by: **27 February 2009** for the first instalment.

Important Information

A separate application is required for each school if you have children attending different schools. If you transfer your child, you will need to make a new application at the new school. All staff are required to treat the information that you provide as confidential.

Summer 2009

Menu

Available at Recess:

Hawaiian English muffins	\$1.20
Toasties – ham, tomato and low fat cheese	\$2.50
Raisin toast (café style)	\$1.80
Warm cheese roll (low fat)	\$1.80
Hot chicken roll with mayonnaise	\$3.50
Chicken dim sim (steamed)	\$1.20

Available on lunch order:

All recess items mentioned above	
Fried rice (foil packed)	\$3.50
Baked potato - coleslaw, low fat cheese, butter and mayonnaise	\$4.50
Turkey twister – turkey, lettuce, tomato and mayonnaise in a wrap	\$4.50
Salad roll:	
with ham	\$4.00
with chicken or turkey	\$4.50
Egg and lettuce roll	\$3.00

Drinks:

Water	\$2.00
Focus Water	\$2.50
Nippy's low fat milk:	
small	\$1.50
large	\$2.00
Juicy Isle 100% fruit juice	\$1.50

Miscellaneous:

Popcorn	\$1.00
Snakatas	\$1.00
Yoghurts	\$1.00
Red Rock Deli chips	\$1.00
Fresh fruit tubs	\$1.00
Icypoles and frozen yoghurts	RRP

Canteen Roster

ST PAUL'S CAMPUS

Mon 23 Feb	L. McDonald, L. Hare
Tue 24 Feb	L. Skinner
Wed 25 Feb	L. Hodder
Thu 26 Feb	M Johnston
Fri 27 Feb	M. Holt, R. Gillow

KILDARE CAMPUS

Mon 23 Feb	E. Panayiotou
Tue 24 Feb	S. Budge
Wed 25 Feb	Help needed
Thu 26 Feb	H. Stoddart
Fri 27 Feb	L. Clarke

Breakfast Club @ Kildare

The Kildare Campus of Lavalla Catholic College is hoping to continue the breakfast club with the assistance of local parishioners and college parents and friends.

Aims of the Breakfast Club:

- To offer a warm and friendly environment for students to have a simple breakfast at no cost.
- To offer the opportunity for voluntary mentoring between adult members of the local parish and school communities and Kildare students on a weekly basis.

This invitation is extended to all adults in the Valley region, especially those who love kids. Please pass the invitation on to those who you think might be interested.

This highly successful venture depends totally on community response. Please consider this opportunity to assist with the family spirit of the college.

For more information and to register interest please phone **Mike Hansen at Kildare on 51748111.**

Special Resources on booklists

TI-nspire calculators have been booklisted at Years 9-11. They will be used in a variety of ways across all areas of Mathematics progressively from Year 9 onwards. The TI-nspire calculator may also be purchased from the College through a payment plan of three instalments. Forms are available at campus offices.

St Paul's Canteen volunteers

St Paul's canteen is currently calling for any parents that may be able to volunteer their time to help out on canteen duty from term 2 onwards. Even one day a term is helpful and would be greatly appreciated.

If you are able to volunteer please call St Paul's campus canteen on 03 5174 7355 and speak with Pat Brown or Allison Farley.

Private Car Conveyance Allowance Applications

Any parent who needs to travel more than 4.8 km to get their child to school or bus stop can claim a conveyance allowance to help cover the cost involved. This claim can be made provided there is no bus service running at that time or place. This applies particularly to music students who need to come in early for rehearsals. Could I ask that if music rehearsal days/times have changed this year for your son/daughter, could you please inform Mr. Van Berkel in writing of the new arrangements. New claims can be made by filling in the blue Private Car Conveyance Allowance Application form, obtainable from the Campus office.

Forthcoming Events

TERM 1

FEBRUARY

- | | |
|--------|--|
| 23 Feb | Parents and Friends Meeting
(St Paul's Library 7.30pm) |
| 25 Feb | Parents and Friends Meeting
(Presentation Staff Room 5.30pm)
Ash Wednesday |
| 27 Feb | Swimming Carnival [Kildare] |

MARCH

- | | |
|--------|--|
| 3 Mar | Commissioning Mass held at St Paul's at 9.30am |
| 4 Mar | Year 7 immunizations |
| 5 Mar | Swimming Carnival [St Paul's] |
| 9 Mar | Labour Day Public Holiday |
| 19 Mar | Second Hand Uniform Shop Open (3.30pm-4.30pm) |
| 23 Mar | Year 10 Work Experience |

APRIL

- | | |
|--------|--|
| 2 Apr | Parent Teacher Student Interviews (4.00pm-7.30pm) |
| 3 Apr | Last Day Term 1 - Student Free Day
Year 11 Debutante Ball
Parent Teacher Student Interviews (9.00am-12.00pm) |
| 4 Apr | Year 11 Debutante Ball |
| 16 Apr | Second Hand Uniform Shop Open (3.30pm-4.30pm) |

TERM 2

APRIL

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 20 Apr | Term 2 Commence - for all students and staff |
| 23 -27 Apr | Marist Basketball [Lismore] |
| 25 Apr | Anzac Day |
| 27 Apr | Full Winter uniform |

Electronic Devices

As in past years, the College has placed a USB memory stick on the booklists. This year, the USB memory stick has the College logo printed on the protective housing, and is provided with a College lanyard with a plastic pocket to house the student ID card. The lanyard will assist to keep the USB stick easily accessible for use, and protect the student ID card which will be needed this year for printing services.

Any use of an electronic device capable of storage and transfer of data must be related to authorised student activity within the college.

The College reserves the right to view the contents and delete any inappropriate and/or potentially malicious material from any electronic storage device used on the College premises.