



M D E
Mary Duffy sgs
Esplanade



Shalom, anywhere you go

The Monican

MISSION

St Monica's College is a regional Catholic coeducational faith community. The school values the sacredness and wellbeing of all students, staff and parents and is committed to serving the young people of the northern suburbs of Melbourne.

We promote the truths and values of Jesus Christ and fidelity to the message of the Gospels. Through prayer and perseverance, we nurture genuine and harmonious relationships based on restorative principles.

Our teaching and learning approach is contemporary, global in perspective and aims to inspire life-long learning. We seek to stimulate and develop academic learning and students' personal world view through critical thought, whilst always being respectful of students' abilities and learning styles. We encourage and assist each Monican to reach full potential.

Student-centred educational programs and extra-curricular offerings foster respect of self, others and the environment. The College provides extensive well maintained facilities, resources and technologies which reflect an ongoing commitment to excellence and innovation.

St Monica's College celebrates its cultural diversity and draws strong identity from its past. We endeavour to empower Monicans to flourish and contribute positively to Australia and the world, now and in the future.

OUR STRATEGIC INTENT

St Monica's College is a School of Educational Enterprise. The College is committed to adopting international perspectives focussing on global citizenship and social justice for all. There is an ongoing commitment to the development of programs and facilities including a Trade Skills Centre. The College aims to be a leader in innovation, the use of Information and Communication Technology, with state of the art resources and encouraging digital leadership. The College will continue to expand the repertoire of effective teaching practices and use of data, in order to strengthen curriculum pathways and achievement. Contemporary learning opportunities will be provided for all community members, including students, staff and parents.

EDITORIAL TEAM

Principal Mr Brian Hanley
Ms Pamela Griffin

COVER

'Mary Duffy sgs Esplanade'

Contents

▶ 3	Principal's Report
▶ 4	Tribute to Sister Mary Duffy sgs
▶ 4	Mary Duffy sgs Esplanade Now Open
▶ 5	Dalton Road Campus Director's Report
▶ 5	Davisson Street Campus Director's Report
▶ 6	Deputy Principal's Report (Operations)
▶ 7	Deputy Principal's Report (Identity, Mission & Community)
▶ 8	Assistant Principal's Report (Teaching & Learning)
▶ 8	Liturgy
▶ 9	Youth Ministry
▶ 9	Class Captains Workshop
▶ 10-11	Values Education – Al Siraat College Ramadan Dinner
▶ 12	Public Speaking
▶ 12	Debating
▶ 13	Wellbeing
▶ 13	Principal's Ribbon for Cookery
▶ 14	Sports
▶ 14	Chess Tournament
▶ 15	Careers
▶ 16	Counsellors Report – Bringing Positive Psychology Home
▶ 17	Class of 2000 – 20 Year Reunion
▶ 18	Class of 2005 – 15 Year Reunion
▶ 19	Class of 2010 – 10 Year Reunion
▶ 20	Class of 2020 – 1 Year Reunion

Principal's Report



Brian E. Hanley OAM
College Principal



Mary Duffy sgs Esplanade

Shalom Aleichem

Peace to You, members of the St Monica's College community and all readers.

At no other time since I commenced as Principal of St Monica's College, Epping in 1991 has our College motto 'Pray and Persevere' been more relevant and significant as we exist as a College of Educational Enterprise.

Once in the first term and then again in Term 2, Victoria has been sent into lockdown and students and staff have had to cope with remote learning and teaching and other disruptive arrangements. This, of course, has affected all schools in Victoria, but for a moment, allow we Monicans to really reflect on what lockdowns demand of us.

We know COVID must be handled in a sensible, safe manner with the ultimate goal of communities being able to take control of its spread. This will be no easy task, locally, nationally, and internationally. SMC must play our part.

It has meant that our daily practices must be in accord with Government and Catholic Education Melbourne regulations and guidelines. We have earnestly achieved this requirement. It has meant that we are ready to deliver our educational program in whatever form it must take at a given time. Therefore, we have taught face-to-face, switched quickly to remote learning; reversed back to daily contact, and so it has gone on. Throughout this, Monicans must be assisted to persevere with the disruptive nature of these circumstances.

It has been important to pay special attention to the mental wellbeing of the staff and the students. Research informs us that students have suffered through the 2020 lockdown period, and in 2021 it is remerging. Our Minders program played a significant role in wellbeing last year, and again the College will be attentive and active in seeking and providing ways to help those members of our school community who are finding it tough.

These times have wide implications for a school, and this includes our administration and business affairs. St Monica's College's Finance Office did all that was possible to support families financially in 2020, and these efforts continue in 2021. The response and the gratitude of families has been amazingly appreciative, and just shows so beautifully the relationships that flourish at this particular school.

We shall survive. We shall regain all that we have lost, by some means and in some way. We shall always pray and persevere as Monicans.

It is with sadness that I inform the College that our second Principal, Sister Mary Duffy sgs entered eternal life on Thursday, 20 May 2021. Sister Mary was Principal from 1967 until 1970 and junior secondary registration was granted for the school in her term of office. A beautiful book has been written about Mary by Deputy Principal, Miss Bernadette Harris, so her contributions have been formally recorded, and good memories of Sister live in the hearts and minds of many pioneer students from the later 1960's.

It was with pleasure that Father Peter O'Rourke PE blest and opened the Mary Duffy sgs Esplanade a few days after her death. It was to have been a great celebration with many guests present, but this has now been postponed until later this year. The beauty, serenity, and the calmness of the features that exist along the Mary Duffy sgs Esplanade will provide much joy for Monicans now and in the decades ahead. This includes the newly installed Rock of Saint Benedict.

Under new governance structures, the Catholic Archdiocese has instituted MACS (Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools). This is a complete change from our former regional structure. More authority and decision making has been given to MACS staff and our school, in the same ways as all Catholic schools in Melbourne, has had to adapt.

One change is the creation of the School Advisory Council. Further details regarding membership and role will be announced in Term 3. In the meantime however, I place on record the immense thanks of our College to Mr Mario Bernardi, Chairman of the former College Board, Mr Dominic Moscatello, Chairman of the Finance, Property & Works Committee, and all members of both these committees for their loyal, intelligent, strong and faith-filled ministry of servant leadership. May God bless each and every one of them.

Shalom – anywhere you go, Monicans. Amidst all the changes, struggles, disruptions, fears and challenges of COVID lockdown, I pray that our quest for peace will guide us through these hard times, grant us understanding and acceptance, and strengthen our perseverance to remain hope-filled and faithful to our loving God.

Brian E. Hanley OAM
College Principal



Sister Mary Duffy sgs

Tribute to Sister Mary Duffy sgs

Sister Mary Duffy (formerly Sister Kieran) served as Principal of St Monica's College from 1967 until 1970. She continued to serve the Church and the Sisters of the Good Samaritan in other ministries after her time at our College.

Sister Mary entered eternal life on Thursday, 20 May 2021 at Mercy Care, Keon Park. She leaves behind her grieving brothers and sisters and extended family members. Two of her Sisters are Sister Therese Duffy sgs and Sister Zita Duffy sgs, both well known to Monicans.

Our College pays tribute to Mary through our Mary Duffy sgs Esplanade, recently blest and opened on the Davisson Street Campus (see report in this edition). As senior students enjoy the serenity and beauty of the Esplanade environment, they might grow to know more about the woman in whose honor it is named.

Sister Mary first arrived in Epping in 1967 and the College existed of one sole building. It was a school needing to be shaped and registered for the education of the pioneer female students who had commenced as Monicans in 1964. The task was substantial, but Sister Mary achieved her chief goal which was to attain registration from educational authorities. She nurtured a great Christian and unifying spirit to develop during her period of Principalship.

Our College thanks Sister Mary for the leadership and commitment she showed during her tenure as Principal. She was so highly respected by the girls under her charge in that time, and they remember her fondly today.

Sister Mary celebrated 70 years as a Sister of the Good Samaritan this year, 2021. May her soul rest in peace.

Brian E. Hanley OAM
College Principal



Mary Duffy sgs Esplanade Now Open

A lavish opening ceremony was planned for Wednesday, 2 June as Father Peter O'Rourke PE was organised to bless and then formally declare open the Mary Duffy sgs Esplanade on Davisson Street Campus.

However, due to the death of Sister Mary on 20 May, it was decided to postpone the official ceremony of celebration to a later date when more people can be in attendance.

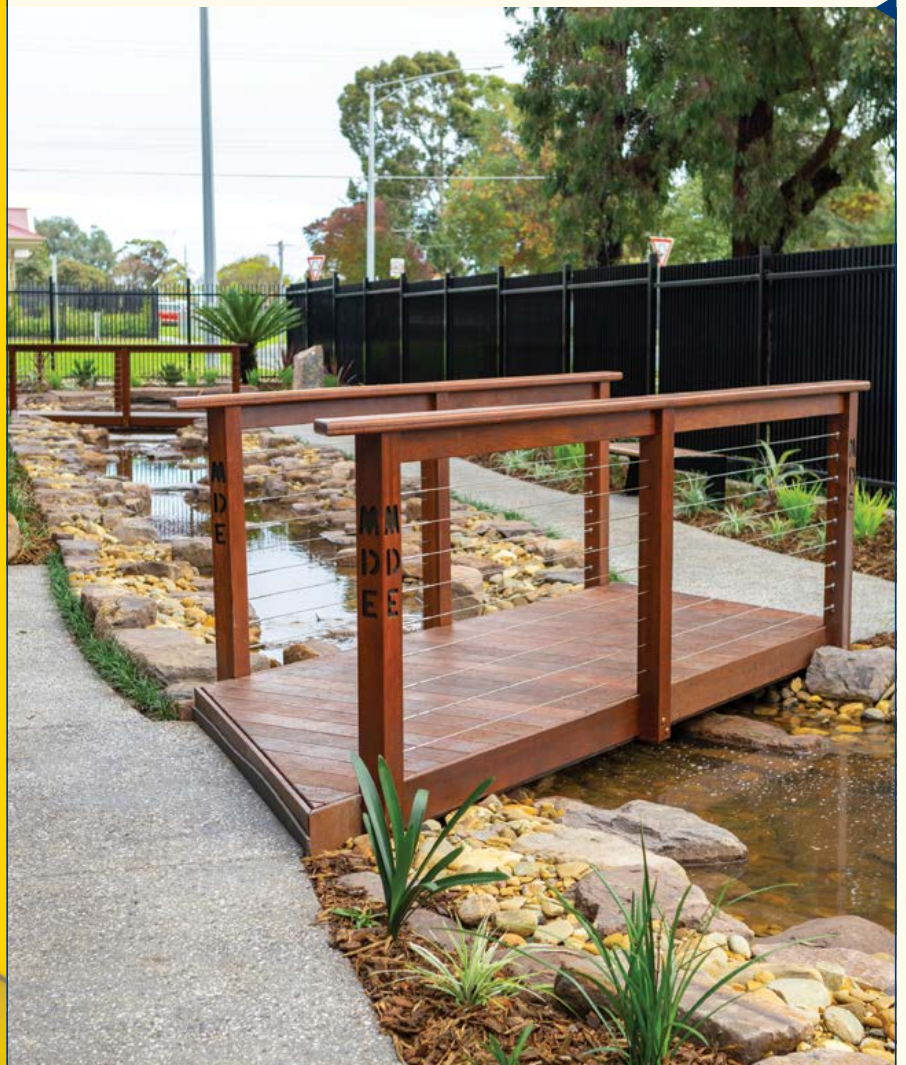
Instead, it was arranged to have a much smaller ceremony until lockdown restrictions were decreed, and all plans had to be changed with the numbers present lowered to a mere four people on site, Father Peter on Zoom conducting the blessing and saying prayers, and a melodic voiceover musical contribution in the background.

Nevertheless, the ceremony proceeded, and our Principal, Mr Hanley sprinkled the Esplanade and the official brass plaque with holy water as Father Peter said the blessing and declared the Esplanade open for the enjoyment and pleasure of senior students and staff. The ceremony was filmed for a later screening.

The Mary Duffy sgs Esplanade runs alongside Coulstock Street towards the front of our property and construction works were carried out mostly by our Buildings staff with some contractors. It is a beautiful space with a calming, flowing stream, well-crafted bridges, lovely plants, comfortable seating, and *Angelic Hearts* which is a mosaic sculpture adorning the wall at the entrance to the Esplanade.

Another special feature is the Rock of Saint Benedict. This particular rock was retrieved from the demolition works on Dalton Road Campus and transferred to the Esplanade. It pays tribute to Saint Benedict whose Rule Sister Mary followed faithfully, and it bears the Benedictine inscription, 'Listen with the Ear of Your Heart'.

Congratulations and thanks are extended to all staff who, in different ways, contributed to the creation of the Mary Duffy sgs Esplanade, a beautiful addition to Monican life and our attractive landscape.



Director's Report Dalton Road

Far too many of these Monican articles have been written recently commencing with the phrase, "as we are currently in lockdown" and unfortunately this article, is no different as we await our students return.

The media had suggested that the current lockdown could be the most dangerous and could impact on people in the greatest way. Experts have cited examples of PTSD associated with COVID lockdowns and this circuit breaker added to people's anxiety levels. It is very concerning when I read and hear this information because working with young people adds another level of concern to my agenda particularly as they make their way back to classrooms.

On the one hand, we have students at Years 7 to 9 who flourished working at home. They enjoy the independence and they develop their own structures and timetables and dealt extremely well with communicating via emails or via a screen. Such students missed the company of their friends and peers however they compromised by keeping in touch via social media and the use of mobile phones. On the other hand, we have students who depend heavily on one to one and face to face teaching and learning. They gain energy, inspiration and motivation from being around other people. They could function well and could learn remotely, but they feel the absence of other aspects of daily life. Neither of these scenarios are right or wrong. Both of these scenarios have positives and negatives. Both of these scenarios are worthy of consideration because fundamentally young people learn differently, they have diverse ways of digesting information and they process this information in different ways.

My classes indicated to me that "they are ok". They completed tasks and submitted work and have mostly kept their spirits up. They have developed habits and processes for individual classes and manage all of these very well. They are full of praise for their teachers who touched base and checked in with them. They enjoyed getting a view of their teachers' homes, children and pets, however they missed the Premier League and Science Pracs and they want to complete the Tech work they had just got around to starting before lockdown. Some of my students wanted to get back into the Food Technology kitchen to cook their chicken schnitzel and missed the grounds and sports equipment. Others wanted to return to their ADP sessions and their basketball training. I understand all of that because so many of our students are engaged in lots of activities that make their day at school exciting and motivating and lots of fun.

I love the word resilient and apply it to our students with pride – *the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties*. They prove over and over again that as a generation of the future they will be capable, ready and willing to do things differently and to approach the challenges of work and play and family differently in their own way. We should be proud of that and feel safe that our future is in good hands.

I sign off today in the way that many of my students have learned to do – *stay safe*.



Amorina Chirico
Deputy Principal, Director
of Dalton Road Campus

Director's Report Davisson Street

Once again, our beloved city of Melbourne had been forced into lockdown, at a time when we were beginning to feel that normality was returning. Lockdown Number 4 commenced on the evening of Thursday 27 May for a comparatively shorter period this time around, and at the Davisson Street Campus we have since seen a staggered return to onsite teaching, learning and assessments from Friday 4 June 2021. We all know that these periods of absences from school can reignite feelings of despair and sometimes disconnect however, it is important to recognise and acknowledge the understanding that, we can and will get through these periods when we rally together and support one another. Our young people have in many ways, acted as role models in demonstrating their ability to take hold of their own circumstances, to persevere, respond and proceed.

So much of what occurs around us, is often out of our control. However how we respond to challenges, changes and the odd lockdown here and there, is something we can take charge of. In the past fortnight, Year 12 students have demonstrated a strong capacity to move seamlessly from face to face instruction to remote learning, and then back to onsite learning and assessments, all in a matter of days. They could have responded with the attitudes of "poor us" but instead, with a truly Monican spirit of perseverance they have picked themselves up, dressed back into their uniform and presented on campus, masks and all. The postponement of the highly anticipated Year 12 Formal scheduled to have occurred on the evening of Thursday 10 June, was also received with maturity, albeit understandable disappointment. Our Year 12 students know that every effort will be made to reschedule this popular event, at a safe, permissible and acceptable time. In the meantime, gowns, new shoes, suits and new ties, have all been set aside with hopeful promise for later use. The postponement of the GAT also meant that students had an additional day of scheduled classes to finalize assessments and Unit 3 courses. This too was accepted with responsiveness and commitment. Well done Year 12!

The snap circuit breaker lockdown sent Year 10 and Year 11 students home to reinstate remote learning, only a short number of days ahead of their scheduled end of Semester 1 examinations. Yet another decision that was very much beyond their own doing or control however, the response of our young people has been both commendable and worthy of note. Hasty alterations to examination timetables and study schedules were devised and actioned. Students accepted the support offered by their teachers for clarification, assistance and further instruction if required. A true sense of "we've got this", has been evident amongst a mature group of young people who have presented daily to complete onsite examinations at scheduled times, following all directions and requests from staff. Attendance has been outstanding and the commitment to study demonstrated, continues to make me feel so proud of this new generation of resilient learners that are not prepared to let the circumstances surrounding this pandemic, stop them from doing what they need to do to achieve.

I wish to take this opportunity to once again commend the dedication and true commitment of all staff who have continued to support and engage DSC students, during this period. Your care for our students is very much appreciated and valued. Our senior students have acted as role models to those in younger year levels, because they have mirrored your determination to persevere, respond and proceed in creative ways, when change is imposed, and our direction and leadership has been paramount.

Shalom, anywhere you go



Paula Di Maria
Deputy Principal, Director
of Davisson Street Campus

Deputy Principal's Report Operations

Despite the challenges of the Coronavirus pandemic and the uncertainty that the world faces, the College is continuing to progress with 'The Cooinda Plan' a new strategic direction that involves the construction of two new buildings. However, there is still a strong commitment to refreshing the teaching and learning facilities across the College.

I would like to congratulate our gardening and excavation contractors Emma and Cameron Prince who, with our Property staff, have created the Mary Duffy Esplanade, a wonderful garden and stream with magnificent bridges and fauna to create a tranquil setting for our senior students to enjoy. This Esplanade is dedicated to former Principal, Sister Mary Duffy.

2021 is continuing to be a wonderful change in the area of Information Technologies. As the College now has full control over its Information Technology staff, it has better aligned the priorities and capabilities of the Information Technology Department to school values and strategies. Under the guidance of Mr Matthew Byrne and Mr Craig Ryan the College has implemented a new Executive Committee called the IT Digital Transformations Committee. This committee provides advice to the College on all matters to do with infrastructure, equipment, software, devices, and eLearning to develop better outcomes for both staff and students.

All learning areas across the College now have either a new projector or interactive screen to view displays and other presentations. Staff can wirelessly project from their computers to assist with a greater experience in the classroom. Student devices are becoming more robust and will continue to offer more efficient ways of completing schoolwork. The College has created a new eLearning team under the leadership of Mr Sid Bagh to provide expert advice to primarily teachers but also students as well. A new student group of eLearning Ambassadors are working on the junior campus to assist other students with their digital literacy.

Towards the end of 2021, the College will refresh all Information Technology servers to install brand new equipment and reduce the number of old outdated servers. Ultimately, this will increase wireless connectivity and provide a greater classroom experience for all students leading to increased student outcomes. As always, software programs and online textbooks are reviewed to allow for necessary changes if students and staff are having a negative classroom experience.

The College recognises how important digital literacy is and the exciting changes that continue to take place in the world of Information Technology, but we also acknowledge and listen to the words of Pope Francis from *Christus Vivit* in 2019 *'The digital world is characteristic of the contemporary world... the web and social networks have created a new way to communicate and bond... Yet to understand this phenomenon as a whole, we need to realise that, like every human reality, it has its share of limitations and deficiencies.'*



Cameron Whitford
Deputy Principal
(College Operations)



Deputy Principal's Report

Identity, Mission & Community



John Henry Newman

1801 - 1890



Bernadette Harris

Deputy Principal
(Identity, Mission & Community)

At St Monica's College we provide opportunities for reflection, prayer and spiritual formation to promote faith development. These offerings are varied and the experiences are planned to include dialogue, the exploration of aspects of our Catholic tradition, spirituality, Monican identity and culture.

In May, our second College Conversation for 2021 was presented by former Canonical Administrator, Father Shane Hctor PE. Reflecting on the faith and spirituality of St John Henry Newman, Monsignor Ronald Knox and Caryll Houselander, the Conversation was entitled 'Coming Home.' Father Hctor presented the faith journey of eminent Christians, whose lives were typified by a spiritual hunger and search for meaning, culminating in them finding or 'coming home' to the Catholic Church and tradition. The presentation was an opportunity for all present to learn about their extraordinary lives, experiences and insights. Reflecting deep theological underpinnings and meticulous research, the College Conversation enlightened many, especially those who were not familiar with Houselander or her writings. Her comments "There is no way of learning of God except through the adventure of our own heart" and "Christ asks for a home in your soul, where he can be at rest with you" were recounted by attendees.

The annual theme of 'Shalom, Anywhere You Go' was the focus of three prayer sessions this term. We prayed for world peace and for the fallen in April, to Mary the Queen of Peace in May and on the occasion of the Feast of the Sacred Heart in June. Offered and facilitated by the Coordinator of Liturgy, Faith and Mission, Mr Frank Cumbo, these online prayer opportunities have proved popular with staff and members of our extended community and parishes. As a school operating under the motto of 'Pray and Persevere' we are ever mindful that quiet reflection and contemplation are

vital elements, promoting self-awareness and shaping our approach to faith and education.

Formation is an intentional, ongoing and reflective process. It is central to the ongoing life and mission of a Catholic school. In May all staff holding Positions of Leadership were invited to reflect on their spirituality as an educator and share in a reflection and dialogue session. Focussed on 'We teach who we are' attendees were asked to consider why they teach, how they teach, what they cherish and what challenges them. Participants found the formation session worthwhile. Seeking to deepen our shared understanding of our mission, our ethos, history, values and Monican culture, these sessions will continue to be offered as a means of reflecting, sharing, questioning and connecting members of our community.

Online Spirituality Seminars have also provided a regular opportunity for staff formation. In second term, we focussed on Servant Leadership and the role of this approach to leadership in Catholic schools. Based on the model of Jesus Christ, this approach is linked to our call to continue Jesus' mission on earth. Servant Leadership entails service of others and is a mindset and an approach which has the capacity to positively influence relationships and communities. It transforms a day job into a vocation and offers staff and students a means to live out their faith through their words, deeds and witness.

St Monica's College will continue to support the faith journey of each Monican and foster a deeper connectedness to our Catholic traditions and an appreciation of spirituality. Conscious that faith is nurtured through relationships, interactions and opportunities to act in service of others in our day to day lives, we continue to proclaim and celebrate the Good News spreading 'Shalom' everywhere we go.



Assistant Principal's Report Teaching & Learning

The third term in a College year is a time of preparation for students at all year levels. For our Year 12 students, it is the last full term they will have at the College (and, indeed of secondary education), when they undertake the final unit of their subjects and continue to prepare for their end of year examinations. The Year 8 to Year 11 students start their preparation for 2022 and beyond with subject selection.

The subject selection process requires students to consider their academic and career pathways and their personal areas of interest in order to select their subjects for the following year. For the Year 8 students, it will be the first time they have a chance to choose their electives; four semester long subjects designed to provide the students with an introduction to the senior courses available to them. The Year 9 students have bigger decisions to make and the choices increase considerably for them as they begin their transition to the senior campus.

For the majority of Year 9 students, the mainstream course will consist of three core subjects (Religious Education, English and Mathematics) and eight electives (four per semester), three of which must come from the Science, Humanities, Health/Physical Education choices available to them. The students will be assisted by the College during every step of this process.

The Year 10 students will be required to really consider their career choices and determine their pathway in order to make decisions regarding VCE, VET and VCAL. It is essential that they see this as a two year plan and commit to the choices made. Having undergone this process in 2020, our Year 11 students must now decide which of their subjects they will not continue in their final school year.

The process can be a challenging one for some students, and the College is working to ensure the students have all the information they require as well as the opportunity to speak to a number of key personnel about their options. Parents/Carers are strongly encouraged to have conversations with their child regarding their choices. Consider prerequisites for university courses, the student's most current (and previous) reports and just as importantly, subjects they love and for which they show great aptitude. Subject Handbooks for 2022 are available on the College Portal.

End of Semester One Reports will be available via the Parent Access Module (PAM) and SIMON on Wednesday 21 July. Fundamentally, this is a Statement of Results and parents/carers are encouraged to also access the feedback provided via Continuous Reporting which provides much more detail regarding assessment tasks and results. As indicated, it is a valuable resource when considering subject choices for 2022.

Term Two highlighted how resilient and adaptive both our students and staff are to both lockdowns and restrictions. Whilst none of us want to consider this way of operating to be 'the new normal,' it is heartening to know that we can move seamlessly to remote learning should the need arise. In addition, the Years 8 to 11 students returned to the College to undertake examinations and they did so with maturity and commitment. Term Three offers our students the opportunity to draw on that strength to have open and honest conversations about their End of Semester Report and subject selection for 2022.



Michelle Keele
Assistant Principal
(Teaching and Learning)

Liturgy

Many of the blessings and liturgies we had planned for Term 2 were rescheduled or cancelled due to increased restrictions and lockdown, yet the commitment of every Monican to prayer and worship of God continued to be a source of 'Shalom' in our College community. Online reflections, prayers and spirituality seminars provided a sense of community and connection for many, as did the inclusion of reflections and prayers within Religious Education classes.



Frank Cumbo
Liturgy, Faith &
Mission Coordinator

As the Catholic Church marked the end of the Easter Season with the Feast of Pentecost, a number of Monican students continued their preparations for receiving anointing and the gifts of the Holy Spirit through the Sacrament of Confirmation, which was deferred this year for a small number of students. The most common symbol of the Holy Spirit is the dove, which formed an important connection to our annual theme for these students. 'Shalom,' like all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, is only truly experienced when it is shared with others. By taking 'Shalom, anywhere you go,' you are not only becoming a source of blessing for others, you become blessed in and through your efforts to forgive, reconcile and promote harmony.

This understanding was evident in some of the responses that students provided to an invitation to source inspirational quotes to rework into prayers for celebrations in Term 2. Although these liturgies, prayer sessions and other celebrations did not proceed as planned, the small sample of student reflections that are reproduced below provide a clear indication that our annual theme is animating the lives of students and proving to be a source of inspiration and comfort for many. As we look with cautious hope towards upcoming liturgies, we pray that all Monicans, staff and students alike, may reflect on the words below, allowing a spirit of 'Shalom' to make a lasting dwelling place in our hearts.

"It's not about how much you do, but how much love you put into what you do that counts"
– Saint Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Theresa)

"This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all."
– 1 John 1:5

"Christ said to me 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.'"
– 2 Corinthians 12:9

"For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility."
– Ephesians 2:14





Theresa McLauren
Youth Ministry

Youth Ministry

Last term, Youth Ministry students considered how we each play a role in building the Kingdom of God and examined Jesus' earthly life as a perfect model for fulfilling God's will for humanity and the world.

In Term 2, we considered the role of the Holy Spirit as our guide in discerning God's will through our specific circumstances. There are many ways to think about the Holy Spirit. He is the third person of the Trinity who has existed for all eternity; the perfect love and unity between the Father and Son; and God dwelling in our souls from the moment of Baptism.

A relationship with the Holy Spirit is essential to discipleship as he is the *"interior master of life... a gentle guest and friend who inspires, guides, corrects, and strengthens"* us (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1697). By cooperating with the Holy Spirit, we engage in the ongoing process of becoming holy, and in turn, grow in our capacity to love in unexpectedly radical ways.

How can we help this process of sanctification? Firstly, by becoming docile to the Spirit's movements, that is, having a disposition that allows us to be taught or guided easily by the Spirit. Docility is necessary for discernment: a prayerful consideration of different options, where God guides our decision-making.

Father Nnamdi Moneme, OMV, proposes three questions for reflection on how docile we are to the Holy Spirit:

- 1 Does our love for God move us to seek what is pleasing to God at every moment, or are we instead motivated by human accolades? The Spirit puts in us the same desire that Jesus had: *"The one who sent me is always with me; He has not left me alone, for I always do what is pleasing to Him"* (John 8:29).
- 2 How deep is our desire to know, love, proclaim and live according to the truth? Jesus promised us, *"The Spirit will guide us to all the truth"* (John 16:13). The Holy Spirit reveals to us who we truly are before God, who God truly is, and the truth of what our relationship with God asks of us.
- 3 How readily do we forget ourselves to do and endure things for the greater glory of God? The Holy Spirit strengthens us to do good in the face of opposition and suffering, believing that *"it is better to suffer for doing good, if that be the will of God, than for doing evil"* (1 Peter 3:17).

We were each created for love, by love and to love, and God delights in helping us craft the story of our personal vocation in a way that honours this. Jesus promised those who are receptive that the Holy Spirit will guide their every choice to live out this universal vocation: *"I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him: you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you"* (John 14:16).



Class Captains Workshop

In May, all Class Captains and Class Vice Captains were invited to participate in a workshop to assist them in understanding their role.

They took part in activities with representatives from the Student Council to get to know each other better and begin developing their leadership skills.

All student leaders at St Monica's participate in a series of workshops and meetings throughout the year to promote the development of valuable leadership skills such as public speaking, meeting procedures, time management, communication, decision making and team building centred around developing Christian values through a gospel understanding of leadership.

Anthea Sarantos
Coordinator of Alumni and
Student Formation and Leadership



Values Education – Al Siraat College Ramadan Dinner

On the evening of Thursday 22 April, a group of Year 8 and Year 9 students represented St Monica's College at the annual ending of Ramadan dinner at Al Siraat College. The event was an opportunity to experience the rituals that take place at the end of each day during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

Ramadan is held in the ninth month of the Muslim calendar and is the holy month of fasting. It begins and ends with the appearance of the crescent moon.

Ramadan is a time for Muslims to practise self-restraint, in keeping with Swam, one of the pillars of Islam (the five basic tenets of the Muslim religion). Although Sawm is most commonly understood as the obligation to fast during Ramadan, it is more broadly interpreted as the obligation to refrain between dawn and dusk from food, drink, and all forms of immoral behaviour, including impure or unkind thoughts. Thus, false words or bad deeds or intentions are as destructive of a fast as is eating or drinking.

The event was an interfaith activity, which various members of our municipality were invited to attend regardless of their faith or cultural background.

Our students were warmly welcomed by Al Siraat to experience the simple yet humbling ritual that Muslims all over the world practise at the end of each day of Ramadhan.

St Monica's student representatives who attended the Ramadan dinner at Al Siraat College.



Making new connections



This reflection tree was provided to allow participants to share their thoughts on the interfaith experience



Mrs Clare Turner assisting with the distribution of dates



The prayer service held before the breaking of the fast



The food

IN GRATITUDE TO AL SIRAAAT, SOME OF THE SMC PARTICIPANTS HAVE OFFERED THEIR THOUGHTS OF THE EXPERIENCE BELOW:



The Ramadhan dinner was very interesting. The sense of community was great when they gathered and broke fast together and then prayed together. I noticed the similarities between Ramadhan/Muslim traditions and Catholic traditions. At Church we gather as a community to pray quite similarly to how the Muslims prayed at Ramadhan. They also broke fast together which can be related to communion which occurs during mass and the period before Easter; Lent, when we give up certain things or even fast and make other sacrifices. It was humbling knowing that this Muslim tradition was to help experience gratefulness for the things we have in everyday life we take for granted and to help sympathise with the poor or others without the luxuries we have. The Ramadhan tradition shows us how despite our differences in religion or belief we have many of the same values. Lastly, it cannot be left out that, the food was delicious.

– **Matthew James** (Year 9 Yellow)

During the Ramadan dinner, I learnt a few things. I learnt that they usually eat dates to break their fast and after they have done praying. Another thing that I also learnt was they have a certain way that they pray. What I saw from this was they continuously stood up and bent down a few times. This helped me understand that there are different ways for different cultures and people to pray. Everyone at the dinner was really friendly and the food that they provided was similar to what I have at home and it was very tasty.

– **Shreya Kuchimanchi** (Year 8 Emerald)



Thank you very much Al Siraat for having us as your guests for the Ramadhan dinner. I learnt about how you pray. It was also my first time trying such different food! A little spicy but that's okay it is always good to try something new. Thank you again for sharing your culture with us.

– **Isabella Zammit** (Year 8 Purple)

On Thursday 22 April, a group of students from St Monica's College were invited to attend the Ramadhan dinner held at Al Siraat College. This experience was truly extraordinary, as I was able to meet with some friends that I had seen on my previous excursion to Al Siraat and there were several guest speakers during the evening. During this time, I learnt so much more about the Islamic faith and how important it is to them as we were able to observe and partake in the prayer service held just before the dinner. Thank you Mr Zucchet for allowing us to attend such a prestigious event, I enjoyed every aspect of the event.

– **Jasmine Khuu** (Year 9 Brown)

My experience of going to the Ramadan dinner was very pleasant as I learnt many new things. Everything, to the food and to their religion was very nice. The food was one of my favourite parts it was delicious! I also got the chance to learn more about the Islamic faith. I learned, they break the fast by eating dates and pray before they eat. All-over everything was very interesting as I had a very enjoyable experience!

– **Jasmine Singh** (Year 8 Brown)

The Ramadan dinner with our interfaith school has given me a better understanding of the Islamic faith by showing us their place of worship and the traditions of their faith.

Throughout the Ramadan dinner, Al Siraat representatives came and introduced themselves along with getting to know each other. They explained many of their traditions in the period of Ramadan and how they break their fast with a traditional meal called 'Iftar'. After getting to know one another, we proceeded to the mosque where the readings were read. We were all intrigued by how Muslims worshipped.

This event, once again, enhanced my understanding of the Islamic faith. I had a fine experience at this dinner. It allowed me to connect with our interfaith school and learn more about other religions.

– **Jenny Nguyen** (Year 8 Brown)

At the Ramadan dinner, I learnt a lot about the Islamic faith. I learned how important interfaith is, how we can connect and relate with others and learn about their religion. The Ramadan dinner at Al Siraat College was a great opportunity to learn about what they do during Ramadan. Thank you Al Siraat College for welcoming us to your school.

– **Valeriy Rodrigues** (Year 8 Green)

The array of guests!



Our local Federal member of Parliament, Mr Andrew Giles

Public Speaking



Cidelle Rodrigues (Year 10)

On Sunday 16 May, Sanjita Choudhary (Year 8) and Ravneet Dhindsa, Olivia Ebin and Anika Nicholapillai (Year 9) all participated in the Rostrum Voice of Youth Competition.

In the Junior section, Anika and Olivia were two out of the four competitors chosen to progress to the semi-final on the day. Anika finished as runner up with her speech on the topic, *The Right Attitude*.

In the senior section, Cidelle Rodrigues (Year 10) delivered her speech on the topic *Life in Colour* and was named the winner on the day. Cidelle will progress to the State Final to be held next month.

On Tuesday 25 May, two of our Year 12 students, Mila Spirovski and Leanne Sebastian competed in VCAA's Plain English Speaking Competition. Leanne was chosen as the winner, meaning she will compete in the semi-final held at the University of Melbourne next month.

I would like to thank all students involved for their preparation and collaboration. I extend congratulations to all involved for speaking with confidence and passion.



Leanne Sebastian (Year 12)



D Grade Debater's Association of Victoria Competition Round 2

Debating

The Debater's Association of Victoria Competition is underway. Well done to all students and their coaches for their hard work and commitment. Please see the results so far:

ROUND 1

A Grade

SMC 1 (229) defeated Kilmore International School 1 (228)

B Grade

SMC 1 (226) defeated Ivanhoe Grammar School Plenty 1 (225)

C Grade

SMC 1 (225) defeated Parade College 1 (222)

D Grade

SMC 1 (229) defeated Parade College 2 (227)

SMC 2 (225) lost to Ivanhoe Grammar University Campus 2 (227)

SMC 3 defeated Eltham High School via forfeit

ROUND 2

A Grade

SMC 1 defeated Marymede College via forfeit

B Grade

SMC 1 defeated Eltham High School via forfeit

C Grade

SMC 1 (225) lost to Assumption College (226)

D Grade

SMC 1 (226) lost to Catholic Ladies College (228)

SMC 2 defeated Eltham High School via forfeit

SMC 3 (226) defeated Thomastown High School (224)



SCHOOL NURSES

St Monica's College has two School Nurses employed with a focus on health promotion and primary prevention. They work closely with students with chronic health conditions and illnesses and supporting them throughout their studies at SMC. They communicate with parents and other health care agencies to create smooth transition and relevant plans for specific students. The school nurses are called upon if an incident has occurred of specific concerns, providing school management plans, dispensing medication, and attending to sporting events such as Athletics Day, Swimming Carnival and Cross Country. The School Nurses also organise Immunisation Days for both staff and students and offer support in class for delivering health education sessions.

PASTORAL CARE PROGRAM

Our Pastoral Care Program is from Years 7-10. The focus is on Positive Psychology. Positive Psychology is the application of research in areas such as optimism, resilience, positive emotions, mindset, character strengths, and emotional intelligence. St Monica's College has integrated the Positive Education Enhanced Curriculum within our Years 7-10 Pastoral Program. This interactive evidence-based curriculum has been acquired from The Institute of Positive Education (Geelong Grammar) and provides students with knowledge and skills to enhance their wellbeing, to deal with life challenges, live a meaningful and purposeful life, and strengthen relationships with self as well as others.

THE COLLEGE COUNSELLING SERVICE

Currently the Counselling Team consists of six Psychologists/Counsellors, working across both campuses.

The services provided include:

- Individual, confidential assessment and counselling sessions for students

- Support for, and consultation with, teachers in their work with students
- Staff professional learning
- Availability of the Psychologists / Counsellors for parent / guardian enquiries and concerns
- Parent / guardian support programs and seminars
- Student assessment
- Referral
- Support and consultation regarding College Programs.

What happens in counselling?

The role of the Psychologist/Counsellor is to support students through these challenging times, through assessment and by assisting them to identify their issues, strengths, and resources and to develop appropriate strategies and plans to cope with or resolve these issues.

RETREATS

Year 7 Camp is an overnight camp with activities in getting to know each other. It is at Camp Manyung in Mount Eliza. The students engage in fun activities such as the flying fox, archery, giant swing, cooking classes, snorkelling, bay discovery cruises, and raft building.

Year 8 Retreat is called 'Stepping Stones'. This retreat is at The Village Green & Pavilion and Ostia in Strath Creek. Ostia is the College's country retreat facility. Activities are based on preparing to journey through adolescence.

Year 9 Retreat is called 'Uniquely Year 9'. This retreat is located at Phillip Island. Activities include a visit to Maru Koala and Animal Park, the Penguin Parade, and Churchill Island Heritage Farm (sustainable farming), which are all located at Phillip Island.

Year 10 Retreat is called 'On the Edge' and this retreat is also located at Ostia in Strath Creek. Activities focus on exploring relationships, identity, decision-making, values and spirituality.



*'Every student matters,
Every moment counts'*

Principal's Ribbon for Cookery

On Thursday 20 May, the Principal's Ribbon for Cookery was held in The Gateway Room on Dalton Road Campus. Nine competitors with six dishes, both sweet and savoury, competed for two awards e.g. the Principal's Encouragement Award and the Principal's Ribbon for Cookery. Our adjudicators, Ms Carmel Boldrin and Mr David Chessari, empathised with the contestants, both having previously competed and won the award themselves.

At the conclusion of the evening, the judges awarded the Principal's Encouragement Award to Chelsea Fernando (Year 10 Blue) for her dish "Grandma's Rice and Curry". Chelsea spoke to the audience with eloquence, detailing her Sri Lankan culture and love of good food as the inspiration behind the creation of the dish.

The Principal's Ribbon for Cookery Award was awarded to Daniel Manglaviti (Year 12 Jade) for his Heavenly Hazelnut Chocolate Tart, which was a harmony of sweet, tart, rich and creamy flavours and textures and was impeccably presented. Daniel, having competed in the competition since Year 9, epitomised the College motto of pray and persevere, having won the Encouragement Award in 2020 and finally his goal of the Principal's Ribbon for Cookery in 2021.

All students competed with distinction and should be congratulated.



Daniel Manglaviti and Mr Hanley

Heavenly Hazelnut Chocolate Tart



Chelsea Fernando and Mr Hanley

Grandma's Rice and Curry



Sport



Alana Jancevski (Class of 2020)

Congratulations to our very own Alana Jancevski (Class of 2020) who has signed for Perth Glory in the W-League Competition on a long term deal. Regarded as one of the brightest young prospects in the country, the 18-year-old is a Young Matildas representative who was previously a part of the set-up at Melbourne Victory. We wish Alana the very best as she moves to the West ahead of the Westfield W-League 2021/22 Season. We will be supporting her every step of the way.



Intermediate Girls Basketball Team

On Friday 21 May, our Intermediate boys and girls basketball teams competed at the Victorian College Basketball Championships (VCC). In a very successful day our Intermediate girls were crowned Champions in Division 2 after beating Mt Ridley Secondary College in the Grand Final. The girls should be very proud of their effort. The Intermediate boys also made their respective Grand Final but unfortunately just fell short to Maribyrnong College in the Division 1 category. Well done to all the students involved and their coaches Mr Dorge and Ms Sa'aga.

Chess Tournament

On Tuesday 25 May, twelve students represented St Monica's College at the Northern Star Chess Secondary Open Zonal Chess Tournament held at Penleigh and Essendon Grammar. For many of the players, it was their first experience of an over-the-board tournament at Secondary School level.

With a team comprising many students from Years 7 to 9, St Monica's showed skill and composure beyond their years, finishing in fourth place of the seven competing schools on 20 points, scoring many wins against players three or four years their senior. Cruze De Giorgio, Trajco Nikolov, Angella Dcunha, Nigel Dcunha and Edwin Joby earned qualification into the State Championships to be held later in 2021.

Congratulations to the individual award winners:



Cruze De Giorgio (First Place – Year 7 and 8)
Trajco Nikolov (Second Place – Year 9 and 10)
Angella Dcunha (Second Place – Girls Division)
Nigel Dcunha (Second Place – Year 7 and 8)

Scores and individual placings out of the 166 players:



Cruze De Giorgio (6 points; 3rd), Trajco Nikolov (5 points; 10th),
Nigel Dcunha (4.5 points; 23rd), Angella Dcunha (4.5 points; 24th),
Edwin Joby (4.5 points; 31st), Eric Tun (4 points; 38th),
Max Mircevski (4 points; 39th), Aidian Ebenezer (4 points; 40th),
Luke Gigliotti (4 points; 41st), Justin Taduran (4 points; 43rd),
Lachlan Brundell (3 points; 64th), Elbiya Joby (3 points; 65th)

Well done to all players for their achievements and attitude.

Mr Strantzen
Chess Co-ordinator

During the month of May, we had a program of seminars for students in Years 10-12 to choose from. Many universities, TAFEs and the ADF presented to interested students.

Students have also received constant updates on all the programs, seminars, open days, etc., that tertiary institutions are presenting. This information can also be accessed via the Year 12 resources page (accessed via the 'important information' tab on the Careers Website).

We also continue to encourage students to apply for University early entry programs. We have already been notified of the 20+ students who have been accepted into the VU Guaranteed program. These students have now secured a place at Victoria University or Victoria University Polytechnic in 2022 (or 2023, if a Year 11 student). Information on this program and other early entry programs can also be found on the Year 12 resources page.

We are now at the time of the year when students need to be selecting subjects for the following year. For Year 10 students, it is particularly important for you, as you need to decide what to study in the senior school years. This involves thinking ahead to what you might like to do when you finish school.

Study choice is your personal decision. It requires you to think carefully about three things:

- what you are interested in
- what you are good at, and
- which studies will help you reach your goals.

While it is a good idea to speak to other people about their experiences and what they think you are good at, the decisions you make about study should be your own. These are important decisions to set you on course for your life after school, but Year 10 is not the only chance you'll have to work out what is right for you. There are many pathways to tertiary study and the career you want.

In Year 10, you will be asked to choose the senior studies qualification (VCE or VCAL) that you want to complete and for your study plan for Years 11 and 12. To make good decisions as you move into the senior years, you might also need to research tertiary courses which might require pre-requisite subjects to be studied in Years 11 and 12. In particular, you need to know:

- what tertiary courses are available upon completion of your VCE or VCAL certificate
- the entrance requirements, including prerequisite subjects, that are required for any university courses you might be considering.

VTAC (Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre) has a range of tools and information to support your research. On the VTAC site (www.vtac.edu.au) you will find the following tools to assist you:

- *CourseSearch* is an online database for researching tertiary courses.
- *Prerequisite and Course Explorer* helps you create and change VCE programs while identifying prerequisite studies needed for entry into tertiary courses.
- The comprehensive *VTAC Guide to Researching Tertiary Education* covers:
 - Types of tertiary courses
 - Researching campus life
 - The cost of study
 - Research questions to ask
 - How to use VTAC's course research tools
 - Planning pathways
 - You can also download and complete the *Year 10 tertiary course research plan*

VET (VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING)

Research shows that 4 out of 5 parents would prefer their child to go to university after school over Vocational Education and that many young people and parents do not understand the benefits of Vocational Education and training (e.g., TAFE, apprenticeships, traineeships).

2017 Australian research suggests that:

- Nine out of the 10 top occupations predicted to have the most jobs growth are in Vocational training areas
- The median full-time income for a vocational education graduate is \$56,000 vs \$54,000 for someone with a bachelor degree
- Nearly 8 in 10 Vocational Education graduates have a job soon after training, vs about 7 in 10 university graduates
- More than 9 in 10 trade apprentices have jobs after finishing training.

You can read the research report at this link - <https://bit.ly/2l0Yz1R>

Currently at St Monica's, we offer the following VET studies for students in Years 11 and 12:

Allied Health Assistance, Automotive, Building and Construction (carpentry), Business, Community Services, Electrotechnology Studies, Engineering Studies, Hospitality (Kitchen Operations), Information, Digital Media and Technology, Plumbing, Small Business (Operations/Innovation), Sport and Recreation, Dance.

There are sometimes other options available – i.e. offsite courses for those who have specialist areas of interest. Please discuss these areas of interest with the Careers Department or Senior Teacher (VETiS).

At St Monica's, VET subjects can be studied as part of a VCE course but must be studied as part of a VCAL course. When studying a VET subject, it is strongly recommended that a student undertakes Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) to give them the opportunity to apply the skills they are learning in their course, in the workplace. Students are encouraged to consider a VET subject as part of their senior school studies.

Choosing the right subjects can sometimes be a difficult task. If a student needs assistance with subject selection, they are more than welcome to make an appointment to see one of the College's careers practitioners for guidance.

Paul White
Senior Teacher (Pathways)



Counsellors Report

Bringing Positive Psychology Home

In 2017, St Monica's College began to embrace Positive Psychology in Education. Positive Psychology is the application of research in areas such as optimism, resilience, positive emotions, mindset, character strengths, and emotional intelligence. This year, students in Years 7 - 10 are drawing on the domains of positive education within their pastoral classes. Our Positive Education Enhanced Curriculum (PEEC) was developed by The Institute of Positive Education (Geelong Grammar School) and covers Positive Emotions, Positive Relationships, Positive Engagement, Positive Health, Positive Accomplishment and Positive Purpose, and puts flourishing at the heart of this framework.

It is evident in the research that when one experiences higher levels of wellbeing, they also experience higher levels of productivity, learn better and perform better. Positive Education allows for the explicit teaching of skills to enhance wellbeing, to deal with life challenges, live a meaningful and purposeful life, and strengthen relationships with the self and others. These areas together help to buffer the impact of stress, anxiety and mood concerns and on the flip side, help to increase enjoyment and engagement at school.

The skills taught within the pastoral program can extend well beyond the gates of St Monica's College! There are many ways families can bring Positive Psychology home, to enhance connections, boost positive emotions and build resilience.

Positive Emotions: Positive emotions, humour and laughter can alter the atmosphere of the family home. Our brain's default position is negative, and hunting and enjoying our wins, helps our brains to learn the skill of paying more attention to what is going well.

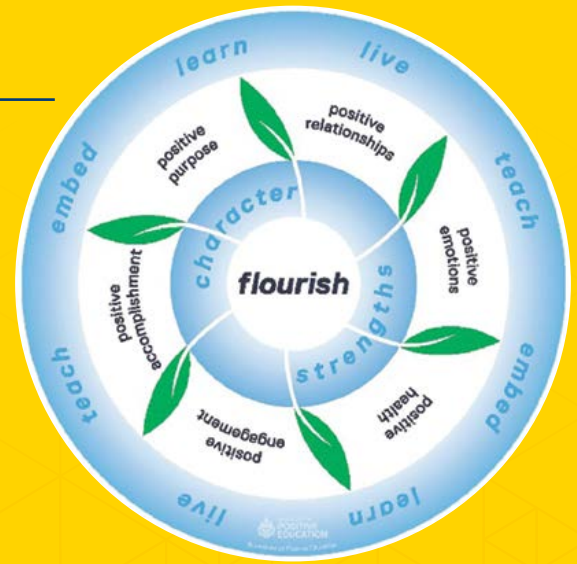
- Practise hunting the good stuff with your young person whether that be a win, a positive experience they encountered that day, reliving a past positive experience or sharing something they are grateful for.
- Embrace optimism and help your young person make "lemonade out of lemons" by helping them identify the small positives of a difficult time, challenge, or outcome.
- Engage in random acts of kindness for someone in your family.

Positive Relationships: Relationships are a key part to maintaining emotional wellbeing. Familial relationships facilitate a sense of connection and belonging; they help to buffer the impact of stress and provide a supportive network during challenging moments. Further, these relationships provide a space for adolescents to reflect, grow and flourish.

- Eat dinner (or breakfast) together - as a minimum having one adult available to share a meal with your children at least five times a week! Meal time offers an opportunity for social skills development, daily reflections, and familial bonding
- Model gratitude within relationships with your young person. For instance, you may have noticed that your child put their morning cereal bowl in the sink (or washed it!). You could then reflect back to your child that you were appreciative that they did this. For example "I noticed that you washed the cereal bowls from breakfast, and I wanted to say how thoughtful that was, and how much I appreciated that extra assistance"
- Spend at least 5 minutes talking to each member of your family
- Draw on curiosity instead of interrogation
- Discuss 'checking in': While providing appropriate independence, discuss a check in process with your young person for when they are out to ensure you know they are okay.

Positive Health: Looking after our minds and bodies allows us to get the most of them!

- Help your young person practise good sleep hygiene including a before bed routine, minimising devices, and getting into bed at a reasonable hour



- Engage in regular movement which can be done with another member of the family to continue building on relationships
- Use strong emotions as opportunities for teaching and learning
- Build resilience by asking everyone in the family to share one challenge they overcame in their day or by posing an appropriate challenge and encouraging a family brainstorm on how to manage it.

Positive Accomplishment: Developmentally, adolescents tend to push away from parents and this can make it difficult for you to know how to best support your young person as they progress through their schooling.

- Help your young person list what work is required to be completed, and plan how they will work towards this
- Encourage a growth mindset whereby skills and knowledge can be developed by practice and perseverance. The simplest way to build a growth mindset is using the word "yet" to instil hope and optimism, that with practice, the brain's capacity to learn new things is increased; i.e. "I do not understand this maths topic" versus "I don't understand this maths topic, yet"
- Extra-curricular activities provide another avenue to feel a sense of achievement and success, and allows young people to learn new skills, build confidence, and engage in their strengths.

Positive Purpose: Adolescence is an important time for identity formation which includes strengths, mindsets and values. Guardians can build on this by helping them to identify and draw on their values in order to make decisions about what they stand for and how they behave.

- Identify your own strengths as a guardian and how you can use these more in your parenting
- Draw on news and societal events to engage your young person in conversations about their values and what they stand for, while exploring if their behaviour and actions are in line with their values.

Positive Engagement: Tapping into curiosity, interest and motivation can help young people remain engaged and connected whether it be behaviourally, cognitively or socially.

- Identify and highlight the strengths in your young person and encourage them to use them more in their studies, in their relationships and in their personal pursuits
- Consider an extracurricular activity which allows your young person to tap into their skills and strengths and really shine
- Practise positive communication and active listening with your young person.

If you are interested in exploring your strengths further, www.viacharacter.org and www.the-strengths-exchange.com.au/videos.html

Mrs Diana Murphy, Miss Sarah Malseed, Mr Oliver Jones, Ms Michelle Miller and Miss Belinda Sudano.

College Counsellors

Class of
2000



20
Year Reunion

Shalom, anywhere you go שלום

Class of
2005



15
Year Reunion

Class of
2010



10
Year Reunion

Shalom, anywhere you go **שלום**

Class of 2020



1 Year Reunion



*Shalom,
anywhere you go*

SMC

PRAY AND PERSEVERE

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