The locker doors at Bosco swing empty. Our families gathered for a spectacular Benedict performance and the Year 7s left with grace. The Foundations joined in a Christmas pageant and Bosco Campus after a splash at the pool suddenly became very quiet. We farewell teachers and wait in Advent hope as we make sense of the preciousness of our humanity.

The locker doors at Bosco are swinging idly at the moment. They have been emptied except for a few scrappy bits of paper and perhaps the odd lunch not quite eaten. These lockers, once filled with the bits and pieces of secondary school industry, seem forlorn. They have been the hub of daily organisation but the Bosco students have now finished. The lockers not needed are empty, dustily waiting for next year. In these last days the Boarding House is almost empty. This has been ground zero for noise, community, activity and life. It is quietly resting. Benedict students are still buzzing. They have had a full year of Benedict life and seem indefatigable. There is still the play, the running, the cartwheels, the endless stories, the endless need to create or define. Their energy and optimism continues with the constant chatter. But I know that they need a break even as they have settled into the class activity of making a Christmas ornament or card, something precious because it comes from those beautiful hearts. And there are piles of paper on teachers’ desks. This is the remnant of their busy lives, paper stacked, paper once so important now ready to be filed after the more immediate demands of the children’s chatter around classroom doors. Teachers draw in deep breaths to make sure they keep patience, and keep generous, and work so hard to make the last days significant. The quality of relationship with students is at the core of what they do. The teachers would not want that sabotaged by tiredness or indifference. These teachers care so deeply. The last memory, of the last days with their children, is vitally important. And so the school machine, so powerful, is grinding to a quiet halt. The Reports are written and signed. The lists for next year are done. People are checking that things are locked away and the maintenance list is complete. The builders of four different sites at the school are looking at the calendar and pressing forward to complete jobs ending in January. This wonderful place is creaking to rest.

The Year 7 Graduation
The Benedict community gathered to honour the contribution of the Year 7s and the professional life of Mrs McKeough at the Year 7 Completion Assembly. It was a remarkable occasion where students prayed, spoke with dignity, sang and graduated. The Year 7s were beautifully affirmed through procession, song and a release of balloons. We were able to say “farewell” and “you have made an impact” to the Year 7s. We were able to express to Mrs McKeough what she meant to us. We tried to humbly say “thanks” to Mrs McKeough. We saw images on the screen and we remembered generosity. We were filled with a great sense of many achievements in the Benedict Campus for 2014 and celebrated so many children who have tried so hard. There were teachers, just a little bleary eyed I might add, and we applauded with a sense of gratitude their work and what they have done all year. We acknowledged that parents were important partners and we applauded the Year 7 students as they sat at the back of the hall with a pride in their accomplishments. It was an assembly
worth celebrating. Good things have happened around Benedict. It was clear because of the people assembled.

The Benedict Concert
The Benedict Concert continued to be quite a performance. There were packed houses, students trying their best and a quality of excellence on show. “Oh what a night” it was. They were superb and if our school has been about trying hard and joining in and connecting with people then that’s what our students did at the Concert and that’s what they’ve done all year. It’s been a wonderful Benedict year.

Bosco Activities and Pool Party
The last days of the Bosco community have been enjoyed with just Year 8s and Year 9s. They have been involved in community events and a bit of a clean-up. They were splashing in a Pool Party, enjoying some 8 Square Championships, eating sausage sizzles, playing games and involved in activity. They had little celebrations, prayers and parties, and all seemed to genuinely feel a sense of gratitude for their experience. It has been a superb year at Bosco and made more special by chance to have some fun with the students.

The Christmas Pageant
The Foundation students, under the care of their teachers, created a Nativity scene on board Gadoleta’s Steelworks tray top truck. There was Joseph and Mary, loads of angels and plenty of shepherds and wise men to sit on bales of hay and wave their way through the Christmas Pageant. It is in contrast to the tough world of industry that is usually the truck’s life. This is a wonderful community activity and connects with an important story and an important community.

The Blessing of the Cribs
On Sunday a number of our children presented Nativity Cribs as part of the Blessing of the Cribs liturgy. The cribs had been carefully made by the children and they were blessed at the invitation of the parish. The children processed in. There were well crafted cribs and reflected the story of Christmas and the important characters. It was a way of honouring of the advent preparation and anticipating the sacred dimension of the holiday season.

Farewell to Teachers
The College staff will gather to say farewell to members of staff. We will talk of the enormous impact of Helen McKenna and the integrity and resolve of Brett Czechowski. We will thank with the deepest gratitude the work of these two outstanding Deputy Principals. We will speak about the importance of 11 years service from Renee Canton and speak with appreciation about the contribution of Sarah Watkins, Neale Filton, Collette Salerno and Emma Patton. It will be a time of deep gratitude for their involvement and influence. It has been a rich, diverse and powerful staff team this year. We are blessed to have had these teachers with us even as their time is finished.

Happy Christmas
It is time to think of Christmas and what it means to us. Our own humanity is enhanced by this reflection. We are richer through our connection to this time; to the rituals and family activities. And we understand this more deeply when we connect with a story about a baby born in Bethlehem. It is a story of profound dignity and sacredness. With this story we have a new sense of how sacred we really are. We can understand human preciousness. We can access a spirituality. We are drawn together in a connection by this story. That’s what the birth of that baby has created for us and our community. We rest now, reflect a little and come together again for a wonderful new year. Merry Christmas. God bless.

Greg Hay, Principal
The Nativity Scene

In our Religion lessons the Year 5 students have been making Nativity scenes. On the second Sunday of Advent we went to the Blessing of the Cribs Mass. We processed in with the cribs and placed them in front of the altar. Later on during the Mass we went back to pick up our cribs so that Father Francis could bless them. The first Christmas Nativity scene was created by a man named St Francis of Assisi because he was concerned that people were forgetting the true meaning of Christmas. We plan on putting our Nativity scenes at the foot of our Christmas trees to remind us that Christmas is about Christ being born. It is important to make or have a Christmas Nativity scene because it represents Jesus being in our hearts and in our homes. **Eve Clark - Year 5 student**

I found out that when the nativity scene was first created it had real people and real animals. **Ebony Tizio - Year 5 student**

Christmas is important because it is when Jesus was born and God sent Jesus to teach people important messages. **Alphie Taylor - Year 5 student**

St Mark’s College
Office Hours 2015

- **Monday 19 January**
  8.30am – 11.00am then 2.00pm - 4.30pm

- **Tuesday 20 January** - Closed

- **Wednesday 21 January** - 2.00pm – 4.30pm

- **Thursday 22 and Friday 23 January**
  8.30am – 4.30pm

- **Monday 26 January**
  Australia Day Holiday - Closed

**Tuesday 27 January 2015 School resumes for all Staff and Students.**
SMC Staff and students enjoyed spreading Christmas cheer when they participated in the Port Pirie Christmas Pageant on the weekend. Natasha, Samantha and Miss Sandy Lee clowning around during the Christmas Pageant.

Mary and Joseph - Oscar and Ruby
Angels - Mya, Evelyn, Whitney and Kallie
Angels - Laura, Sophie and Mya
Kings - Declan, Rafael and Aspen

Year 8 and 9 students ended the school year by having some fun in the sun and water at the Bosco Pool Party.