Dear Members of the St Gregory’s Family,

This week has been a busy week on the Church’s calendar with the Feast of the Annunciation being held last Tuesday and Ash Wednesday taking place on Wednesday. The season of Lent commenced last Wednesday with all our students taking part in an Ash Wednesday ceremony.

We can all relate to the person who talks about the good old times as though there is no moving forward because it will never be that good again. We had have all heard the person who continually talks about the future and how good it is going to be. There is no going back no matter how good it was but we all realistically have to live in the present and prepare for the future to the best of our ability. It is easy to get distracted when we are doing something if we are not fully focused. In the case of praying, if we are not fully focused we can easily be distracted. What can we do about this? We can always go to a quiet place, such as the Chapel, where we will have no distractions. Friday morning is a good time as we can come together and pray for our intentions and those of others. Christ asks us to pray during Lent as a way of preparing ourselves and Friday morning Mass is an easy way to do this.

Christ went out into the desert to pray and fast for forty days and forty nights in order to prepare himself for what lay ahead. We all have our deserts/challenges in life whether it be with members of our family who are ill, out of work or just unhappy with life. How do we deal with these deserts/challenges? Prayer and reflection is one way as it gives us time and strength in order to come to terms with the situation. If you can make the time to spend in God’s presence during Lent, you may not find the answers to the problems, but it may help to find peace and or relief from the constancy of our deserts/challenges.

Enrolments 2015

Thank you to the many parents, students and staff who helped with our Open Day and Information Evening. We had so many parents and students who were willing to talk about their experiences as a member of the College Community. The feedback that we have received via surveys that were sent out was very positive and only reinforced to me that St Gregory’s is a wonderful community to belong to. The boys were wonderful in the way that they wanted to share their experiences of the College and were proud to do so. Many thanks to everyone who has been involved.

Cocktail Evenings

Many thanks to all the parents who attended the evenings and especially those parents who travelled great distances to be with us. Hopefully the evenings were informative and enjoyable and parents took the opportunity to meet other parents. The “Half Way There” Cocktail Party for Year 10 parents takes place tonight.

Quae Seminaveris Metes.

Damien Millar
Headmaster
Mission

This week marks the beginning of the season of Lent on Ash Wednesday. In the Church year it is a time of spring cleaning in our spiritual lives. We are encouraged to make it a time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Students will hear a lot about this at school and I encourage you to discuss this in your families as well. All students will be encouraged to work with their homerooms on one class activity which can raise funds for The Marist Solidarity projects around the world.

Sacramental Programme

Each year the College offers classes to prepare students who wish to receive any of the sacraments. If your son is interested in preparing for Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist or Confirmation, please forward his name and we will be in contact with you. Full details of the College Sacramental Programme are also available on the website.

Cathie Clarke, Director of Mission/RE Coordinator

Season of Lent

During Lent abstinence of meat and fasting is to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

The Canteen did not serve meat on Ash Wednesday and there will be fish alternatives served on Fridays during Lent.

The church’s Canon Law affirms our obligation to do penance. The special times of penance are all the Fridays of the year and during the Season of Lent.

The common practice of penance is fulfilled by performing any one of the following:

1. Prayer – attending a weekday Mass; family prayer, eg decade of the rosary; visit to the church; reading the bible.
2. Self-Denial, e.g. not eating meat; not eating sweets or dessert; giving up entertainment to spend time with family; limiting food and drink so as to give to the poor of one’s own country.

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Teaching and Learning

The academic programme is well under way with assessments already conducted in many classes.

All boys from Years 7 through to 12 should have an assessment calendar outlining the dates of their tasks. For Years 7-10, this is for Semester 1 but for boys in Years 11 and 12, the calendar covers the whole course.

Year 12 have Semester 1 exams beginning in Week 10. Please refer to the Study Skills site and the tips from Prue Slater to help with your preparation.

Follow the link for the Study Skills tip for March.

Catherine Keegan, Director of Teaching and Learning

Year 8 News

On Sunday 16 February Year 8 boys and important males in their lives came dressed in their house colours ready for a competitive day of sport and activities. The weather was not on our side however with a contingency plan in place it still turned out to be a great day for some quality male bonding time.

For the full story and photos see, Year 8 news

Loren Keir, Year 8 Coordinator
Student Profiles

Congratulations to Alessandro Comin (Year 7), Alex Mangion (Year 8) and Cameron Menzies (Year 12) on their success in Public Speaking.

Other News

Year 10 History Excursion

On 25 February Year 10 History attended an excursion to Cabramatta to experience the Vietnamese culture and society. See Richard Bahamondez’s account of the excursion with photos on Year 10 History.

Kangaroo Valley and Canberra Royal Shows

2014 has seen the start of yet another successful year in the show ring. So far we have been to two shows being Kangaroo Valley Show and Canberra Royal show. Kangaroo Valley Show delivered some fantastic results with our show team bringing home an array of ribbons. Canberra Royal Show also saw more success in the show ring with every animal taken to the show being a placegetter in their respective competitions and students achieving great results in the Paraders competition.

In the upcoming weeks we will be competing at Moss Vale Show, Camden Show and the Sydney Royal Show with many more, such as the Dubbo National Heifer Show and Upper Hunter Beef Bonanza, later in the year.

For the full report on these Shows, with photos, go to Kangaroo Valley and Canberra Shows.

Wednesday marked the beginning of Lent which is an extremely important time for our Catholic faith as we remember the sacrifices that Jesus made for us and the 40 days he spent in the desert.

Over the next six weeks, in the lead up to Easter, we are asked to put others first, think about our choices and, as a College community, raise money to help those less fortunate than ourselves and we can do this in a variety of ways, including collections in homeroom.

Thanks in advance for your support and I wish you all a happy and holy Lenten season.

Marist Solidarity ... because young people matter.

For the full story, follow the link to: Marist Solidarity

Deb Monte, Marist Solidarity Coordinator

Public Speaking and Debating

It has been a good start to the Public Speaking and Debating season which is now well underway.

Four students progressed from the first round of the CSDA Public Speaking competition to the zone final, with two of these students then progressing to the Grand Final to be held tonight.

Our first public speaking event for the year, the 23rd Annual Gordon Fetterplace Public Speaking Competition, saw a record number of participants.

On 12 March we will be hosting the Rostrum Voice of Youth Public Speaking competition. The debating season will begin in week 9 of this Term.

For further details see: Public Speaking

Maria Santos, Public Speaking and Debating Coordinator
MCS CRICKET

MCS Grand Finals were played with St Gregory’s teams successfully defending their Premierships in the Second Grade, Year 9-10 and Year 7-8 Divisions. The First Grade Grand Final was postponed to Thursday week 6.

NSW CCC DOWNIE TROPHY CRICKET COMPETITION

A really close, good game of cricket was played between St Leo’s College, Wahroonga and St Gregory’s in the Semi Final of the NSW Downie Trophy Open Cricket competition. St Gregory’s batted first and were all out in the last over for 170 runs. Top scorers were Lachlan Binskin 55 and Bailey Dickinson 42. The turning point in the game came when St Leo’s were 1-97 and our Vice Captain, Lachlan Inger, hit the stumps with a throw from the boundary for a run out and St Leo’s were eventually all out for 134. A 36 run win to St Gregory’s has the team proceeding to the Grand Final against Wollongong.

REPRESENTATIVE HONOURS

Mitchell Austin (Year 12) has been selected to the New South Wales CCC Open Baseball team.

Joseph Lantz, Sports Coordinator

School Fees / Direct Debit and Credit Card Processing Days

Dear Parents,

The dates the College will be processing fee Direct Debit or Credit Card payments this year are located on the College website under the following options: Enrolments>Fees>Fee Direct Debit and Credit Card Authority Form (the last page of this document contains the dates)

Please contact Deanna on (02) 4629 4112 if you have any questions re this.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

John Sammut
Finance Manager

Other News

‘Wellspring of Hope’- Taize Retreat for Youth with Trish Watts
Cost: $250.00
April 11-13 Weekend Retreat
Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, 247 St Andrews Road, Varroville (near Sydney)

Come and experience the joy, peace and simplicity of the prayer and music of the Taize Community. Young people from all around the world make pilgrimages to Burgundy France. Check this youtube on Taize: http://youtu.be/QN5mXIGFTmA or visit: The Taizé Community www.taize.fr