Our Theme - “The Joy of the Gospel-Putting our Faith in to action”

Sunday 4 December, 2016 – Second Sunday of Advent – “...Prepare a way for the Lord...” (Mt 3:1-12)

Dear Parents, Guardians, Care Givers, Grandparents and Students,

We are preparing during the Advent season for the coming of Jesus. In this Sunday’s Gospel, John the Baptist is telling people to change their lives to prepare the way for Jesus. We also must make changes in our lives. John is baptising people as an outward sign of cleansing. But they must prove they have changed their ways by their actions.

We are also called to do exactly that – to live our faith – by putting our faith into action. It is a huge challenge for us all. In other words – do we walk the talk. It is difficult to say the least! It takes time and it takes courage. Two factors which sometimes we are a little short of in this world.

I think John was expecting a mighty and powerful ruler who would physically overcome the Romans. Jesus was not of this image.

As we saw in the fantastic and real life Journey to Bethlehem portrayed on Tuesday in our College grounds – Jesus was born in a manger, on straw bales and surrounded by animals and some shepherds. Then came 3 wise men on camels who recognised the true identity and greatness of this new born child. This child challenges us at Christmas time – to be compassionate to others; have the time to be with family and friends; to have the courage to right the things we see as unjust in our world. As the liturgy was entitled – it is a journey. It is a journey which runs the length of our lives – to make this world a better place for all people. It is a huge challenge that started in Bethlehem and is at the core of our Christian faith today.

In this season of Advent – we are all part of this never ending story of our faith journey.

The liturgy we had yesterday was amazing. There has already been a great deal of positive feedback from the 1100 primary aged students, parents, staff and visitors who were our guests for the liturgy.
An event like this demands much time and preparation, and I would like to thank in particular our Director of Evangelisation and Catholic Formation – Mr Daniel Petrie. His vision, planning and time has given a realistic meaning to his title – assisting and guiding members of our community to a deeper understanding of their faith and providing the opportunity for others to put their faith into action.

The most impressive factor that I noticed both in the preparation, the liturgies and the very quick dismantle – was the involvement of people from a cross section of our community. At one stage – I bumped into a parent who had heard we were packing gift bags for our guests – and said she wanted to assist. I took her into the staffroom where there were many hundreds of bags being prepared. A true example of someone putting their faith into action. This was coupled with many members of staff, casual teachers, students, support staff and CSO staff. The Road to Bethlehem was a true faith building community event open to all.

Mocktail Evening for our College Volunteers
It was great to see over 40 of our volunteers and their family members enjoy the fruits of our Year 11 Hospitality students in our thank you Mocktail evening last Thursday. Each enjoyed drinks and canapes prepared by the students that day.

In my thank you speech – I highlighted that it is certainly true that it “takes a village to raise a child...”. Without our volunteers, attaining the current fantastic outcomes of our students would be so much more difficult. I highlighted two particular volunteers:

The first was Ms Barbara Aquilina – a volunteer in our unique Community Tutoring Program - who was last publicly thanked by Br Myron Byrne (the last Christian Brother Headmaster here in 1983 – as he wrote in his Annual Report that year):

“The Ladies Auxiliary has also promoted social activities for each year and although a couple of enterprises met with little response others were great successes. Mrs Barbara Aquilina and her enthusiastic helpers from the Primary presented a Year 2000 Night, a dinner dance in the Hall that transformed the place with plants, lighting effects and shimmering foil and some of the mothers catering...”

I was very humbled to publicly thank Barbara again 33 years later for her continuing voluntary work for our students.
The other person was Ms Sarah Szacsvay who is now a past parent here at the College but certainly is very involved in many areas of the College. From Coordinator of Tutors for our unique and successful Community Tutoring Program to assisting serving cups of tea for our new parents, Sarah is almost a member of our staff. Sarah is here most days of the week – when not looking after her two sons and husband!

It is vital that as a faith filled learning community we have many role models for our students (and staff). Here are two ladies that are definite role models for our entire community. A sincere thank you to all our volunteers.

Thank you to our students and staff who assisted in the preparation of the lovely food and gifts for this important evening.

**From Two HSC ArtExpress Nominations to One Selection**

Two of our HSC students were nominated for ArtExpress 2017. This State event is the Showcase of excellent works across NSW. These students were Lance Bautista (for his Body of Work-Transcendence) and Ryan Macri (Poisonous Ink).

Ryan’s work has now been selected for inclusion in this showcase of excellence. Congratulations Ryan and to his teachers over the past six years!

**Congratulations – Two Year 9 Students**

During the week we heard that Chiara Donagemma of Year 9 has won Gold at the Australian Junior Ice Skating Championships. Chiara and the other members of the team will now compete at the World Junior Synchronized Ice Skating Championships in Canada in March 2017. The College is very proud to support Chiara in her chosen sport!

**Georgia Peregrina** – also of Year 9 will be presented at the Assembly next week congratulating her on her representation as a NSW All Schools member in Swimming.

Congratulations to both these girls on their fantastic (and upcoming) achievements in their chosen sports.
Year 10 - Urban Challenge School Camp
As I was completing my Pride report this morning – photos and messages were being sent to my mobile about our Year 10 students currently undergoing the 3 day Urban Challenge School Camp. It provides the ultimate real-world experience to our students. Small teams, each with a teacher and an Urban Challenge Guide, embark on a fast-paced unfolding adventure through Sydney and its surrounds. Teams must complete urban-flavoured activities, clue chases, meal preparation, go-discover challenges and much more along the way. Each team member has a functional role that contributes to the running of the team (such as Photographer, Navigator, or Team Leader). Participants must work together to take actual responsibility for their own money, transport, timings and meals.

Parts of the challenge are run via an interactive website where teams are required to upload blogs and photos and check-in for their next day's itinerary and activities. In addition to this, parents have a Programme Page for those wanting to keep track of what the teams are up to, allowing parents and caregivers the chance to participate from the lounge, or check out the daily blogs and photos as they are uploaded. Over the next two evenings the teams will stay in YHA youth hostels and other city group accommodation overnight enabling participants to experience this style of accommodation in a safe, supervised and structured way. We wish our students and staff all the best!

Mr AF Gleeson
Principal

“...We are all but travellers here...”
St Mary of the Cross Mackillop (27/11/1866)
Assistant Principal
Swimming Carnival
This year’s Swimming Carnival was a wonderful whole school event. Our Year 12 Student Leaders were outstanding in their leadership on the day. I was particularly impressed with the spirit shown by students.

The attendance was excellent on the day and I thank parents for your support on this important community day.

Attendance
It is important that students attend the College until the end of the academic year. If for any reason your child is unable to attend then I would ask parents to follow the normal College processes. Please phone the College reception prior to 9:30am on the day of absence and send in a signed note either through the College App or a handwritten note to the Tutor teacher on the day of return.

Year in Review
At the end of every year, the College holds a Year in Review. The planning has already started to make this a true celebration of the many wonderful things about St Leo’s and a great acknowledgment of student efforts and achievements throughout the year. The ceremony will occur at 11.30am on Tuesday 13th December in The Light of Christ Centre. All students will be expected to attend, as it is a normal school day.

We wish to issue an invitation to family members of our students and friends of the College to this significant end of school year activity. Invitation to award winners will be sent prior to the event.

Academic Awards will be presented to students at a special Assembly at the start of 2017. This way we are able to acknowledge the academic achievements of the Class of 2016 at the same time.

Cars in and around the College grounds
The safety of students and staff at the College is our highest priority. In order to ensure a safe environment for all students, staff and visitors to the College I would ask all parents to take careful note of the procedures outlined below.

Since the roadways through the College are thoroughfares for students moving to classes or entering or leaving the College grounds, vehicle access to the College is restricted to essential traffic (deliveries, staff parking, visitors during the day) only. There is no access for parents along driveways to pick up or drop off their children. Students need to disembark from cars near the Unwin Road or Woolcott Avenue gateways. Parents are also asked not to park across gateways while students disembark.

Please note there is no access through the school from Woolcott Avenue to Unwin Road.
Owing to the narrow roadways, cars delivering students to the top (Woolcott Avenue) area of the College should travel in a clockwise direction (40 km per hour maximum) continuing along Windarra Crescent to meet Woolcott Avenue at the gate near the College Library (not turning right into Woolcott Avenue at the first intersection). This is shown in the diagram below.

Often the College is quite congested at the end of the school day. I would encourage parents who are picking up their child to arrange a pick up point in Woolcott Avenue, Yardley Avenue or Unwin Road. This is a strategy that can save time and reduce congestion.

**Parents are requested to drive with great caution around these streets, as there are** many excited students around this time – from not just our own school – but also of the schools nearby.

These procedures have been put in place in the interests of your child's safety, a higher concern than the minor inconveniences of, for example, students having to walk from the gates, and we ask you to respect and support them.

**Students Driving to School**
Any student who wishes to drive to school can only do so after they and their parents have read and agreed to the conditions set down by the College. These conditions are to ensure the safety of your child and other students. Students should see their Year Leader for the driving to school form.
The Road to Bethlehem – a liturgical pilgrimage

On Tuesday 29\textsuperscript{th} of November in the 60\textsuperscript{th} Year of St Leo’s Catholic College, the Nativity story was brought to life. This marks a 60 year cycle of tradition as in 1956 the first concert held at the College was a Nativity play.

The Nativity story - The Christmas story, Our story!
Each one of us is another page in the never ending story of God’s love.

The Nativity narrative tells of the birth of Jesus. When we walk into a shopping centre or through an airport during the season of Christmas, we see Nativity scenes inside a stable of statues featuring Baby Jesus, Mary, Joseph, the three Wise men known as Magi and a few farm animals. Yet how many of us know in detail the miracles, awe and wonder that is the Christmas story.

How many of us stop and think about what it meant to be Mary – a 14 year old peasant girl, pregnant outside of marriage which carried with it punishment by death, parents who certainly would not have believed that an angel spoke to her and told her that she would become pregnant with the Son of God? How many of us stop to think that Mary becomes pregnant purely because God’s voice said those words?

How many of us would have been as forgiving as Joseph who would rather bear the burden of public shame than to have Mary put on trial for what he thought was an affair? How many of us would have agreed to be a loving devoted father to a baby that at first was not his and one that he could hardly begin to understand how it came into being?

How many of us would risk our lives like the 3 Magi on a journey across several countries and deserts, searching for a baby messiah that was written about in ancient prophecies, guided by nothing other than a bright star? No guarantee that their risk was worth it but the faith that their journey would reach its destination.
The Christmas story is painted in the colours of trust, courage, faith, sacrifice, doubt, journey, relationships and above all love – a love so immense that God took the form of a human to walk among us, to live like us, to die like us and to suffer for us so that we would be healed. A God who loves us that much is a God worth loving in return and learning about through this story. It is for this reason we at St Leo’s chose to break open the covers of the Christmas story so that the story of the birth of the Son of God will continue to be written on our minds so that Jesus can be reborn this Christmas in the cradle of our hearts.

Our first liturgy saw almost 1100 students gather at St Leo’s from Holy Family Lindfield, OLOR Waitara, St Patrick’s Asquith, Our Lady Help of Christians Epping, St Phillip Neri Northbridge, St Agatha’s Pennant Hills, St Thomas’ Willoughby, Prouille Wahroonga and St Lucy’s Wahroonga. To see staff, students and parents gather before the manger from across our diocese was an emotional moment to witness the cohesive and communal power God’s Word in 2016.

The second liturgy saw the entire St Leo’s Catholic College student and staff family gather as well as Sister Margaret Farrell and Sister Jenni Ryan (Sisters of Mercy North Sydney), Father Robert Borg and Father David Ranson, Deacon Roberto and residents from Catholic Healthcare McQuoin Park Retirement Village. To have four generations of God’s people gathered and immersed in His story brings a deep sense of Emmanuel!

It is with deepest gratitude that we thank the extraordinary St Leo’s staff, students and CSO staff who have demonstrated sacrificial love through their generous volunteering and work on Bethlehem. In particular Mr Greg Wilson from the CSO for his assistance in logistics, planning, creation of the backdrops and the constant support of materials acquisition. Mr Andrew Introna for the design, construction, creation and dismantling of props and sets. Mrs Tracie Axton, Mrs Julie Atkins and Mrs Mary Connor (CSO) for their creative genius and endless hours in designing and creating costumes and props. Mr Adrian Gomez for ongoing hands on support and superb acting. Mrs Olivia Gauci and the Choir for their heavenly music and ongoing support of the liturgical life of the College, Mrs Sam Murphy for her wonderful dramatization and direction, the extraordinary coordination of Mrs Jo Gower and the Office Team and for the deep and genuine support from Mr Anthony Mahoney, Mrs Julie Macri and Mr Tony Gleeson to enable Bethlehem to become a reality on St Leo’s soil.

We pray that the Season of Advent that lines the road to Bethlehem inspires new room in our hearts so that Jesus is reborn in us anew. May we become willing cradles to welcome the stranger, the disadvantaged and the broken this Christmas. May God bless you and keep you in the Palm of His hands.

Mr Daniel Petrie
College Director of Evangelisation and Catholic Formation
Pride Extras
Text Book Hire
Please note that ALL TEXT BOOKS NEED TO BE RETURNED TO THE LIBRARY NO LATER THAN TUESDAY 8 DECEMBER.

As I am sure you can all appreciate it is to everyone's benefit that books are returned. The Book Hire staff will assess the condition of the books and in some instances books may need to be replaced – and you will be charged accordingly.

Many thanks for your attention to this request.

From the Mathematics Department
With the year coming to an end it is important that we reflect on the year that has past. Whilst students may feel that they have not achieved as well as they would have liked, the question needs to be asked what are they going to do differently next year to improve?

Things that could assist improvement:
- Completing all set tasks.
- Asking for help as required.
- Revising new content each week and developing summaries.
- Attending Maths Help regularly.
- Teach a family member what has been learnt. Explain the concept and demonstrate how to apply with examples.

Each student is encouraged to discuss their results with their teachers to identify strengths and areas that require improvement.

On Monday 28th November, Year 10 students took part in a StartSmart program run by the Commonwealth Bank. The program aims to educate secondary students in financial literacy. Students attended a 50-minute workshop to explore concepts around smart earning. Concepts included employee rights and responsibilities, award wages, tax and checking your pay slip. Students found these workshops extremely beneficial and realised they need to be better informed within the workplace.

Maths Help finished for the year on Monday 28th November, Week 8. It will return in 2017.
Congratulations to Year 12 Visual Arts students

The Visual Arts staff would like to congratulate Lance Bautista and Ryan Macri, who have been nominated for Art Express. This is a fantastic achievement for these students, who were nominated from over 9,200 students in NSW.

Lance’s work consisted of a series of photographic images of the figure travelling through the Urban environment. Ryan used the allegory of an octopus to explore feelings of suffocation and struggles with the subconscious.

Ryan’s work has been chosen to be exhibited next year at Campbelltown Art Gallery.

Juliette Carson
Leader of Visual Arts

Lance Bautista “Transcendence”  PHOTOMEDIA

Through the unseen perspectives of everyday life in the urban city, these photographs reflect how architecture and photography can together make art. The busy world around us can be frozen and kept forever through a snap, reflecting the beauty of it. Adding a subject in the photos adds a sense of scale, occupancy and action, the darkened and illuminated regions of the city itself create a sense of mystery and drama, documenting a journey through the night. Living in Sydney, life never stops within and outside of school, it is fast paced. I want to represent the aspect of growing up as a teenager with a passion for photography and city life. You only get to live life once.
Ryan Macri "Poisonous Ink" SCULPTURE and PHOTOMEDIA

In my Body of Work, I have been inspired by the mythical legend of the Kraken, a dreadful sea monster capable of sinking ships with a taste for human flesh, dragging victims down to the depths of the ocean, suffocating and strangling sailors. I've personified suffocation in the form of an octopus, wrapping and strangling its tentacles around your soul and the stages of it taking over. The poisonous ink is a metaphor of the darkness engulfing, of the two inevitably becoming one. The final stage is a calmness and expectance of suffocation. Personifying suffocation shows the struggle and visualises how it feels to give in to the sharp tentacles wrapping around your soul.

Year 12 Visual Arts Excursion - AGNSW

On Thursday 24th November, Year 12 ventured to the AGNSW to view The Tate’s Collection as part of a HSC Case Study. Students were also given an opportunity to watch the installation film Manifesto and other contemporary works.

Students thoroughly enjoyed this immersive experience and seeing works in the flesh contributes to an increased understanding of the art world.
The College aims to provide broad educational experiences that promote the spiritual, academic, social, cultural and physical growth of students in a Catholic environment. It is a priority for St Leo’s to provide diverse, deeply engaging learning opportunities. ICT-enabled teaching and learning activities enhance active engagement that allows for a focus on developing such skills as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication. Activities and styles of engagement previously impossible or difficult to achieve are now readily attainable. The College views our BYODD iPad Program as an opportunity to create an environment more conducive to effective innovation in teaching and learning.

The iPad is an integral part of the Leo’s eLearning culture. We value flexible and active learning, where students are not tied to one desk but can actively explore and connect with the world around them; in and outside the classroom. Additionally, the iPad allows for further equity to be achieved; not only in the price point but in the accessibility features built into the device as well. Using technology in the learning process should be ongoing, accessible, effective and ‘just work’. The iPad not only allows for a shift from teacher-centred to student-centred learning but also saves students time in the creation of learning product with its effective use.

**St Leo’s will continue to support an iPad only learning environment in Years 7 - 10.** In addition to what has been mentioned previously, this structure allows for further teacher support in how they use technology in the classroom as students all have access to the same technology and software. However, the College understands that students moving into their senior years may have different needs depending on their subject selection. It is on this basis, that the College will support both iPads and Mac Laptops in Year 11 and Year 12. **This means that students in Year 11 and 12 have the option of either an iPad or a Mac Laptop.** There is by no means an obligation on parents to upgrade to a laptop, the iPad is perfectly adequate to meet the needs of the majority of subjects in senior years.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with Mrs Kim Prosser
kimberly.jones@dbb.catholic.edu.au
Sport Report
Swimming Carnival
Last Friday (25th November), the Annual College Swimming Carnival was held at Hornsby Aquatic Centre. With the weather being a beautiful sunny 25 degrees, it was perfect for a day of competitive and novelty events. The traditional Year 12 Dress up Parade was fantastic with all houses bringing their A games, with Joshua Reidy, Max Dakic, and Harvey Timms being awarded the Best Dressed Males, and the 5 Green fairies from Aquinas winning the award for the Female division.

Apart from the swimming, the Year 12 student leaders have been having regular meetings with their Houses to ensure that their War Cries were synchronised and after a slow start it was the Chanel House that were awarded by the Judges as having the best War Cry. Well done to all Year 12 students.

In the pool, the racing was fast and furious with a number of standout performances from students in all year groups. It was the first opportunity for our Year 7 (2017) to participate at a whole school event and both William Belcastro and Matilda Waite showed that the school has a very bright swimming future, as they powered to victory in a variety of events.

Along with the younger students, it was fantastic to see so many Year 12 students participating in the competitive races, with the main aim of catching U/18 swimming superstar Tom Peregrina however Tom was able to hold his rivals off. Not to be outdone by big brother, Year 9 student Georgia Peregrina was able to win 5 from 5 and in many races did this against the older age groups.

At the end of the competitive races, all students were encouraged to participate in the novelty events, which included House noodle relays, tube relays, and an inflatables race. These events provided the opportunity for the students to gain valuable house points that go towards the final point score, that this year came down to the last event.

The Age Champions and House Cup will be presented at the next College Assembly.
Broken Bay Surf Life Saving
On Monday 28th November, a 20 student strong team represented the College at the Broken Bay Surf Life Saving Carnival at Terrigal Beach. Heading to the carnival, the students were aware of their underdog status as it is difficult to compete against the Northern Beaches and Central Coast schools whose students compete for various surf life clubs on the weekends. However this didn’t deter our students and they achieved some fantastic results.

The highlight of the day was the Combined Boys Relay (2 students from the Junior, Inters, and Seniors division) who won the Beach Sprint Relay. Along with this some other results include:
- Pedro Barreto Rodrigues (Year 7) winning the Junior Beach Sprint and Beach Flags Double
- Mitchell MacDonald (Year 8), 2nd in the Intermediate Beach Flags
- Ryan Stack (Year 10), 3rd in the Senior Beach Sprint
- Jake Seiler (Year 12), 1st in the Senior Beach Flags
- Thomas Peregrina (Year 12), 3rd in the Senior Swim

Well done to all students on your fantastic results.

Sporting Success
Apart from the success at the College at the Broken Bay Swimming Carnival and also the Surf Life Saving, a number of students have had success in their chosen sports. Chiara Donnagemma in Year 9 has recently returned from the Australian Figure Skating Championships in Melbourne. Chiara was representing NSW at the Championships and her team are the National Champions and heading off to Canada in March next year to represent Australia.

Along with this Year 8 student Sophie Batchelor represented NSW at the recent National Physical Culture Championships at Homebush. After qualifying through the NSW Championships Sophie made the National finals and finished in the top 15.

Well done to both Sophie and Chiara on your recent success.

For more information on any of the upcoming competitions, or to find out more information about a particular sport, or to inform the College about recent sporting performances outside the College please don’t hesitate to contact me on michael.kember@dbb.catholic.edu.au

Michael Kember
Community News
Sustainable School Shop
Year end is in sight and now is the time to consider buying and selling second-hand textbooks and uniforms.

Sustainable School Shop provides the second-hand textbook and uniform trading system for the school. Our school’s 2016 booklist/textbook information for years 11 and 12 has been uploaded and is ready to use on the Sustainable School Shop website.

To get started, go to www.sustainableschoolshop.com.au and either register as a parent or log-in if you’re already registered.

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW
Free Payment Plans @ Hornsby
Everyone is busy getting ready for the festive season and preparing for a new year. The No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) is here to help families budget for large cost items such as laptops and iPads. Particularly as we get ready for a new school year. For example an iPad costing $600, repayments would be $15 per fortnight over 18 months. No application fees or interest is paid. Repayments can be made by Centrepay.

The scheme is available for a range of items such as: car registrations, car repairs, house repairs, health items, fridges, washing machines, televisions and furniture.

The criteria to apply is simple,
- you earn less than $45000 or receive a Centrelink payment
- you have stable accommodation
- you can afford the repayments.

If you meet the above criteria contact Sandie to find out how to apply.

NILS Hornsby
9477 5010 option 7 Tuesday and Friday
41 Jersey Street, Hornsby (above Vinnies shop).
Fax 9482 2048
Email NILShornsby@vinnies.org.au

Sandie, your friendly NILS administrator at Hornsby