

LAVALLA CATHOLIC COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



10 FEBRUARY 2009

Special Bulletin from the Principal.....

Dear families

The current tragic bushfires have directly affected a number of our families and staff and while some news has come to light, we are yet to understand the full impact of this disaster. To the best of our knowledge, no current members of our school community have lost their lives.

What we do know is this:

- Sadly, we believe a former student and his father may be victims of the fire- this is yet to be confirmed
- One member of staff has suffered the direct loss of relatives
- At least 10 of our families have lost their homes and possessions and many more families (staff and students) were forced to evacuate their home.
- Many families including several staff members remained on their properties and fought the fires.
Thankfully they saved their homes but some experiences loss of sheds, cars and livestock.

The immediate College response:

- The College is monitoring the personal and emotional welfare of those affected directly and indirectly by the bushfires.
- Like most other organisations the College will be supporting the various official fund raising efforts.
- Over past days approximately 40 members of staff have volunteered with the Red Cross to provide support to Fire fighters, SES and those displaced by the fires.
- Student leaders have instigated fund-raising activities for our affected families. Money raised will support the provision of uniforms and other school supplies as appropriate to individual needs.
- The College psychologists will be available to families and friends associated with the College who are affected by the bushfires. Please contact reception at St Paul's or Kildare to access **Ms Francois or Ms Chia.**

Community Support:

- A number of our associated support groups have made contact offering emotional support to the College community.
- **Riggalls stores** – Traralgon & Morwell and **McAuthur's Shoes**- Traralgon are generously making provision to supply uniform to those families affected. You will need to obtain a letter of introduction from the Campus Directors – **Mr Roga and Mr DiCesare.**
- A school in Canberra, **McKillop College** and another in Adelaide, **Blackfriars Priory School** are offering their fund raising, so our families can be directly supported.
- I would ask you to call the Campus Directors on their behalf if you know of any family in this situation. It is important that we know if these families need any assistance from us.

I am deeply grateful to staff members and parents who put aside their own fears and concerns on Monday, to ensure that our students were welcomed into a 'normal caring' environment. Our prayers, practical actions and total support will continue. I shall keep the College community informed of any further developments. Parents with any concerns regarding the wellbeing of their child are urged to contact the College.

Erica Pegorer
Principal