Dear Parents and Caregivers

Let me begin by saying that it is not my intention to offend anyone who holds differing views to those I am about to share. I say this after last week’s P&F Meeting at which different opinions were expressed on a couple of topics about which I’d like to follow up. Robust debate, carried out respectfully with openness and preparedness to listen to others’ ideas, is healthy and shouldn’t be feared. It’s another thing, however, when people, rather than ideas, become the subject of attack.

In fact this propensity for personal attack is a very worrying development. I wasn’t watching, but I heard the reports of what happened on a recent morning program when a guest suggested that the response to Cadel Evans’ win was overdone. Why should such an innocuous comment warrant threats and personal vilification? Have we really become so intolerant and/or overly-sensitive?

It is perfectly understandable and acceptable that, within any group, there will be a range of views on any given subject and allowance for such diversity lies at the heart of our democracy. That said, I will move to the point of this newsletter.

Is anyone else concerned about the extent to which schools are being used as the vehicle for everything from correction of the problems of society, to fundraising for every conceivable charity and cause, to promotion of huge businesses through shopping rewards, to the belief that schools should provide every experience for young ones before they reach the age of 13?

Perhaps it is time to clarify the fundamental purpose and activity of school and to ask the question, ‘Are society’s expectations of schools reasonable and appropriate?’

Schools are fundamentally places of learning. As a Catholic school, this translates to learning across the dimensions of mind, body and spirit while offering learners and their families a lived example of how faith informs daily living and is inseparable from it. We aim to equip our students to lead fulfilling lives, both personally and as responsible, contributing and compassionate community members. Surely, doing this well is a complex enough task!

We do not accomplish this task, however, if we lead students to believe, either knowingly or unthinkingly, that the adults in their lives exist to satisfy their every whim, to do everything for them or to believe that their happiness depends on these conditions being met. It doesn’t help either if we reinforce the view that everything should be ‘fun’, or it is ‘boring’, or that ‘anything goes’ as long as it gets us what I want. As a Catholic school, decisions should not be arbitrary or ego-centric, but rather based on the teachings of Jesus and taking into account the achievement of our Vision and Mission.

So here are a few of the issues confronting us at the moment.

1. The never-ending shopper-docket promotions by Coles, Woolies, Sunshine Plaza and the like: Should the ‘rewards’ of teaching aides and sports equipment outweigh concern at promotion of some of the multi-nationals that are expanding their interests at the expense of small business operators?

A little time was given to discussion of this question at the last P&F Meeting. Some voiced the view that, ‘We can’t change the way the world is heading, so why not benefit from what’s on offer?’ Others made the point that families shop at these stores in any case, while others spoke of the effect that the large chain stores are having globally and locally. Given that more time needs to be given to the subject, it was decided that, in the meantime, we would register for the latest Coles scheme but we would not promote our participation. Those who normally shop at these stores may wish to contribute their dockets; however, the school will in no way urge participation through our advertising.

2. The purchase of the slushy machine by P&F for tuckshop: This, on the surface, may seem a very minor issue and not worthy of debate; however, that slushy machine for some, myself included, embodies many of the previously mentioned concerns. Regardless of advice to the contrary, there remain worries about artificial colouring and subsequent health concerns. Furthermore, slushies take a long time to eat and many young ones are still eating them at the end of lunch break. These young ones are getting no play at all. Some do not finish eating their prepared lunch before buying the slushy and teachers become ‘food police’ in the interest of the students.

You might ask, ‘Why a slushy machine?’ Well, slushies are fun for students. They like them. They want them. They buy them. Are any of these reasons satisfactory? I do not think so. There are more important considerations such as sound health practices, the necessity of play and fitness, the eating of a balanced diet and healthy, natural foods. Do schools have to provide these ‘treat’ foods in order to make students happy? I don’t think that’s our role.

3. The disgrace that is ‘lost property’: Are our students so indulged that they have become complacent about their belongings? One student had three sports jackets when they were all recovered. How many lunch boxes are bought when students fail to get them home each day? Parents, I urge you not to replace items. Without suffering the consequence of their lack of care, young ones will not learn. If it means going without lunch for a day, no-one will starve. If it means going to school without a jumper, no-one will die. We are trying to assist at our end by collecting abandoned lunch boxes after afternoon tea each day, with students missing play with their friends the following lunch break. And it’s working, with only one lunchbox not retrieved yesterday.

4. Students who simply stand up and walk away from their mess: Who do they think will clean up after them and why do they think anyone is going to do it? Last week, year level meetings were held to reiterate a few expectations of each and every student at Stella Maris: After eating, clean up every bit of mess made; Place rubbish in the appropriate bin; Put all uneaten food back into the lunchbox and zip/close it up; Place lunchbox on a seat off the cement; Raise hand to have duty teacher check area before going to play.

5. The many causes and interests that seek support: Many people have particular attachments to this cause or that interest and understandably want the school to jump on board. If we made a list of these, we would all be staggered by the range and volume. Schools simply cannot do everything. Choices do have to be consciously made.

It’s time to free schools and teachers to do the job for which we are commissioned – that’s teaching and learning - not entertainment, not manufacturing ‘fun’ activities, not promoting businesses that already monopolize market share, not indulging children’s wants.

Have a great week everyone.

Glenda
Dear Parents/Caregivers,

The catch-cry for the Virtue of this Fortnight is:

**Become a World-Changer!**

*In looking for opportunities to be of service, don’t wait to be asked; be thoughtful of others and make a difference in the world.*

In reflecting on this, we embrace the notion of Service – service in the family, the community and the wider global society. Using our gifts to be of service is the fullest expression of our lives. Each day, we find a multitude of ways to be useful. Whatever we may achieve, the quality of our own life comes from the quality of our contribution. First and foremost we serve our loved ones. We notice what others need, discover their wishes and respond helpfully, not waiting to be asked. A spirit of service invests whatever we do with excellence as we give our very best effort. People who want to be of service can change the world.

The practice of service involves:

- Wanting to make a difference in the world;
- Looking for opportunities to be of service to others;
- Thinking thoughtful things to do to help family and friends;
- Working with enthusiasm;
- Not waiting to be asked when something needs doing; and
- Caring for the earth: recycling, reducing and re-using.

“Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve... You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

(Rev. Martin Luther King)

In this spirit of Service, a school committee has been formed to support families who, for one reason or another, are finding things difficult. The proposal is to develop a Stella Maris Care Pantry to provide meals, either fresh or frozen, to make life a little easier for those who are affected by illness, accident, or any other need.

The Big Garden has started!

Today we began the expansion of the Permaculture Garden with Di Harris, working under Leonie Shannon’s “Edible School Garden Program”. Di will be coming in every Tuesday for the next year, to work with a range of classes at Stella Maris. To do this, however, she needs help! Di has asked for parents interested in being her helper for a rostered time on the Tuesdays that she is here. If you are interested, please contact Lynsey Martin – ljmartin@bne.catholic.edu.au / 0420 804 762 or Liz Burke at eburke@bne.catholic.edu.au. Your help is greatly appreciated! Also, please keep an eye out in the newsletter for garden updates as well. The major ‘Construction Day’ is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday 30th August, in Week 8. In preparation, we have already installed a water tank and garden shed in the existing garden area. If you have the time, have a look. By the end of the project that entire space will be covered with an Organic Permaculture garden to teach our children about health and nutrition, supply our tuckshop with fresh produce and to enable us to work with the local community and charities.

**Kids Teaching Kids Conference – Stella students inspiring others!**

Last Thursday and Friday on the 11th and 12th of August, a group of nine Grade 7 students participated in the Kids Teaching Kids - Youth Sustainability Conference held at The Events Centre, Caloundra. The children had the opportunity to give a 40 minute presentation to other students from all over Queensland. The Stella Maris presentation highlighted the ways to live more sustainably through many school derived initiatives like composting bins, worm farms, light switch reminders, paper recycling and Permaculture gardening. Pema Bastin, Lucinda Kelly, Liam Hulsman-Benson, Jaxon Steele, Katie Hopkins, Samantha Leahy, Angus Hudson, Cameron Blanchard, and Madison Brown should be extremely proud of themselves. They represented Stella Maris beautifully, and were received so well in their presentation that the organiser of the conference Mr. Wood, wished they could attend the International KTK Conference held in Adelaide. Their commitment and dedication to make a difference in the world has been inspiring to many, and they have done well to spread the message - Sustainable living requires Education, Passion and Action!

**Stella Maris Care Pantry**

In this spirit of Service, a school committee has been formed to support families who, for one reason or another, are finding things difficult. The proposal is to develop a Stella Maris Care Pantry to provide meals, either fresh or frozen, to make life a little easier for those who are affected by illness, accident, or finding life difficult. Part of planning for this service is to gauge community support for the proposal. It would be greatly appreciated if you would complete the enclosed flyer to give us some indication of the level of interest generated by this proposal before we approach families that may need this support.

Thank you in advance for your feedback. God bless.

Judith.

**Try out for the Maroochy RSL Clippers**

*Under 12 Representative Basketball Program!! If you were born in 2001,2002 or 2003 you are eligible*

**WHERE:** Clippers Stadium, Syd Lingard Drive, Buderim
**GIRLS:** Saturdays 13,20 & 27th August: 8:15am - 10:15am
**BOYS:** Saturdays 13,20 & 27th August 12:15pm - 1:30pm

For more information please visit www.maroochy.basketball.net.au
MUSIC NOTES

Congratulations to the following students on these outstanding results in the Speech and Drama Events at the Sunshine Coast Junior Eisteddfod:

- SPEECH CHOIR - 2nd place in Group Speaking
- ABBY O'BRIEN - 4/5L - 3rd Junior Speech Championship
- 13yrs & under - (in 9 & 10 yrs) - 1st Prepared Prose, 1st Unprepared Prose, 1st Humorous Verse, 3d Set Verse, Highly Commended Mime.
- SHANA ORLAUGHSSON - 7H - 3rd Drama Championship 13yrs & under - 1st Impromptu Speech, 2nd Character, 3rd Mime
- RACHEL HAMILTON - 5H - 2nd Mime, 3rd Set Verse, H/C Humorous Verse, 3rd Prepared Prose
- LACHLAN ENGLAND - 3Q - 1st Set Verse, (8 & under)
- SAMANTHA LEAHY - 7H - 2nd Mime (11 - 13 yrs)
- RILEY KRINKS - 7M - 3rd Mime (11 - 13 yrs), 3rd Humorous Verse
- ERIN MAHON - 5L - H/C Mime
- DANIEL ENGLAND - 4/5L - H/C Humorous Verse
- TYLAH ROSER - H/C Set Verse (8 & under)
- ELLIE O'DONNELL 6B, SHANA ORLAUGHSSON 7H, TIannah MALTMAN 6B - H/C Mime to Music

The Eisteddfod continues until Sunday 21 August with Solo and groups events. If your child received a 1st, 2nd, 3rd or Highly Commended prize, please email name, class, event and award to StellaMarisMusic@bne.catholic.edu.au

Piano Soiree - Congratulations to Ms Worthy and her students for a lovely evening of piano music last Thursday evening.

Catholic Schools' and Colleges' Music Festival - Good luck to the Concert Band who will perform at this huge music festival on Friday this week at Villanova College in Brisbane.

Assembly Thursday 8 September - Guitar and Percussion Ensemble Instrumental Soiree - Mr Wynyard’s students will present a soiree on Thursday 15 September in the hall from 6pm.

MUSIC COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA - The Music council of Australia receives significant Federal funding each year to promote the value of music education in our schools and communities. John Foreman heads this advocacy program with the skills and assistance of music leaders and high school students to write a song to perform across the nation. The song this year is called We've Got the Music and is to be performed on Thursday 1 September. Every student in our school will participate this year along with half a million performers around the country. Learn the song and come along and join in the fun www.musiccouncil.org.au

Music Tuition Enrolment - a reminder that four weeks of paid lessons are required as notice to discontinue or alter enrolment in the music program and notice needs to be provided in writing (letter or email) to Mr Wynyard. Failure to provide the correct notice will result in additional fees and this meets our obligations to staff. jalansey@bne.catholic.edu.au - Classroom Music / Choral Program
jalanksey@bne.catholic.edu.au - Instrumental Music (including singing, speech, drama)

SCHOOL FEES ARE NOW OVER DUE

Twenty-six Stella Maris students participated in the NSW University Science Competition in May. The following children received a Distinction or Credit for their Science skills/ knowledge:


DISTINCTION: Gretel Wessely and Lani Johannsen

Thirty nine Stella Maris students participated in the NSW University Spelling Competition in June. The following children received a Distinction or Credit for their spelling.

CREDIT: Victoria Mc Ardle, William Martin, Perry Reeves, Laura Magao, Gabrielle Brown, Kyra Bellamy, Alina Robins, Georgia Kapolos and Steele Doolan.

DISTINCTION: John Tuxworth

Congratulations to all those students who participated. These certificates will be presented at next week’s Assembly.

An Evening of Multicultural Celebration

Thursday 18 August 6pm - The Hall

Stella Maris’ first evening of Multicultural entertainment. CULTURAL LITERACY and LOTE invite you to join us in a wonderful cultural celebration featuring students in the following performance groups:

- RESPECT – Aboriginal Dance troupe
- ZAHARA – Belly Dance troupe
- CINTA TARI – Indonesian Dance troupe
- DRUMS DOWN UNDER – African drum troupe
- ANGKLUNG ORCHESTRA - Traditional bamboo Percussion Instruments of Indonesia
- TEATRO ITALIANO - short skits written and performed by year 7 Italian students.

For more information please contact Peta Neill (Cultural Literacy) or Carmel Barbagallo (LOTE – Italian)

ITALIAN WRITING COMPETITION

Recently Stella Maris students of Italian in Years 6 & 7 entered the Italian Writing Competition organized by the Modern Language Teachers Association, Sunshine Coast. Congratulations to the following students!

Year 6

1st  Bronte Ruegg - 6V 1st Leon Xie - 7jHC Josh Circelli - 6B
2nd Sophie Coombes - 7JHC Jessica Ford - 6V

Year 7

HC Jessica Lidbury - 7H
HC Angus Hudson - 7 M

LIBRARY NEWS

Author/Illustrator Peter Carnavas will be at Stella Maris next week Wed—Fri, working with Grades 1—7. His books are available to purchase from Library Staff.

Book Week Dress-Up Parade is on the last day of term – 5L - H/C Mime
– 7M - 3rd Mime (11 - 13 yrs), 3rd Set Verse
– Aboriginal Dance troupe
– Belly Dance troupe
– Indonesian Dance troupe
– African drum troupe
– Traditional bamboo Percussion Instruments of Indonesia
– Short skits written and performed by year 7 Italian students.

For more information please contact Peta Neill (Cultural Literacy) or Carmel Barbagallo (LOTE – Italian)

Honesty is the best policy

Thank you to: Holly Wessely, Mary Corcoran, Georgia Hodson, Alex Smith, Bronte Ruegg, Kirra Dixon and Emily Moro.

Principal’s Awards

16 August 2011

What does it mean when you say, "I'm Sorry"?

Do we want our child to grow up to be a person who says, "Well, I SAID I was sorry!" Making children say they are sorry only to satisfy an adult, or to not get into trouble, can create the habit of avoiding taking responsibility for actions.

So then, what can we do?

1. Investigate. Find out what happened and what happened before that.
2. If an apology and restitution is indicated—and the child does not sincerely apologize on their own—WE should say we are sorry.

Example:
- Tommy, I am so sorry that Bill tore your picture. I can see it took a long time to make it.
- The child with the hurt feelings and the torn picture hears words of empathy—he knows that someone understands how he feels.
- The offending child has the benefit of good role modeling. He has heard words of empathy.

2. Next, have the hurt child tell the other child how s/he feels.

Example:
- I feel bad that you tore my picture. It took me a long time to draw and color it.

3. If Bill says something such as—
- "I'm sorry I ruined it; it was wrong for me to do that"... you're on your way to a good conflict resolution!

4. Next, ask Bill what he can do about it? Some ideas he may come up with or say are:
- I can help tape it.
- We can do another one together
- What can I do to make it better?

The lesson here is for children to learn that some things are right and some are wrong. If wrong, we help children figure out what to do to fix it and/or what to do differently next time.

5. The above are some responses for which we hope. If the aggressor takes ownership, responsibility, and discusses alternative behaviour, nothing more is needed. If you need to talk to the aggressive child—be sure to send the other child away. (Privacy)

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