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Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining star and angel's song, for infant's cry in lowly manger. We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold his glory, and are bathed in its radiance.

Be with us as we sing the ironies of Christmas, the incomprehensible comprehended, the poetry made hard fact, the helpless Babe who cracks the world asunder. We kneel before you shepherds, innkeepers, wisemen. Help us to rise bigger than we are.

Amen.

From the Principal, Mr John Freeman

We are now in the Season of Advent, that time which the Church sets aside to mark a new liturgical year, a time of preparation for the coming of the Lord at Christmas and a time in which to focus on the many ways in which the Lord breaks into our lives. Advent is a time of joyful waiting, a time of preparation, a time of longing, a time of expectation and hope. Our God is a God of surprises and we don't know exactly how God will break into our lives. Our task is to be ready to receive and welcome God as and when God appears – perhaps in the new born child, perhaps in the sick parent, perhaps in the inexplicable tragedy, perhaps in the delightful surprise that a child or a friend delivers us, perhaps in the lonely or poor person upon whom we accidentally stumble, perhaps in the one who takes our breath away in love, perhaps in the exquisite revelation of the beauty of nature – or in any of the infinite and unimaginable ways in which God's revelation might happen.



Many of you would already be aware, but the Diocese of Sale has a new Bishop. His Holiness Pope Francis appointed the Very Reverend Father Patrick Michael O'Regan as the ninth Bishop of Sale on 4 December 2014. Bishop-elect O'Regan is currently the Vicar General and the Dean of the Cathedral in the Diocese of Bathurst. Our Diocese of Sale has been awaiting a bishop since Bishop Christopher Prowse was elevated to Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn on 12 September 2013. We look forward to Bishop-elect O'Regan being with and leading us.

On Monday, 1 December, we held our Awards Night. This is a time when we recognise and celebrate our students in Years 7 to 11 for their academic, sporting and cultural achievements. We recognised our Year 12s a week and a half earlier at the Graduation Dinner. Our special guests included the Director of Catholic Education for Sale, Ms Maria Kirkwood, and a great friend of the College and Secondary Education Consultant for Sale, Rosemary Copeland. It should also be noted that Rosemary Copeland retires at the end of this year from her role at the CEO and we thank her for her support over the years and wish her the best of success for the future. These nights only occur through hard work and organisation and I particularly wish to acknowledge the work of Annemarie Clarke and her team as well as Kellyann Armstrong, Claire Couling, Suzanne Farley, Tamsin McCormack and Jo Alford.

Last Wednesday, 3 December, we held a liturgy to farewell our Years 7 and 8 students. During that time we presented a large number of very full baskets, inflatable boats, sand pits and other receptacles full of toys to St Vincent de Paul – we had previously made a smaller, but still significant presentation to the Newborough Chapter. This has been a long-standing, generous and wonderful tradition at the St Paul's Campus. I have been in a number of schools previously and not seen something as generous as this, so my congratulations to all of Years 7 to 9 and the staff who supported them.

After many months of planning, consultation and effort we have commenced the construction of our Trade Skills Centre which will be located on our Kildare Campus. As part of recognising this achievement we held a small ground-breaking ceremony on Friday, 5 December and were very privileged to have The Honourable Darren Chester, Federal Member of Parliament for Gippsland present to say a few words and ceremonially turn soil along with our School Captains and members of our Leadership Team. My thanks in particular to Brett Van Berkel and Rob Tarraran for all their work to date on this project. Also my appreciation to Doug Doherty and Nicole Denovan.

From the Principal (Cont.)

Our Cricket team have just concluded playing in the Marist Cricket Competition in Lismore, NSW. We finished third overall with three wins and two very close losses, with the last loss being based on the Duckworth Lewis system due to a thunderstorm that stopped the last ten overs of play, when by all accounts we were in strong position to win the game. Nevertheless, our students acquitted themselves with great dignity and sportsmanship throughout the carnival, so well done to the boys involved and to their coaches, Peter Flahavin and Brett Van Berkel.

Also of note is that one of our Year 7 students, Kayla Kennedy, has achieved equal best entry in the CEO Sale Christmas Card Design Competition 2014. Well done Kayla.

Whilst on sporting achievements we congratulate Jordan Cunico on being selected by Geelong in the AFL National Draft.

It is with much pleasure I announce the following students as House Captains for 2015.

MacKillop: Brooke Flemming and Joanne Fernandez
Champagnat: Maggie O'Keefe and Jayde Travers
Nagle: Amelia Charlton and Liam Brady
Delany: William Lowe and Shinae Ainsworth

Congratulations to these fine young people.

We congratulate Dominica Szylkrot who is marrying Justin Kosakiewicz and also Lawrence Sanchez who is marrying Bevin Roberts during the upcoming break.

I ask that you please remember the following people in your prayers:

After a period of ill-health Pru Scholtes, mother-in-law, Geraldine Scholtes passed away on 28 November. Mrs Scholtes was matriarch of a large wonderful family of 10 children and was also the great grandmother of two current students - Chloe Bransgrove Year 12 and Lori Scholtes Year 7. The majority of her children went through Lavalla, she was a cleaner at Kildare at one stage.

Carolyn McCabe's mother, Nancy Flannagan, passed away on 28 November. She was 95 years, and had been unwell for quite some time.

Eva Gustin Pangestu, 30, my nephew's wife passed away on 26 November. We mourn for husband Ben and her two children, Isabella two and half years of age and Claramaria who has just turned one.

The College community is saddened to learn of the passing of Sr Mary Barnes. Sr Mary taught at Lourdes College in the 1980s and was one of the last of the Brigidine sisters to live in the convent which is now the Administration and staff area at Kildare. Through her teaching and her later work, like all Brigidines, she stood in reverence for the community of life and worked to further compassion and justice for humanity and the earth.

Finally, Jacqueline Kennedy, my mother's sister, passed away 30 November at the age of 75 after battling breast cancer.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them.

May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Amen

Finally, as this is the last Newsletter of the year, I wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas and holiday and every best wish for 2015.

Faithbook

Mr Paul Skippen, College Minister

Leading People to Jesus

The day of the Christmas pageant finally arrived. Shannon was so excited about her part that I supposed she was to be one of the main characters, though she had not told me what her part was. The parents were all there, and one by one the children took their places. I could see the shepherds fidgeting in the corner of the stage meant to represent the field for sheep. Mary and Joseph stood solemnly behind the manger. In the back, three young Wise Men waited impatiently. At the end of the stage, Shannon sat quietly and confidently.

The teacher began: 'A long time ago, Mary and Joseph had a baby and they named him Jesus.' She continued, 'And when Jesus was born, a bright star appeared over the stable.' At that cue, Shannon got up, picked up a large tinfoil star, walked behind Mary and Joseph and held the star up high for everyone to see.

When the teacher told about the shepherds coming to see the baby, the three young shepherds came forward, and Shannon jiggled the star up and down excitedly to show them where to come. When the Wise Men responded to their cue, Shannon went forward a little to meet them and to lead the way. Her face was as brilliant as the original star must have been.

The play ended, followed by refreshments. On the way home Shannon said with great satisfaction, 'I had the main part.' 'You did?' I questioned, wondering why she thought that. 'Yes,' she said, 'cause I showed everybody how to find Jesus.'

How true! To show others how to find Jesus, to be the light for their paths – that is the finest role we can play in life.

Have a joy-filled Christmas and a rewarding new year with family and friends.

Important Dates

Friday January 30, 2015
Years 7, 10 & 12 Commence

Monday February 2, 2015
Years 8, 9 & 11 Commence



St Paul's Campus Update

Mr Andy Martin, Campus Director



Thankyou!

As the work of the year is being completed and preparations for 2015 begin, inevitably as educators, we engage in reflective process as we tally the plans and expectations for the year against the outcomes and results. For my part, this process is attached to the understanding that my time at the College is ending and will, appropriately, become a footnote written into the pages of our particular history. Others will judge the relative merits of direction taken, programs instituted or policy implemented.

For my part, what can be said about 'My Lavalla Experience', is that I very much appreciate the support and care I have received since day one of my arrival. In particular, I would like to thank the staff of our school and the St Paul's staff especially for their willingness to 'take risks in their work', to adopt change and to act in a collegial way to support the Strategic Direction of the College going forward. This staff demonstrates the best of what Catholic Education has to offer in support of enhancing student opportunities - Curricular, extra-curricular and faith centred experiences that add texture and meaning to the 'whole of person' approach to developing a global citizen for the 21st Century.

I thank also the Leadership Team of the College and I am mindful that all of the initiatives taken and any improvements made have been the result of implementing a shared vision. My perspective is that the College community owes a debt of gratitude to Erica Pegorer and John Freeman for the collaborative and consultative mindset that has characterized Leadership throughout my time at the College. In my experience of working in teams, the most successful are those which recognize the essence of core 'mission' and utilize the collective strengths and wisdom of the members to model authentic Leadership. This is a feature of leadership at Lavalla and I am confident that Lee McKenzie will offer considered, compassionate and strategic leadership to the St Paul's staff and students in 2015.

Finally, I thank you, the students and parents of the College, for your kind words and thoughts over recent weeks and more

generally for your regard to supporting the policy and protocols associated with generating a sense of solidarity and community at our College throughout the last three years.

I look forward to the future in anticipation, but, I will also look back on this recent past with fondness and the highest regard for the people who make up the community that is Lavalla Catholic College.

My Best to all for a Holy Christmas and a happy new year.

Oral Health

Maintaining good oral health is essential to overall health and wellbeing. Teenagers and Young Adults need to protect their mouths and teeth by practising good oral health hygiene.

Although regular brushing and flossing are important, the oral health of this age group is also often associated with risk factors such as diet, smoking and alcohol and mouth and tongue piercings.

The most common oral health disease in teenagers and young adults, is Tooth decay. Tooth decay is a diet related disease. It is caused by the interaction of sugar and plaque to produce acids. Acids dissolve the outer layer of the tooth. These acids are produced by bacteria in plaque which develops after eating sugars commonly found in food and over



Tips to maintain good oral health

- Brush teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and a toothbrush that has small, compact head and soft bristles. When the bristles appear 'shaggy' it is time to change toothbrushes.
- Flossing once a day is recommended. There may be some bleeding at first but this should subside after a few days if tooth cleaning is thorough
- Limit sugars and processed foods to mealtimes (rather than between meals).
- Choose snacks such as cheese, natural yoghurt, fresh fruit and vegetables, dry biscuits, nuts and wholegrain bread.
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- Wear a professionally fitted mouthguard when training and playing sport where there is risk of oral injury.
- Have regular oral health checkups – don't wait for a problem.

together we are creating a healthy school



A jointly funded initiative of the State Government of Victoria and the Australian Government



Kildare Campus Update

Mr Douglas Doherty, Campus Director

“My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others. Come to think of it, why do we have to wait for Christmas to do that?” — Bob Hope

As we complete the academic year of 2014 we progress from our direction of Faith and Learning: Serve One Another; and adopt Faith and Learning: Just Love for 2015.

During the Christmas period we hope as a Catholic Community that we undertake a ‘Headstart’ programme of love just as we undertook one for academic success for each year group at Kildare.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate some of most recent successes. Jordan Cunico was selected at the AFL draft for Geelong. We wish Jordan every success. He is a very humble yet capable and skilled young man.

It is also with great pleasure that I announce the following students as House captains for 2015.

MacKillop

Brooke Flemming
Joanne Fernandez

Champagnat

Maggie O’Keefe
Jayde Travers

Nagle

Amelia Charlton
Liam Brady

Delany

William Lowe
Shinae Ainsworth

Success continued this week with the achievements of our cricketers at the Marist Cricket Carnival in Lismore, Queensland.

Cameron Graham won Bowler of the Carnival and his third all Marist cap (best 12 players of the carnival).

Mitchell Membrey won Batsman of the carnival and All Marist Jackson McMahon won his third All Marist cap as the opening bowler.

I would also like to thank Mr Brett Van Berkeel and Mr Peter Flahavin for their dedication in training and accompaniment of the boys.

Lavalla Catholic College is renowned throughout the Latrobe Valley and the region as one the most diverse colleges offering such a wide range of pathways to success. This continuous drive to offer our students the best possible pathways to achieve success was illustrated with the ‘Turning of the Turf’ for the Trade Skills Centre on Friday 5th December. We are very thankful for all those involved, especially the federal government for their grant and for the Honourable member for Gippsland – Mr Darren Chester who assisted us with the celebration. A special thanks must go to Mr Brett Van Berkeel for his project management, Mr Jason Szwerek, Mr Rob Tarraran, Ms Erica Pegorer, Mr John Freemant, Ms Lee McKenzie and SLAP architects for the planning and fruition of this project.

2014 was a very successful year. We now await the results of the exams. I would like to welcome all Year 12 students to attend a morning tea on Monday 15th December from 10 to 11am. This is an opportunity to meet with staff, discuss future pathways or simply to celebrate success.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all parents, students and staff of the college for their support this year and I look forward to working with you next year.

Have a safe, happy and holy Christmas. Please make an effort to visit a Christmas celebration at Church during this festive season.

God Bless



A Time for Every Purpose

'For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven ...' (Ecclesiastes 3: 1)

In our journey as Church in this season of Lent may we hear the call to celebrate time and so honour the season of our life.

'A time to keep silence, and a time to speak ...'

An opportunity to step aside from the ordinary, give time to self and experience a fresh approach to the 2015 Lenten story.

The weekend will centre on scripture, prayer, music, story, meditation, reflection, interaction, discussion ... and silence.

FRIDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2015 (7.00pm)

SUNDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2015 (3.00pm)

Greenmount Retreat House, Yarram

For more info contact Paul Skippen (College Minister)

Lavalla Catholic College (paul.skippen@lavalla.vic.edu.au)

The fire season is here – what parents and carers can do for the children

Fire season has arrived and many people may be beginning to become stressed and anxious about ‘What might happen?’ This includes your children. So what can you do to help your children to deal with the feelings that may be coming up as the temperature rises?

Here are a few tips;

You know your children best – recognise when they may be behaving differently

Take an extra interest in what they are doing – this will give your children the opportunity to communicate with you more

Many children find it easier to talk about their feelings whilst undertaking an activity with you, such as going for a walk, painting or playing

Talk to your children about how they are feeling – use opportunities such as meal times, driving in the car to and from childcare/school/sports/afterschool activities

Tune in to your children – there may be some things they say, a look they give a body gesture that tells you how they are feeling

Children communicate in many ways. Some children may not talk about how they are feeling and will communicate through their behaviour, art work or play

Teach them ways to cope – find an activity of interest to them and help them to participate in that activity, let them share their story/experience, encourage them to talk to you and/or a significant person they trust

Seek help when you don’t have the answers

Allow them to express their emotions in healthy ways

Include children in your planning for an emergency

Give the children age appropriate information to help them understand what has happened, what might happen and what they might be feeling

Remind your children that their feelings are normal and they are not the only ones feeling this way

Here are some useful resources for you and your family

<http://www.redcross.org.au/emergency-resources.aspx>

http://www.redcross.org.au/files/Emergency_services_Get_Ready_Childrens_activity_book_20110609.pdf

http://www.redcross.org.au/files/ARC_REDiPlan_WEB.pdf

<http://www.redcross.org.au/files/>

[Emergency services how to talk to children fact sheet 20110609.pdf](#)

<http://resources.beyondblue.org.au/prism/file?token=BL/0447>

<http://resources.beyondblue.org.au/prism/file?token=BL/0646>

Should you or anyone you know of need further information or assistance during this stressful time please feel free to call or make an appointment with one of our counsellors at Relationships Australia Victoria on 5175 9500 or email traralgon@rav.org.au