Headmaster’s News

Dear Members of the St Gregory’s Family,

Next Sunday is the second Sunday of Advent. When I was doing some reading to get a context for what to say at the next Assembly, I came across suggestions, such as open door policy, accentuate the positive and good over evil. When I reflected on what Advent was about, in that it is a time of preparation for the coming of the Lord, it made me question, does Christ just want us to look at Christmas or does he want us to see something a bit further such as eternal life. For the young people to get past Christmas and the coming of the Lord, I would imagine it would be hard. In preparation for Christmas and during the season of Advent, do we accentuate more of the Open Door Policy such as welcoming people into our communities, do we contribute to beggars we see on the street, do we offer a smile to people as we pass them, do we make a bigger effort with the St Vincent de Paul Collection this year? Do we talk about doing good and reconciling with ourselves and our God, the wrongs that we have done throughout the year? Can we all do good in small and large ways and therefore do we really work on the positive and are we conscious of it? This is a hard one in many ways because one only has to reflect on the busyness of life, do we stop and reflect? Do we take time out by ourselves or with our husbands or wives and/or children? How often do we tell them how much we appreciate them? I remember the scene in “The Castle” where the father in the picture is always telling everyone how much he appreciates what they do for him and how special they are. When was the last time we told others how much we appreciate them? This is a time of preparation, a time to reflect on the past and the future. Do we want to be welcoming? We want to accentuate the positive? Do we want to do good? This is the time and it is now!

Mock Trial State Champions 2016

Congratulations to Mr Bullock and the team (Sean Mabin, Christian Iriarte, Rohan Indap, Derek Komban, Curtis Byrum, Bailey Devine-Scott and Mitchell Carter) on their recent success in the Mock Trial. To be crowned the Champion school in NSW is a great accolade to Mr Bullock and the team. The competition commenced the year with one hundred and sixty-five schools. The best St Greg’s has ever done is to be in the round of sixty-four. This is an amazing effort by all concerned. As Christian Iriarte mentioned to me, they are making history today!

Art Attack

Congratulations to all the students who presented work for Art Attack Exhibition last night. The standard of work was very high once again with a mixture of painting, clay work, drawing and photography. It was very clear to see that we have some very talented young men involved in the world of Visual Arts. Thanks to Miss Ferenc and Miss Keir for their work in ensuring that the exhibition went ahead.

Thank You Dinner

Thank you to all the parents who attended the dinner on Wednesday evening. There were over one hundred and fifty people in the room which is a wonderful testament to the parents of the College and the way in which they are prepared to get involved in the life of the College, for without their support, a lot of things would not occur.

Last week of Term

The Academic Awards Evening will be held next week on Thursday evening with the Year 7 and 8 Awards being distributed at 6.00pm followed by the Year 9 and 10 Awards at 7.30pm. Invitations will be sent to the recipients’ families today or Monday. The Christmas Mass will take place next Friday commencing at 9.00am in the College Hall. The Farewell Assembly will take place at approximately 1.30pm. The students will be dismissed at the usual time of 3.00pm.

Quae Seminaveris Metes.

Damien Millar
Headmaster
This week here at school we are busy finishing the work of the school year. While there is a sense of completion of tasks done, there is also a sense of expectancy, not only about the holidays but also for the new year and the opportunities it may offer.

At the same time, the Church is beginning its New Year with the feast of Christ the King last Sunday and the season of Advent. This liturgical season directs our hearts and minds to the birth of Christ and the hope that we have as Christians that one day he will come again. Meanwhile we wait here on earth and rely on the Holy Spirit working through people to do Christ’s work. During Mass last Friday, Declan Foran, one of our Year 7 students reflected on what Advent means using the words of John the Baptist and a very appropriate analogy. Declan proclaimed:

“John says, ‘Get a road ready for the Lord. Make a straight path for him!’ John talks about levelling mountains, filling valleys and straightening roads, his choice of words indicate that great change is about to occur and that the people should prepare and be ready for the change. The change John was referring to is the birth of Jesus. The communities would have to plan ahead for such an enormous event. What do we do to prepare for an event? Usually we have to tell friends, spread the word and clear our social calendars for that date. For an event like the birth of Jesus, imagine how much was involved in that! Compare it to Gregory Hills Drive - this road is an example of connecting the community like John told the people - to make a road to connect the people to Jesus. We need to think about our preparedness for Christmas and what we need to do in the coming few days to get ready for the birth of Christ.”

Thanks Declan! Every morning as I drive up the road where great changes are happening, I reflect on my preparedness during this season of Advent. What an excellent reminder of an important message.

Cathie Clarke, Director of Mission

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**Mission**

Therefore, stay awake!

For you do not know on which day your Lord will come.

Matthew 24:42

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**Teaching and Learning**

**STUDY SKILLS FOR DECEMBER**

**SCHOOLWORK IN THE HOLIDAYS?**

The holidays are designed to be a period of rest and recuperation for students. This means that students need a chance to unwind and relax and do things they enjoy!

However it doesn’t necessarily mean that no schoolwork is done during this time. Go through this checklist to see if your son needs to do any work in the holiday break:

1. **EXAMS:** If exams will be held in the next term then students should use some time in the holidays to get their study notes up to date. If the exams are early in the term, then students will need to also study during the holidays.
2. **SENIOR EXAMS:** For senior students who have major exams after the holidays, the holidays will be a period of intense study and not a time of relaxation.
3. **AREAS OF WEAKNESS:** The holidays can also be a time for pinpointing areas of weakness. For example, students may spend some time reviewing Mathematics topics they found difficult or reviewing the grammar in a language they are learning.

Apart from these, we do want students to have a chance to refresh their mind and body, catch up on their sleep and take the time to focus on healthy lifestyle and quality time with family and friends.

You can learn more about how to be a more effective student at:

www.studyskillshandbook.com.au

by logging in with these details:

Username: forstgregsonly
Password: 60results

**TEXTBOOK RETURNS**

Years 7 to 10 students who have textbooks and novels must return them before the end of Term. Any books not returned will be charged to the family’s fees account.

Catherine Keegan, Director of Teaching and Learning
Congratulations to the following students who made up the Grand Final winning Mock Trial team:

Student Profiles

Year 7 News

As the end of 2016 approaches Year 7 have continued to prove their maturity and commitment to the College, from achieving some outstanding results on the sports field to a group of eight who led several small discussion sessions in a “Transition to High School” forum at St Thomas More Primary School. This small but capable group of young men represented the College showing their prowess in manners, uniform and communication skills.

I would also like to add that the majority of the Year group have made a serious attempt in their final exams which I am sure will be reflected in the upcoming reports to be distributed on the last day.

Congratulations to all the boys on their efforts.

Stephen Harnett
Year 7 Coordinator

History Tour 2018

History Tour Europe 2018: Years 9-12

Applications for the 2018 International Tour to the UK and France are now open. Families who expressed interest have been emailed the application form and details; if you have not received your forms, please let Mrs Murdoch know. The tour is open for boys in Years 9-12 in 2018; and the tour cost will include all flights, accommodation, tours, workshops and meals. It is expected the tour will cost in the vicinity of $6500 to $7500. The itinerary is expected to be finalised by December.

If you would like more details and/or an application form please email Mrs Murdoch, KLA Coordinator: History (megan.murdoch@stgregs.nsw.edu.au).

Megan Murdoch
HSIE Coordinator (History)
SPORTS EVENTS

MCS BASKETBALL AND CRICKET

Every Thursday with Semi Finals on 16 February and Grand Finals on 23 February

6-13 December

• Australasian Marist Cricket Carnival, Cairns

OTHER NEWS

A recent Saturday didgeridoo-making workshop run by Mr Joe Jeffery from Cobar and Ms Harmour was well attended. The boys participated in the several stages of taking a cut tree and turning it into a musical instrument. The didges are currently drying out and will be painted in Art workshops with Mrs Danielle Mate in Term 1 2017.

Photos of the workshop can be viewed in the Galleries section of the College website.

Julie Harmour, Aboriginal Liaison Officer