Dear Parents and Caregivers
On Saturday, Liz Burke and I attended the Combined School Board and Parents and Friends Conference in Brisbane where we were fortunate to have Richard Leonard as Keynote Speaker.

Richard Leonard is a Jesuit Priest who holds the offices of Director of Australian Catholic Film Office and Director, Catholic Church Television Australia. In this newsletter I would like to share with you 6 Elements of Liberation as identified by Richard Leonard and to write a little about each and its application in the Stella Maris community.

But first, what does liberation mean? In the broader sense, liberation means freedom from being subjected to unjust conditions whether economic, political, religious or social in nature. The news is filled with reports of peoples around the world who seek freedom to determine their future through mechanisms we often take for granted here in Australia—the right to choose and change their elected representatives, the right to universal education, the right to improve their lot in life through fair wages for meaningful work, the right to express an opinion without fear of reprisal.

We have these freedoms in Australia, so does this mean we are all liberated? This is doubtful given the many ways we choose to ‘imprison ourselves’ through debt, addictions, negativity, guilt, accumulation of possessions and so on.

So here are Richard Leonard’s 6 Elements of Liberation, that is, six characteristics that move us closer to being truly unburdened, truly free and how these might be applied in order to build a school community that frees people to lead purposeful, happy lives:

- **Call for obedience – Obedience comes from the Latin meaning ‘to listen.’** Within the school context, it is important that we listen to each other in order to make the most life-giving decisions for individuals and the community as a whole. It is particularly important that young people listen to their parents and teachers and thus learn obedience. Yes, they are entitled to their opinions but those opinions do not necessarily carry the same weight as that of the adults involved for the very obvious reason that they have not had the benefit of experience and its acquired wisdom. Plenty of practice at staying within the boundaries of family and school life is needed in order to build a strong foundation upon which to wisely use the freedoms that come with age.

In a number of enrollment interviews, parents have asked their pre-prep children which of the three schools they’ve visited they like best. I wonder which criteria a four year old rise.

- **Forgiveness – There is little that will keep a person more ‘bound up’ than lack of forgiveness.** To find it in one’s heart to forgive is to set one free from living in the past and dwelling on past hurts and wrongs. Some people unfortunately wear their ‘I’ve been wronged’ attitude like a badge of honour without realising that the one truly harmed by this, is oneself. At school, every day we help students move on from their disagreements and hurts and we greatly value the support of parents in this. To encourage peaceful resolutions and forgiveness is to educate in the ways of personal freedom and community peace.

- **Love – And finally, love for all members of the human family, not just immediate family and friends, sets one free.** Love of God, self, others and the environment develops respect and reverence which supports positive engagement in the world.

Have a great week everyone.

Glenda
Prayers Please
Your prayers are requested for Judith Mellifont’s sister, Carol, who has cancer and is suffering complications from a recent operation. Judith is presently in Tasmania with Carol and will return for the last week of school.

We Need Vegetable Garden HELPERS!
Its official - the Garden Construction Day is planned for **Tuesday the 6th of September**. That’s only two weeks away! Once again, we invite you to participate in this wonderful celebration of food, life and all things green! It always ends up being a fantastic day where parents, grandparents, teachers and students all come together, getting their hands dirty and working hard to build the school garden.

We hope this program will be a catalyst to bring people together to learn about healthy food and healthy sustainable living. **To do this Di and Leonie have asked if anyone would be interested in offering either their time and efforts on the day, or a donation of some basic items needed.** Below are some of the items they were hoping someone would have lying around at home. We really appreciate your contribution no matter what it is!

- Newspapers (lots please)
- pots all sizes
- shade cloth (any size)
- star pickets (any size)
- thin bamboo 1.5-2m long, little finger thickness
- bird netting
- manure - horse, cow, chicken,
- Besser bricks
- milk bottles

If you have any of these items to donate or would like to donate your time please contact Lynsey Martin at limartin@bne.catholic.edu.au or at 0420 804 762 or alternatively Liz Burke at elburke@bne.catholic.edu.au

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

The Virtue for the next fortnight is Responsibility. Ron Baron tells us that:

> My life is an influence on every life mine touches. Whether I realize it or not, I am responsible and accountable for that influence.

Responsibility is the willingness to be accountable for our choices and is at the core of our Behaviour Management model at school. It is important to discern what responsibility belongs to us and what belongs to others so that each of us can fulfil our purpose. We take on what is ours with commitment and reliability. Taking on another’s spiritual work deprives us both. When we make mistakes, we have the courage to change for the better; we make amends instead of excuses; and we have the ability to respond ably.

The Practice of Responsibility:
- I am accountable for what I do;
- Others can rely on me;
- I keep my agreements;
- I give excellence to all that I do;
- I focus on my own part, not someone else’s; and
- I make amends for my mistakes.

The following is a very telling story about Responsibility and how one young lass demonstrated it beautifully:

We stood in front of a black sign with white letters that read, “Please Wait to Be Seated,” and we waited.

I was hungry and impatient, and not in any mood to wait. Two couples who arrived ahead of my weary four-week-old was waited, too, even though at least half of the tables in the restaurant were empty. I took that as a sign that the restaurant's staff was slow and incompetent. That made me more impatient. When we were seated and our food arrived, I lost it. “You call this a fresh fruit salad?” I scolded Lindsay, the nineteen-year-old waitress who delivered a bowl of faded honeydew and overripe cantaloupe that the kitchen had, for some reason, thought I would eat. I expected Lindsay to tell me it wasn’t her fault because she didn’t make the salad. But she stunned me. “No,” she agreed, “it doesn’t look fresh at all. The kitchen is just about out of fresh fruit. I’m sorry.”

It’s not often that I’m speechless, but at that moment, I didn’t know what to say. I knew it wasn’t her fault, yet she apologized. As my mouth hung open, Lindsay directed my attention to the plump, red strawberries that garnished the sandwich platters my friends had ordered. “How about a big bowl of those?” she offered. I closed my mouth as it started to water.

She returned in a hurry, eager to salvage my supper. But steps away from our table, she stumbled over a kink in the carpet and released the bowl, sending strawberries flying all over my dinner companions and me. They landed in our hair, on our shoulders, on our laps, and even in our purses. Speechless. Again.

“And everybody get some?” Lindsay asked, and she started to giggle. It infected all four of us. We laughed. This teenage ray of sunshine helped us pick berries out of our hair and sped back to the kitchen to slice up some more. This time, I got to eat them instead of wear them. We left her a huge tip, this young woman who spilled food all over us. As we left, I pulled her aside. “You didn’t get upset because I didn’t like my salad or even when you tripped. You didn’t blame the kitchen or the carpet or us for arrive so late. You just handled it. How do you do that? Her response was mature beyond her nineteen years: “I’m responsible for making sure you come back,” Lindsay explained. “You’ll base your decisions on my actions.”

God bless, Judith.

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**Special Father’s Day Assembly**

All fathers and men are invited to the special Father’s Day Assembly this Thursday, 1 September, starting at 8:50am.

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**Father’s Day Stall**

A Father’s day Stall will be held outside the Uniform Shop from 8a.m until bell time from Monday, 29 Aug.— Friday, 2 Sept. Prices range from $2—$7

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to work as a Zoo Keeper? If you are aged between seven and twelve Australia Zoo is offering this School Holiday Program. Places are limited so call 07 5436 2025 to make a booking. Further details are available on our website http://www.australianzoo.com.au/education/zoo-keeper-for-a-day
**MUSIC NOTES**

**MUSIC: COUNT US IN on Thursday 1st September**

It’s Australia’s biggest school music initiative. With support from The Australian Government, the program has run since 2007 and is all about celebrating the value of music education to students' development, whoever they are, wherever they are. It involves more than half a million students, teachers - and often parents! - from schools all over Australia signing up to learn, rehearse then perform the same song, on the same day, at the same time. We will be performing our song on Assembly.

Wise words from a fellow music educator in NSW "In my ideal world, Music would be present in every classroom every day - sing, perform, experiment, listen, compose, appreciate and enjoy. From a practical stance, Music can be integrated with every other subject area, providing rich, holistic learning opportunities for students. Music is a valuable means of boosting self-esteem, improving memory, encouraging positive risk-takers and sheer enjoyment."

Music: Count Us In is for all schools: primary and high schools; government, Catholic and independent schools, nationwide.

www.musiccountusin.org.au

**CHOIRS IN THE COMMUNITY – Thurs October 6th. Notes to come out soon!**

**STELLABRATION – October 27th**

jalanksey@bne.catholic.edu.au - Classroom Music / Choral Program
twynyard@bne.catholic.edu.au - Instrumental Music (including singing, speech, drama)

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**SOCCER NEWS**

Stella Maris Soccer Club end of year presentation.

Saturday 10th September 9am at the outdoor stage.

Please bring back kit bags and shirts.

Many thanks Fiona 0415575318

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**Principal’s Awards**

1st September 2011

Do not stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there. I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the laughter on the mountain’s rim,
I am the sand at the water’s edge,
I am the sunlight on ripened grain,
I am the gentle Autumn rain,
When you awaken in the morning’s hush,
I am the swift uplifting rush of quiet birds in circled flight,
I am the star that shines at night,
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not there, I did not die.

anon

Christine Craig (Guidance Counsellor)  email:ccraig@bne.catholic.edu.au