



*From the Shadows*

*A world of ashes leached of life,  
The colours swept away.  
A paradise lies lost beneath a shroud  
Of ashen grey.  
And yet in time the veil will fall.*

*The streams once more will flow,  
And from the shadows 'tween the trees  
New life will surely grow.*

*Graeme Base.*

**From the Principal:**

This week has presented yet another challenge for our community, especially given our setting in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges. Yesterday afternoon at around 2.45 we observed on the horizon and were notified of a scrub fire new Nixon Road, adjacent to Birdsland Reserve. Two subsequent notices from DSE and CFA advised us that there may be some further threats to specific areas and hence a decision was made to detain those students who travel on our charter buses. At the time of school dismissal, there was no concern regarding road closures and public transport authorities were advising of ongoing services. Students were encouraged to travel home as normal, provided they felt safe doing so. If they wished, they were able to remain back at the school.

Certainly the timing of this emergency presented significant challenges for us all. I wish to offer my sincere thanks to our families, many of whom travelled circuitous routes and longer journeys than usual to collect their students. I am today overwhelmed by the generosity, competence and compassion shown by our staff, many of whom stayed back many hours to provide support – and delicious noodles - for those students in

our care. I wish to also acknowledge the co-operation and calm exhibited by the students who remained in the Hall.

Updates today provided early notification of further outbreaks, one of which was controlled very quickly. Students and staff responded again efficiently and effectively to ensure a safe dismissal. Although there will be smoke about, the weather is cooler and conditions are deemed to be safe for our programs to continue. Classes – and buses – are operating as usual. This will continue for Wednesday and Thursday. If you elect for your daughter to stay away, please notify the College as usual.

However, due to the EXTREME FIRE RISK conditions in the weather forecast for Friday, and considering also our high dependence on public transport, we have determined to close the College on Friday 27th February. There will be no classes for students. Staff will not be in attendance and teachers will provide students with additional study and homework activities. Parents will receive SMS notification and the College Website will provide full details. The Catholic Education Office and Board Chair was advised and are supportive of this decision.

While I apologise for the inconvenience that this decision may immediately

present to you, I hope that you will agree with our priority for the safety of all students. Over this past fortnight, we have experienced many highs – our Award Assembly, College Opening Mass, Middle School Swimming Carnival, Open Day and then as we have witnessed the dreadful toll exacted by the recent Black Saturday fires, our students have demonstrated active compassion and generosity .....Overnight nearly \$5000 was raised for the Red Cross Bushfire Recovery fund! At lunch today, students have sold pancakes to add to this. Others have brought in materials to help the local wildlife shelter.

Tomorrow is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the season of Lent.....a time when we are all invited to reflect through prayer, abstinence and giving to others on exactly how we are relating to God and our neighbour.

As we await anxiously for the calmer autumn weather, and hopefully some rain, let us take the symbol of ash as that which invites a regeneration of new life.....how might our life now become, newly born, with a loving God at our centre - to Tread lightly; live generously?

*Mary Fitz-Gerald, Principal*



Year 12 2008 High Achievers



Taking Leadership Pledge during the  
College Opening Mass



Year 7 girls welcomed with presentation  
of a flower at Opening Mass

## Celebrating Year 12, 2008

The results for VCE, VET & VCAL programs completed in 2008 by Year 12 students at Mater Christi College have again been very pleasing with many individual and study group highlights. College VCE results were above the state average, with 30% of students receiving a TER above 80, 60% receiving a TER above 70 and a Mean Study Score of 32. There was also a 100% pass rate for our Senior VCAL students. Highlights include Zoe McGann, who received the MCC VCAL 2008 Award. She has begun an Apprenticeship.

VET subjects study scores above 40 in VET HOSPITALITY – Nicole Hynd 49, Melissa Lentini 45, Cherie Peele 44, Kate Begley 43 and Estelle Chambers 42.

At our recent Award Assembly, we were proud to acknowledge our many high achievers from 2008, including fifteen

students who achieved a TER of 90+ and those who made up the eighty-four study scores of 40+. As in previous years, Year 11 students undertaking higher VCE studies, performed well, with seventeen achieving study scores of 40+.

Congratulations to College Dux, Mickey Waitayagitumjon, whose excellent results included a perfect score in Maths Methods. She gained a TER of 99.25 and is enrolled at Melbourne University where she is about to commence a Science degree.

Congratulations also to Hayley Warren, whose TER of 99.15 was a consequence of outstanding results, including a perfect score for Psychology as higher study in Year 11. Hayley was the proud recipient of the Astrid Renehan Memorial Chemistry Prize and is looking forward

to commencing a Science Degree at Monash University.

Bleydy Dimech-Betancourt achieved a perfect score for Psychology, while Jessica Alley in Economics and Sarah Dileo in Health & Human Development added further strong scores to their perfect score achieved in Year 11.

Five students were short listed for the VCAA VCE Seasons of Excellence – Kelly Felton, Candy Ho, Madison Pritchard, Hayley McCunn and Ellie Sargeant. These students have taken a variety of pathways supported by their creative talents and sound performances.

Congratulations and thanks to all Year 12 students, their parents and teachers. We hope that their efforts and success will inspire other students to work hard and achieve excellent results.

Mary Fitz-Gerald Principal



College Dux Mickey Waitayagitumjon



Astrid Renehan Chemistry Award recipient Hayley Warren  
together with Astrid's family.

## Basic Trauma Crisis Counselling for Chaplains, Teachers and Parents

When: Sunday 1 March  
1:00pm - 4:30pm

Where: Life Ministry Centre  
15 - 49 Old Melbourne Road  
Chirnside Park

Cost: A minimum \$10 donation  
per person

RSVP: Must call LMC office on  
9726 8111 to register

## Careers and Pathway Centre

The Careers and Pathways Centre is open to all students. It is "home" to Andy Donnelly Careers Coordinator and Amanda Bischof-Foster Pathways Coordinator, Leonardo Zito and Sara Mugridge.

The Centre contains up-to-date information to assist students in making the best possible educational and employment choices. The centre is open at lunch and students are encouraged to seek advice and gather resources.

Students and parents can also find useful careers and pathways information.

### Student Profile

Name: Samantha Currie

Course Details: Currently undertaking Intermediate VCAL and a School based traineeship at Gembrook Primary School. Sam attends classes at Mater Christi four days a week and works at Gembrook Primary School every Thursday.

### Traineeship details:

When at the Primary School Sam assists the PE teacher with classes and helps with the organisation and running of the sports program.

When asked about the best part of the traineeship, Sam said she loves working with the children and is finding it very rewarding.

Amanda Bischof-Foster  
Pathways Co-ordinator (VET/VCAL)



ADF Lon Tan Award winner  
Amy Callaway



Hemant Kokularupan presented the  
Monash Prize to Tracy Malmo



Kwong Lee Dow award recipients  
Brittany Collard & Rhian Pospischil

## The Education Tax Refund – Get 50% back

Under the new Education Tax Refund, parents and others who are eligible can now claim 50% of their eligible education expenses up to \$750 for primary students and \$1500 for secondary students.

This means you could receive a refund each year of up to \$375 for each primary and \$750 for each secondary school student in your care.

### Are you eligible?

To be eligible you must have received Family Tax Benefit Part A for each child whose education expenses you wish to claim. You can also claim the Education Tax Refund if you were stopped from receiving Family Tax Benefit Part A because your child received any of the following:

- Youth Allowance (student) aged 18
- Disability Support Pension
- ABSTUDY
- the Veterans' Children Education Scheme
- the Student Financial Supplement Scheme

- a scheme under s258 of the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004
- an Australian Postgraduate Award.

Independent students are also eligible to claim.

### What can you claim?

You can claim the purchase, lease, hire or hire-purchase costs, repairs and running costs of:

- laptops, home computers and associated costs — for example, internet and paper
- educational software, printers, USB flash drives, disability aids to assist in the use of computer equipment for students with special needs
- stationery and art supplies
- school textbooks and associated learning materials
- trade tools and safety equipment for secondary school trade courses.

Some of the expenses you cannot claim

include school fees or the cost of school uniforms, school excursions or travel to and from school, musical instruments or sporting equipment, clothing or footwear. For a more comprehensive list visit [www.educationtaxrefund.gov.au](http://www.educationtaxrefund.gov.au)

### When can you claim?

You can claim your education expenses in your 2009 tax return. If you do not have to lodge a tax return, you will be able to lodge a separate claim with the Tax Office from 1 July 2009.

Remember, you need to keep all receipts for expenses you claim.

If your education expenses in one year are more than the claim limit for your children, you can add the excess to your education expenses for the following year.

### For more information:

- visit [www.educationtaxrefund.gov.au](http://www.educationtaxrefund.gov.au)
- phone the Tax Office on 13 28 61.

## Year 8 & 9 Focus Evening

The impetus for our Focus Evening for the families of Year 8 and 9 students came from the 2008 School Review. Some parents sought further opportunities to connect with the College community beyond a very successful Year 7 Transition.

In the first session, ideas about creating a 'home-school partnership' and appropriate lines of communication were presented. The 'Drugs and

Alcohol Resource Booklet' was also distributed as an informative resource for young people and their families.

For the second session, Year 8 families explored learning and teaching initiatives and were introduced to the 'Personal Development' subject and the Melbourne Discovery Experience. The MCC Leadership Certificate, Career Pathways and the Sexual Assault Prevention Program to be run

in conjunction with the R.E. and Health Departments were the topics covered for Year 9 families.

The evening was well supported by families and sets a positive foundation for future forums.

Janine Bauman  
Head of Middle School &  
Year 9 Learning Leader

## Uniform Update Sports/PE Uniform

During 2008 some adjustments were made to our Sports/PE Uniform to make it more responsive to the needs of our students.

The fabric and design of the track pants, top and shorts have been revised and a long sleeved polo top is available. There is also a choice of a cap or bucket hat for sun protection and one of these must be worn for all outdoor sports during Terms 1 and 4.

During 2008 notice was also given that the woollen school jumper was not to be worn with the Sports/PE uniform. Girls should pay careful attention to this detail.

A lightweight waterproof jacket is also available to be worn to and from school over the College Uniform or the Sports/PE Uniform as required. This jacket is not an alternative for the track jacket. It is meant as an additional protective item to be worn outdoors only.

Thank you for your attention to these details. We want the girls to be comfortable and to wear the correct uniform at all times to indicate their positive connection to the Mater Christi community.

Mary Close Uniform Committee



Arnie Vejins presented a Holden motor to the College for winning the Holden Encouragement Award during 2008 RACV Energy Breakthrough

## Environment News Schools Clean up Australia Day

We are following our theme of "Treading Lightly, Living Generously" by participating in the annual Schools Clean Up Australia Day. Clean up Australia Chairman Ian Kiernan urges everyone to get involved and be proactive in the cause by looking after our environment. Even at home, make recycling a priority and the maintenance of the environment something to think about. Clean Up Australia Day is the perfect opportunity for everyone to come together and help clear our local parks, and waterways and to think about how we can reduce our impact on the environment.

Get a group together on Sunday March 1st and lend a helping hand to clean up our environment. Check out [www.cleanup.org.au](http://www.cleanup.org.au) to find your local clean up area.

Cassie Schill Environment Captain



## A Taizé Service: Forgiveness

A time of contemplative stillness and chant based on the services at the French Taizé community.

St George's Anglican Church Monbulk  
7.00pm, Sunday, 1st March 2009.

Enquiries 9756 7115 or 0421 216 825

## Uniform Shop

Extended Hours for Winter Uniform purchasing

Wednesday 18 March  
(Year 7 & 8 Information Night)  
3:00 - 7:00pm

Tuesday 17 March & Thursday 19 March  
1:00 - 7:00pm

## Canteen Helpers Needed

We are desperately seeking help to keep our Canteen running smoothly. If you could spare any time (even a couple of hours) during the morning it would be greatly appreciated.

Kate Lemke Canteen Manager

## St Paul's Primary

Twilight Country Fair

Where: 59 Moores Road Monbulk

When: Saturday 28 February  
1:00 - 7:00pm

## School Nurse Casual Relief Position

The College is seeking a Div 1 Registered Nurse to provide casual relief for the school Health Care Centre. Further details are on the College web-site.

Please forward expressions of interest to Kaye Walker, College Nurse, on

T: 757 0831 OR

E: [walker\\_k@materchristi.edu.au](mailto:walker_k@materchristi.edu.au)

## Anglicare Talking Teens

Do you wonder why they aren't listening to you or how to deal with their anger?

Do you want to maintain a connection with them?

Take some time out for parents  
This is an opportunity to call in, ask questions, meet other parents and share ideas that work!

Who: Dads, mums and carers of teenagers 13 - 17 years

When: Tuesday 10, 17, 24, 31 March  
7:00 - 9:00pm

Where: Healesville Secondary College

Cost: Free (bookings essential)

Contact: Helena at Parentzone on  
9721 3656

## Important dates

Sunday 1 March

Clean Up Australia Day

Friday 6

World Day of Prayer

Monday 9 March

Labour Day Holiday

Wednesday 11

Year 7 2010 Interviews

Saturday 14

Year 7 2010 Interviews

Sunday 15

Catholic Education Week Commences

Tuesday 17

St. Patrick's Day

Wednesday 18

MYP Information Evening -

Year 7 Parents

Friday 20

Catholic Education Week Concludes

## Canteen Roster

Monday 2 March

Frida Kassis, **HELP NEEDED**

Tuesday 3

Ruth MacNab

Wednesday 4

Kaaren Jukes

Thursday 5

Una Steele

Friday 6

Carolyn Mitchell, **HELP NEEDED**

Tuesday 10

Monique Fronde

Wednesday 11

Sue Nicholas

Thursday 12

Annette Thompson

Friday 13

Frida Kassis, **HELP NEEDED**

