Principal’s Message

Dear St Leo's Community,

Two weeks ago my family were literally flooded with gifts, cards and your many good wishes.

On behalf of my family I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude and thanks. It certainly lifted our spirits and has contributed in a very positive way towards my recovery.

Over the past 7 months I have missed the many connections and interactions with you all and I am very much looking forward to returning in 2013 to continue the great work done by Mr Reicher, Mrs White and the staff over this time. 2013 will see me reconnecting with our current members and the new members of our St Leo's community.

Once again thankyou for your generosity, support and prayers. I wish each of you a joyous, peaceful and safe time with your families over Christmas.

God bless,

Anthony Gleeson

Mr Reicher’s report to follow soon.

Marc Reicher, Acting College Principal
Message from the Assistant Principal

Appreciating Excellence

On Thursday 6th December starting at 9 am the College will be hosting an assembly where we will affirm some of the examples of excellence that have occurred this semester.

# The students who received 1st place in the recently completed examination sessions.
# Students who have been nominated for Diligence Awards by their subject teacher for the second semester.
# Students who successfully competed in the recent Reading competition
# Presentations from the Year 10 Student Conference
# Sports awards
# Age champions from our recent swimming carnival

And we will announce our winning House for 2012

At the start of the year Mr Gleeson spoke to the students about the importance of attendance at school. Successful learning takes place more successfully when there is a commitment to coming to school every day. We have had a number of students who have achieved this. These students will be presented to the whole school community at our End of Year Review on Friday 14th December. All students are expected to attend and we invite all parents and family members to come along and see our show case presentations.

At the end of next week (6/7 December) the College will be sending home notification to those families whose students will be receiving a subject or special award at the End of Year Review. This letter will also contain details of the timing of rehearsals for the various performers and award winners during the day on Friday. Students may wear mufti on this occasion.

Families with Year 10 students will be informed via the mail of the activities that the Year 10 cohort will engage in over their last two weeks this term. This notification contains the times that the students are expected to be at school. If for any reason a student cannot attend school during this period then the normal expectations for an absence applies.

On Thursday 13th December students will be celebrating our End of Year Mass and St Leo’s Day Fair that is a major fund-raiser for our five College charities. This is a compulsory day but, just as important, an enjoyable day for our students. We ask our parents to support this senior students effort by having your sons and daughters attend school. Students please attend and bring your money with you.

Mrs Susan White, Acting Assistant Principal
Pastoral News

Dear Year 7 Parents and Carers,

Year 7 MASS: As I have mentioned in The Pride newsletter at the beginning of this term, Year 7 will be having a Year 7 Mass this Wednesday, 5th December, 9.30am, at OLOR (next to St Leo's). You are warmly invited to join us if you are able.

EXAMS: Well done to all of Year 7 who have managed their way through their first exam week. Students should have now received their exams back, and have taken note of the feedback from teachers. In tutor time, students have completed a reflection on what they did well, and what they need to improve for next year.

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS: A heartfelt thanks to all the families in Year 7 who have been filling our St Vincent de Paul Christmas Hampers. Year 7 have, I think, been the most generous and most organised in the school at bringing in their contributions, and these gifts and food will be much appreciated by others in our community who will have little Christmas cheer without our donations.

XAVIER: a reminder that Year 7 students in XAVIER will be having a mufti day on Friday - please wear plain clothes (preferably in your team colour of red!) and bring a gold coin donation.

Megan de Kantzow
Year 7 Co-ordinator,

on behalf of the Year 7 tutor team: Mrs Hasman, Mrs Herczeg, Mrs Wilson, Mrs Pearson, Mrs McCrea, Ms El Hage, Mr Lomaca, Mrs Teys, Ms Jones.
Mission News

Come Join Us in Eucharist
Every Tuesday from 8 am
Every Friday from 1.05 pm
Mass in the College Chapel

The right spirit of Christmas

Keeping Christ in Christmas.

Well we are on the countdown to the big day! Santa has arrived in most shopping centres, you can almost hear the clang of the elves busy hammers at the North Pole and the swish of the pen on the naughty and nice list. The cash registers are ringing in the shops, hams are smoking and all over Australia prawns are quaking in their shells.

As Catholics, this season should be much more than the blatant commercialism that we see all around us. We are entering Advent, a time of preparation to celebrate the birth of Our Lord. It is time for us to put Christ back into Christmas. This is a task that can be quite difficult, a little like the ‘Amazing Race.’ Are we up for the challenge?

Let's make 2012 the year of the ‘Amazing Christmas Race’. Here is your challenge:

· Select Christmas cards that have religious designs and verse.
· Buy your cards from Oxfam or other charities.
· Contribute toiletries for the local homeless.
· Replace the bells and baubles on your tree with angels or nativity characters.
· Make sure you have a nativity scene in your house.
· Buy some presents from the Peru stall.
· Read the children some of the beautiful nativity stories as well as the traditional Santa tales.
· Try to get to Mass.
· Consider placing a Jesse tree in your home instead of an Advent Calendar filled with chocolate. Then each day you can trace Jesus’ family heritage.
  o (http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Christianity/2000/12/Jesse-Tree.aspx)

As a family follow this link to an online quiz about the Nativity story and test your knowledge. http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Christianity/Quiz/Nativity-Story.aspx it can be a lot of fun and spark some great conversation about the true meaning of Christmas and why it is so important in our faith.

· Buy ‘the man who has everything’ a ‘global gift’ from the Caritas website
· Commit to sponsoring a child this year through Caritas or World Catholic Mission.
· Read the nativity story from the Bible.
· Contribute to the Vinnie’s Christmas appeal.
· Commit to caring for God’s creation by sending e-cards.
· Always write Christmas not Xmas!
News from around the College

Finance News

Parents please note Sibling Discounts on Tuition Fees are NOT automatic - application must be made by completing, signing and submitting the form no later than 5th December.

No sibling discount will be given unless forms are returned, signed by person(s) responsible for payment of fees.

English news

On Wednesday 21st November, Year 7 students were treated to the final round of the inaugural public speaking competition. The competition began in Term 3 when students completed a persuasive speech for the unit, “How do we compose texts to inform and persuade?” Students had the choice to draw upon their recent Science project and to speak about Mars as the future Earth or the topic “We are failing our planet.” Students also had the opportunity to present their point of view on whether the Olympics are a waste of money or the benefits of reading. The range of topics facilitated diverse and engaging speeches. Each class nominated 2-3 finalists to speak at the final round of the competition. The following students should all be very proud of their achievement of making it to the finals:

Samuel Spadek
Jessica Richards
Luke Antoun
Molly Farrell
Brenda Haddad
Laura Moran
Thomas Peregrina
Mark Tobin
Jessica Finlay
Ethan Scavia
Reon Rebello
Ben Molloy
Joshua Croasdale
Sarah O’Shannessy

The winner of the competition was Laura Moran and the runner-up was Luke Antoun. Both speakers presented entertaining, controlled speeches that were well received by the audience. I’d like to thank Mrs Neryle Sheldon and Mrs Donna Atkins for giving up their time to adjudicate.

Debating News

Ben Field, Tobias Hilton and Corben Smith, part of our Year 10 debating team, recently attended a debating competition organised by Sydney University Debating Society. This society is ranked first in the world against very prestigious international universities. The competition has become so successful that 60 teams entered from a variety of schools across Sydney and Wollongong.

Our team debated against teams from Scots, Sydney Girls High School and Smiths Hill High School. The three debates were very close but our team only managed one win against Sydney Girls. We were ranked 31 out of 60 on total points and our top speaker, Tobias, ranked 26 out of 183 for individual speaking points. Congratulations to this team for a fine effort. Special commendation goes to Corben who had had only one in-school debate prior to this competition.

Debating and Public Speaking have gone from strength to strength this year: our Year 9 team did extremely well getting to the finals; the number of students interested in debating is rising; more workshops were attended; and an in-school mini-comp was introduced. Students entered a number of Public Speaking competitions, especially those set up by the UN Youth Organisation.

This year for the first time Year 7 students were involved in public speaking as part of their English course. Ms Atkins and I were invited to judge the finals held recently. We both were very impressed at the high standard of presentation and content of the final 15 students and it was a very close decision to select the winner. Congratulations to the winner Laura Moran and runner-up Luke Antoun.

Neryle Sheldon
Debating and Public Speaking Coordinator
The year is wrapping up with research and wide reading classes going strongly in the library. I have had a great year working with students and staff on a variety of projects and managing to read quite a few novels myself along with the teachers. Our obvious enjoyment of reading acts as a strong model for the students. We have kept up with new fiction and non-fiction resources. More than 100 titles have been purchased from suggestions in *The book book*.

To complete the Reading Challenges, 197 students will receive one or more certificates at either the next College Assembly or year assemblies. At publication time we don’t know how many Premier’s Gold Awards we have gained but are hoping for several.

Chess took off in a huge way this year with many games being played at recess and lunchtime. The Science Department organised a competition which was held in the library.

Students are welcome to borrow as many books as they can manage for the holidays. Some students have started to stock up already. Our books love to go on holidays except to the beach, where sand and water can be a fatal combination. Our students generally care for books and have willingly replaced the few titles which have had an accident or been lost during the year. Happy reading for the holidays.

**Neryle Sheldon**  
Teacher Librarian

**Ever thought of being a Volunteer Tutor?**  
One way we support our students at St Leo’s is through a ‘Parent and Community Tutoring Program’. This program has been running for two years and we hope to continue the program in 2013. The program assists students who may need that ‘little extra help’ to achieve their potential.

The main focus has been on the literacy skills of reading, writing, spelling, and grammar. In 2013 we hope to provide some numeracy help as well.

Our tutors do not have to be ‘experts’ in any area. The focus is very much on basic skills, with our tutors role being to encourage and support the students. Our existing tutors all had reservations when they began but are now confident about the assistance they are giving to improve student learning. They find it not only enjoyable but also rewarding as their participation is really making a difference.

Our tutors tell us they have become increasingly familiar with what skills students require to progress in their learning. This familiarity has benefited their own children as well as those students who were tutored. Training is provided to all tutors.

If you can spare as little as one period (about an hour) a fortnight please consider being involved. For more information please contact either:

Sarah Szacsvay (Tutor Coordinator)  
Phone: 98752843  
Mobile: 0421082909  
Email: sbuttfield@hotmail.com  
or

Tony Gulliford (Literacy Coordinator)  
Phone: 94873555 (school)  
Mobile: 0404004700  
Email: anthony.gulliford@dbb.catholic.edu.au

**Year 10 PASS Excursion**  
On Tuesday 27th November 2012, The students of year 10 PASS went on a sailing excursion with Mr Trotz, Mr Trainer and Ms Stimson.

The day turned out to be a success with some great weather.

Students had the opportunity to learn how to operate and steer such a vessel on arguably one of the most beautiful harbors in the world.
During the operation of the vessel students were able to view landmarks such as the Sydney Opera House, Sail under the Harbor Bridge, view Luna Park and Fort Denison.

This was definitely an experience of a lifetime.

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Sport News

insert sports news

On Friday 23rd November 2012, St Leo’s Catholic College held its annual Swimming Carnival at the Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre.

What a fantastic day of competition it was for our swimmers in the pool demonstrating great spirit and skill.

The day started with our House Captains leading the Parade.

Our best dressed House for 2012 was Xavier on 28 points followed by Aquinas on 24 points and in equal third Chanel and Loyola on 20 points.

There were a number of other bonus points scored on the day for cheering and getting involved in the spirit of the Carnival.

On the day we were privileged enough to have a new record broken by Sophia Groundwater in year 7 for the 50m Backstroke. The record was originally held by K Bird with a time of 37.38 seconds. The new record is 37.07 seconds.

Our Age Champions for the Carnival are as follows:
Our Winning House for the 2012 Swimming Carnival is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE GROUP</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U/12’s</td>
<td>Camille Chin</td>
<td>Ryan Sweeney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U/13’s</td>
<td>Sophia Groundwater</td>
<td>Thomas Peregrina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U/14’s</td>
<td>Sarah McIntosh</td>
<td>Ivan Zagvozkine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U/15’s</td>
<td>Maegan Chin</td>
<td>Tim Larman-Yalda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U/16’s</td>
<td>Natasha George</td>
<td>Phillip Zaaour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open’s</td>
<td>Kaitlyn Pejkovic</td>
<td>Lachlan Hinds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Thank you to all the staff, students and parents who got involved in the swimming carnival and a huge congratulations to all the swimmers and their achievements. Well done!!

For full results see the link on the SPports News web page.

Parent Network

Please help welcome Year 7 2013 to St Leo’s

Welcome morning tea for Year 7 2013 parents and carers

On the Wednesday 30th January 2013, the College will host a morning tea for parents & carers of our new students, to welcome them to the College as they drop off their child for their first day. Can you spare an hour or two to help with preparation, serving or clean up?

Year 7 Information Evening

This will be held on 12 February 2013. We will need a few helpers to set up & serve refreshments.

Year 7 Family BBQ

This is a fun event to welcome our new Year 7 students and their families. It is scheduled for 22 February 2013.
We are looking for a team of helpers to assist with various activities for the evening – preparation, shopping, set up, BBQing, serving & clean up. Please help make this an enjoyable evening for our new students!

If you can assist with any of these events, please email Marinela Mendes on mendes@bigpond.net.au.

Soup Van helpers needed
On the fourth Tuesday of each month, St. Leo's parents and Year 11 and 12 students prepare and serve hot meals to those without a home in the Hornsby area. We are currently preparing the roster for the December/January school holiday period, when we will take some extra shifts. Volunteers can choose to cook, serve or even drive the van. It’s a wonderful way to serve those in need and get to know your fellow St. Leo’s parents at the same time.

Please contact Connie Klimko cklimko@au1.ibm.com or phone 0407 603 877 if you are interested in volunteering.

Looking ahead to next year
Parents and carers of all students are also invited to think about ways you could be involved with the College. We are always looking for more parents to become involved in one or more areas of the Parent network. There are many different ways.

We encourage you to complete this expression of interest form and look forward to your involvement.

Community News