The Parents and Friends Movie Night

They came like a flannelette army. There were hundreds of them. They shuffled, this bedtime militia, in slippers and scuffs, slip-ons and moccasins. Like troops filing into quarters they entered Benedict Hall, dressed in pyjamas and they slumped comfortably ready for the night. These many Benedict students were draped in onesies and thick colourful cottons. They wrapped themselves in dressing gowns and robes, luxury sleeping bags and doonas. There were pillows and teddy bears, security blankets and soft, comfortable bean bags. Some brought blow up mattresses and they buried themselves in blankets and feather down comforts. So many attended. They clutched a gold coin donation, and a bag of lollies, and they fussed about getting ready for the ‘End of Term Parents and Friends Movie Night’ I suspected that not many particularly cared about the intimacy and tranquillity of a cinema experience. They didn’t much care about the effort that the director had made to craft an interesting film. They were just happy to be together. They were there with mates. They were there making a pyjama fashion statement and the usual calmness of bedtime attire was replaced by a buzz of excitement. This was a slumber party on steroids. Even at the start, when the film technology let us down for five minutes, and devoted father Jason Caspers was under enormous pressure to get it fixed, they little cared. They seemed to find something to organise, blankets to adjust or food to share; something to chat about. And finally it started. Finally the lights went down. Finally it was time to watch and enjoy a movie. Well, they enjoyed themselves and perhaps it wasn’t because of the movie.

I thank the P+F on the wonderful enterprise. It all went well. It raised money. An extraordinary amount. The children had fun. The place got cleaned up. The special unity of our St Mark’s community was expressed in colour, comfort and endless trips to the toilet. They kept stumbling in the darkened ‘body draped room’ to the toilet or the canteen or they slid in a sleeping bag to see friends on the other side of the hall. There was constant movement and Benedict delight. “God bless them” I said a few times, “God bless ‘em… Oh, that could be a bit much sugar for that little one…. Is it nearly over?”

Teacher Formation Day

On the first day back for Term 2 the teachers gathered in a series of workshops. Teachers had determined from a list of activities a learning opportunity that they wanted to take. The people conducting the workshops were the teachers. Someone had an expertise on Yoga and another on Pilates. There were teachers involved in sessions on Space, Pedagogy and Play and the impact of the Tablets on Year 7 and 8 students. Some gave a session on Apps in the Classroom, Inquiry Based Learning, web based education programs, Excel or Music and Liturgy. We got to choose three sessions and we experienced our teachers at their best. There was even a session just before morning tea on cooking scones. The flyer inviting consideration said:

Learn the secret to light and fluffy scones so that our morning tea will be just perfect. Give a St Mark’s teacher a scone and they feed themselves for a day. Teach a St Mark’s ‘man’ to cook a scone and they could poison the whole staff!

Thankfully Mardi Nolan guided her students to perfect scones and a delicious morning tea. It was a wonderful time of building the collegiality of the teaching community. It was great to be together and experiencing learning. We gained a deeper understanding of classroom life. We shared some of our wisdom and insight. We
modelled teaching. There was even a session on welding. I mixed that acetylene and oxygen and it worked. How does Peter Munday, our Tech Teacher keep calm with a class full of Year 9 enthusiasm? I certainly continued to grow in respect for the commitment and skill of our teaching community. We all grew as learners.

Anzac Day
I shared the dawn on April 25 with 10 of our students and a huge number of Port Pirie residents, and really, the whole of Australia. It was a deeply touching time. It was cold and still and reminiscent. We shared a pride and stood stiller and more at attention with the dignity of the moment. The 100 year remembrance was beautifully realised by Haydn Madigan and the RSL and I thank them for their leadership. We heard the story, were silent in gratitude and connected deeply, reverently, with the defining moment of our Australian character. Our students were ambassadors and represented us beautifully. The Mass in the Cathedral that weekend was also a poignant commemoration and the Bishop, standing with us at the cold dawn also stood in the pulpit and spoke with compassion for families who grieved, gave an insight into history and expressed a reverence. Lest we forget.

Building Nook and Art Complex
The builders were in over the holidays. The Reading Nook, in the Foundation area, was carefully and precisely crafted and has been positioned into place. It is the shape and size of a caravan, and has now been dubbed ‘the caravan’ by the Foundation students. It is a space created to invite reading and engagement and the Foundations are jumping to the opportunity. Into a caravan no less! We haven’t quite told the architect what the students have christened his precious design. And just over the paddocks, the tractors and trucks came to begin the reconstruction of the Art and Technology Centre at Bosco. The whole of the art complex was razed to the ground in two days. I was amazed. There was nothing left. All the history that those walls contained was gone. Memories of all those lessons, all that concentration and learning demolished. The splattered paint, the chatter and designs, the desperate need for inspiration, the striving and creating was over for that building. But something grander will rise from the rubble. There is a very exciting project in the plans and I am looking forward to a new arts precinct that celebrates design, creativity and grows artistic ambition. This is a significant development.

Leaders Training
The House Leaders from the Bosco Campus took 40 students for a leadership training experience last Friday. The House Captains and the year level representatives gathered to talk about the dreams they have for the College. They gathered to talk about strategies and opportunities, obligations and responsibilities. It was a time full of idealism. These are our young people who want to build this community and make a difference. They were managed under the skilful care of the House Leaders and they had fun, found wisdom and made plans. This was a powerfully formative opportunity. I thank them for their leadership. May they grow and succeed. They are really fine young people. The College is in safe hands.

Greg Hay, Principal
New Student Management Computer System

The College has implemented the new Student Information System (ceSIS) from the start of this term leaving behind the ageing and failing DUX system. The new system provides significant administrative improvements and is the platform for any future Learning Management Systems. This system was implemented by the Catholic Education Office at no cost to the school.

As an automatic data transfer process was used to transfer the existing data to the new system, if you experience any errors with your correspondence eg incorrect mailing title or address please contact the Student Office at Benedict on 86338802 and Bosco on 86338801.

Dominic LoBasso, Business Manager

Around the College

Parents and Friends Thank You

Thank you to everyone involved in our Hot Cross Bun and Movie Night Fundraisers - what a success! Thank you to everyone for your support and generous donations towards these two great fundraisers. I'm sure you will all agree the Hot Cross Buns were delicious and the children finished the term with a great night out! Together we have raised over $2,700 towards school resources and a further $500 for the Camporeale children's future education.

Please keep an eye on our Facebook page for further fun events ahead!

SMC Parents and Friends Committee

Are you curious about the changes being made to the classroom environment?

Are you keen to learn more about the positive impacts these changes have on student learning?

Please join us for a

Parent Workshop
on Monday 1 June
at 6pm
in the
The Magdalen Centre
(The new Foundation to Year 1 Learning Space)

During this session we will discuss the changes to the physical classroom environment and how these assist in the development of 21st Century learning skills.

We will also delve into the pedagogy of play in student learning and the academic, social and emotional benefits associated.

The session is relevant to all parents and friends of Foundation to Year 7 students.

Jenna Howell,
Foundation to Year 3 Coordinator
Benedict Campus

SMC Parents and Friends Committee
From the Deputy Principal

Welcome back to Term 2!
The term has started smoothly, with classes settling into familiar routines quickly with great enthusiasm. We have some very exciting events ahead in the coming weeks and look forward to celebrating these as a community.

Welcome
We welcome Jasmine Clark, a student from Tabor University in Adelaide for the first three weeks of term. Jasmine is doing her Teaching Practicum in the Year 3 Blue classroom with Mrs Jordan, and is in her second year of her studies. We also welcome in a couple of weeks, Kendall Pretty who is completing her studies at Charles Darwin University. Kendall will do her Teaching Practicum in the Year 2 Blue classroom with Mrs Arnold and Mrs Richter. We hope that they enjoy their experience here at St Mark’s and learn many new skills.

NAPLAN
(National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy) testing for all Year 3, 5, and 7 students will be held at school on Tuesday 12 May, Wednesday 13 May and Thursday 14 May. Students are tested on reading, writing, language conventions and numeracy. If you wish to find out more information regarding this testing, please either come into the Front Office, see your child’s class teacher or check out the NAPLAN website.

Salesian Principals’ Visit
On Thursday this week, we hosted some very special visitors at Benedict Campus. Eight of the Salesian School Principals from our Australia-Pacific Province came to visit and meet together. These meetings occur every year in a different school – this year it was St Mark’s turn. In between meetings and morning tea with Benedict Staff, the Principals attended a College Assembly where we spoke about all the wonderful happenings here at St Mark’s. They then took a tour of Benedict Campus with our School Captains.

Catholic Education Week
Week 4 is our Port Pirie Diocese ‘Catholic Education Week’. This initiative began last year with the intent of ‘putting our Catholic Schools on the map’. During this week, we celebrate what it means to be Catholic and special events are organised within individual schools to highlight this. Here at St Mark’s we will be having a ‘Port Pirie Switches Off’ event on Thursday. Students will be asked to bring in blankets/coats (which they can use during the day if they get chilly), with the understanding that at the end of the day they will then donate these items to the local St Vincent de Paul Society. On the Friday is our exciting Blessing of the New Building and Whole College Mass.

Good Samaritan Sister’s 125th Anniversary
On Friday 22 May at 10am, we will be having the Blessing of the New Break-Out Space. It will be known as ‘The Magdalen Centre’, named after Sr Magdalen who was the first Provincial for the Good Samaritan Sisters here in Port Pirie. A special ceremony will be held, with the students from Foundation and Year 1 will be participating in this special occasion. Students in these classes are practising very hard at present to ensure that the visiting Sisters see how proud we are of their influence and involvement within our school, parish and community over the past 125 years.

On this day also, at 12 noon, we will continue the celebrations with a special Whole College Mass in the Good Samaritan Hall to further acknowledge the legacy of the Good Samaritan Sisters within our history as a school. Bishop Greg will preside and all present will pray, sing and bless this significant event together as a community. Families are welcome to attend.

Car Park Situation
Our car park is not only a very busy place but requires everyone to work together and do so in an orderly and organised manner. Staff on duty, particularly in the afternoons, are responsible for the safety of students whilst they wait for their parents to pick them up. The waiting area for these students is outside the Good Samaritan Hall and the expectation is that parents come and pick their children up inside the gates. Students are not to leave the school grounds without an adult. Please support and assist our staff in ensuring that this happens. It is also imperative that parents do not drive into the Staff car park area at these times as buses are picking up students and it is a tight squeeze. We appreciate you managing these times with the greatest of consideration and care. Thank you.

Kylie Smith,
Deputy Principal - Benedict Campus
The Reading Nook

The holidays saw the completion of our Shared Learning Space with the addition of a wonderful reading space. The children have been drawn into the ‘Reading Nook’ and are enjoying the chance to share books together in a comfortable and welcoming space.

Jenna Howell,
Foundation to Year 3 Coordinator

What do the students think?

It is comfortable and a good place to read books with my friends. Kallie M

I like to go in there because it is very comfy. I feel happy in there. I like looking at the pictures in the books. Allie T

I like it because it has got lots of books and long lights in there. The lights are good for reading. Aiden C

SAPSASA Soccer Carnival

On Friday 1 May, students from Years 6 and 7 participated in the SAPSASA Interschool Soccer Carnival in Port Pirie. The students were broken up into small teams of boys and girls for the 8-a-side competition. The weather was perfect with warm and sunny conditions setting the scene for a great day of soccer. The day consisted of a round robin style competition, with St Mark’s students enjoying the opportunity to challenge themselves against children from other local primary schools. With all Year 6 and 7 students participating in the day, we had a great range of experience and abilities. It was pleasing to see St Mark’s students showing terrific team work and spirit as they revelled in the excitement of the day.

I would like to thank the parents who gave up their time to help out on the day. Their assistance and enthusiasm went a long way towards the success of the event.

Henry Whiting,
Benedict Sports Coordinator

Special Education News

From 2015 all government and non-government schools in Australia will be required to participate annually in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability. The data collection will provide all Australian schools, education authorities and the community with nationally consistent information about the number of school students with disability and the level of adjustment being made in schools to enable the students to access and participate in learning on the same basis as their peers.

No personal information that identifies students or schools is provided to the Department of Education and Training. Consistent with the information for parents/carers (see link below), please contact the Principal if you don’t want to have your child’s information included in the national data collection.

More information is also available on the Department of Education and Training website:


Louise Richards,
Special Education Teacher - Benedict Campus
From the Deputy Principal

Student Leadership

It has been an exciting start of the term with student leadership.

Last Friday I was fortunate to join our House Representatives on their Formation Training Day held at the Benedict Campus. The day was led with excellence by our experienced team of House Leaders. Their enthusiasm, dedication and vibrant presence were instrumental in the success and spirit of the day.

Students participated in a number of sessions that explored different ideas and concepts of leadership, led by staff and senior student leaders. There were insights shared, ideas discussed and actions to be taken. It was exciting to see students, united by house reflecting and celebrating together, as they explored their own personal leadership style and what it means to work in partnership with their house and the wider school community.

Students learned rhythm from our Principal as they mastered the art of the heel and toe polka and the 8 step tumble. Amidst the swirls, twirls and giggles there was peer connection and commitment to trying something new. It was a time of great fun and challenge, everything leadership should be.

I left the Formation Day thinking just how fortunate I am to be surrounded by such wonderful potential. Our student leaders are a dynamic group of individuals with a passion for house and a drive to make a difference in the wider school community.

PT Interviews

On Wednesday evening the BGC was a hive of energy as parents, teachers and students gathered to discuss progress and learning. It was a great night full of affirmation and challenge.

The evening was well-attended highlighting the deep commitment from both parents and teachers. At St Mark’s we believe that communication and a shared partnership are instrumental in ensuring a successful learning journey is experienced and I would like to take this opportunity to thank families for their attendance and commitment to their child’s learning.

Catholic Education Week

In Week 4 we will celebrate Catholic Education Week. This year the College will be fundraising for both St Vincent De Paul and the Caritas Australia’s Nepal Earthquake Appeal. On Thursday 21 May, students will be encouraged to wear colours of the rainbow and bring in a blanket that will be donated to those in need through our local St Vincent De Paul Society. Blankets can be new or old and brought in at any stage during Week 4. If students are unable to bring in a blanket then a gold coin donation will be collected, with all funds being raised going to the Caritas Nepal Earthquake Appeal. More information about the day and our fundraising efforts will be distributed to students next week during Caregroup.

Finally, I wish to extend a warm welcome back to all students and families. As the new term begins I cannot help but feel excited about the rich offerings that St Mark’s has and look forward to working closely with you to ensure that your child continues to strive for excellence in learning.

Kate Kilpatrick
Deputy Principal - Bosco Campus
Our Student Leaders attended a Formation Training Day where they explored different ideas and concepts of leadership whilst having a lot of fun.

Rural Health Visit

On Tuesday 28 April, the Adelaide University Rural Health Alliance came to visit St Mark’s Bosco Campus. Seven Adelaide Uni students, who are studying health related courses, spoke to 26 of our senior students about doing health courses at Adelaide University. The presentation went for about one hour and included general information such as; what courses are on offer and the associated ATAR required for each. The visitors also gave information on moving to Adelaide, living in Adelaide and coping with a university course. During the presentation, students broke off into practical groups and learnt how to take blood pressures, test reflexes and brush up on their anatomy knowledge. Overall, the visit was extremely informative and enjoyable and our students benefitted greatly. If any further information is required, please contact me.

Simone Atkinson,
Student Pathways Coordinator

Student Leaders Formation Training Day

Rural Health Alliance visited the College and gave Bosco students a taste of the health related courses they have to offer.

Year 12 Drama Production

A fast paced cocktail of Shakespeare’s most famous plays (and some of the ones you don’t know too!) It’s an in-one-door-out-the-other lump of satirical hilarity.

Join the year 12 Drama Class on the flight of your life.

13, 14 and 15 May
Bishop Gallagher Centre
7.30pm
(Doors open at 7.10pm)
$5 entry at door
Our Soccer season is off to a good start with an exceptional amount of enthusiastic players hitting the soccer fields.

SMC Soccer

The 2015 soccer season started off well with many enthusiastic and excited students playing for the first time.

Our Foundation students are also participating in a great development program run by the association. The program is aimed at developing skills and confidence and preparing the students for playing soccer games. All children participated with enthusiasm. Parents are most welcome to assist with these sessions.

We have had an overwhelming response with many students registering to play soccer for the College this season. In particular in the Under 8s, where numbers are looking extremely healthy.

We have registered 12 teams, a total of about 130 players which is exceptional.

A huge thank you to all the parents and supporters who went out to cheer on our students on Saturday. Thankyou to all coaches who have volunteered their time this season: Andrew and Julieanne Fowler, Sacha Smith, John Smith, Adam Saler, John Saler, Joe Amato, Vinny DeGioia, Matty Hunter, Bassy Caputo, Darren Giancaspro, Phil Amato, Joseph Sciancalepore, Nick Gaudio, Sam Gadaleta and James Hellmanns.

Thanks also to Ken Fay, Anthony Spadavecchia, Steve Garden and any other parents involved in coaching and assisting the High School teams. The College appreciates your efforts.

There are still a few outstanding registration fees. These need to be paid by Wednesday 13 May (Week 3) otherwise these students will be ineligible to play.

Players are reminded that it is your responsibility to contact the coach if you are unavailable for training or games.

Good Luck to everyone for a successful season!

Pia Keain, SMC Soccer Coordinator

SMC Hockey

The first weekend of Junior Hockey ran smoothly, and it was great to see so many keen St Mark’s players running around.

Thanks to all who have volunteered to coach or help out in any way this season – please remember to support and assist the coaches throughout the season. If your child is unable to play, it is important to let the coaches know with plenty of notice.

Coaches for 2015

Under 18 Boys – Thomas Dickeson and Jesslyn Oxford
Under 18 Girls – Danica Manfield
Under 15 Boys – Caleb Connor
Under 15 Girls – Jo-anne Ferme
Under 12 Boys – Kireea Cugley
Under 12 Girls – Cassidy Manfield and Keely Clonan
Under 9 Blue – Grant Hanlon
Under 9 Red – Rob Jeffries

Hoodies

St Mark’s will be ordering hoodies this season, the order forms are currently in the Bosco and Benedict Offices. A rang of sample sizes should be here by the beginning of next week, so students are welcome to try them on. The designs of the hoodies will be slightly different from previous years, with the inclusion of the new St Mark’s logo and a second colour to the new design on the back.

The order forms are due back to the respective offices no later than Friday 15 May – this gives parents an extra week to try on samples and confirm sizes. The hoodies should be here within 2 weeks of the order date, depending on the supplier.

Under 12 Girls

This season our numbers are low for the Under 12 Girls team. The Under 12s play 9-a-side on a ¾ length field on either Friday nights or Saturday mornings. If your child is 12 or under and may be interested in playing or filling in for St Mark’s, or you would like more information, please contact Jesslyn Oxford at Bosco Campus or via joxford@stmarkspirie.catholic.edu.au.

Jesslyn Oxford, SMC Hockey Committee
Salesian School Principals’ Visit

Eight of the Salesian School Principals from our Australia-Pacific Province visited the College this week. Whilst here they met with staff, attended a College Assembly and took a tour of both Benedict and Bosco Campuses.

McNally Farm News

Our Year 11 Agriculture students have been busy completing a Horticulture unit, and learning how to propagate native plants. We have experimented with cloning Saltbush and Melaleuca cuttings, and growing Eucalypts, Salt Bush, and Grass Trees (Yakkas) from seeds, and are about to try our luck with wild peach stones. The Year 10’s have been very busy with the “Operate Machinery and Equipment competency” for their Vet course, by learning how to use our Rotary Hoe and Cox Zero turn ride on mower. Once this unit is completed, we will turn our attention to working with Cattle.

Our Boer Goats have arrived, and our Year 9’s look forward to training them to lead, in preparation for the Adelaide Show. They have also been growing and caring for a range of winter vegetables in their gardens. We also welcome our Year 8 Science students and their teachers who have just begun their term unit of Agriculture at the Farm.

Paul Matthews, Agriculture Teacher

Soon Year 10 students will start working with the cattle and Year 9 students will start training our newly arrived Boer goats in preparation for the Adelaide Show.

Year 10 students have been busy learning how to use our rotary hoe and ride on mower as part of their ‘Operating Machinery and Equipment Competency’ for their Vet Course.
From the Federation of Catholic School Parent Communities

South Australian Catholic school parents hold a diverse range of views on the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and the national testing carried out each year across Australia for children in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

The Federation has written a resource, designed to answer a number of questions commonly asked by parents about the purpose and scope of NAPLAN.

It can be found on our website at: http://www.parentfederation.catholic.edu.au/files/2052/Putting%20NAPLAN%20in%20Perspective%20-%20FINAL.pdf

If you have any feedback or topics you’d like to receive more information about please feel free to contact us.

The Federation of Catholic School Parent Communities

Mid North Starclub

Is your club a Starclub? The 2015 round of the Mid North Starclub small support subsidy is now open. Mid North Starclub provide funding to clubs for equipment, programs or activities that are consistent with the aims and value of the Starclub Development Program e.g volunteer training, membership drives, come and try activities and strategic plan developments. Applications close Friday 22 May.

For more information call 86 33-8725 or 0488 101 783 or email starclub@pirie.sa.gov.au

Piano and Singing Lessons at St Mark’s College

Private half hour lessons. For more information please contact Anne Hansen (Bachelor of Music) on 86 362231 or 0429 866 242.

Wolves Hockey

There are places available for players aged over 40 who would like to play for the Wolves. No experience necessary. Please ring the College if you would like more information.

Students of the World

Host families are required for French and Italian students 14 to 18 years old for 6 to 8 weeks. The students will be arriving on 20 June 2015 and departing 15 August or 10 September 2015. Students will attend school and stay with Australian families. This is a highly rewarding but voluntary hosting program.

For further information please go to www.studentsoftheworld.com.au or email studentsoftheworld.au@gmail.com.

Feel like walking?

11 May - National Volunteer Week Walk, Alexander Street, Port Pirie. Phone 86381100
16 May - Gallipoli Centenary Cemetery Walk, Port Pirie Cemetery, Port Pirie. Phone 86322253
17 May - RSPCA Million Paws Walk, Memorial Park, Port Pirie. See millionpawswalk.com.au

Benedict Assembly

Year 3 Blue students acted out a parable from the Gospel during the Assembly at Benedict Campus.