

Catholic Education

Today



CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
MELBOURNE



Stepping
up

TERM 3, 2020

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TRANSITIONS

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ITALIAN WITH
THE FAMILY

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PROJECT

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BEST IN VCAL
AND VCE

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ARCHDIOCESE

For one who is exhausted, a blessing

Take refuge in your senses, open up
To all the small miracles you rushed through.

Become inclined to watch the way of rain
When it falls slow and free.

Imitate the habit of twilight,
Taking time to open the well of colour
That fostered the brightness of day.

Draw alongside the silence of stone
Until its calmness can claim you.
Be excessively gentle with yourself.

*Excerpt taken from To Bless the Space Between Us:
A Book of Blessings by John O'Donohue (2008)*



**CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
MELBOURNE**

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Cover image: Students at Marymede Catholic College, South Morang



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views and discussion designed for parents.

Editorial

'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares
the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to
give you a future and a hope' (Jer 29: 11).

The first two terms of this school year have brought
challenges to teaching and learning that no education
system has faced before. The first few weeks of Term 3
have been no different.

Principals, teachers and staff have risen to those
challenges and worked hard to ensure the continuity
of learning at home, while looking out for the wellbeing
of students under their care.

Where difficulties have arisen, they have worked to
find innovative solutions to complex problems in short
time frames.

None of this would have been achievable without the
support of parents.

While we are aware that this experience has been
different for each family, the school-parent partnership
has been strengthened by the remote learning experience.

Catholic Education Melbourne and Catholic schools
across the Archdiocese are working hard to identify
both the benefits and challenges of this experience
of flexible and remote learning.

Late last term, a set of optional remote learning
surveys were developed for schools to send to students,
staff and parents. Over 100 schools in the Archdiocese
have used the surveys, and we are analysing over
100,000 responses from our school communities.

New, and sometimes surprising, insights have been
gained on our levels of comfort with the unknown and
capacity to adapt to rapid change, while reservoirs of
resilience, hope and optimism have been strengthened
for many in our community.

From early trends and patterns, students have reported
that the most challenging aspects were not seeing
friends and changes to interactions with teachers.
However, many students also said they felt more
independent and resilient, which are important qualities
that enable academic, social and moral success.

This theme was also present in parent responses,
with many also indicating that they had viewed the
experience as a bonding opportunity and enjoyed the
additional time they were spending together.

Responses for students, parents and teachers are
united on the importance of face-to-face learning and
the student-teacher relationship in the progression of
learning. Students and teachers love learning together,
and we have all missed the many school celebrations
and events that bring our vibrant Catholic learning
communities together.

Every Catholic school is committed to continuing to
deliver a high-quality Catholic education for the rest of
the year. We will be working hard to incorporate what
we have learned from this feedback and the experience
of flexible and remote learning into our practices for
our future, and the hopes that it holds. ✦

School transitions

If the expression ‘change is constant’ is true of the world today then it is also true that as students go through their 13 years of schooling, beginning in primary and ending for the majority of students in Year 12, they will experience various key stages and transition periods.

By understanding the different transitions parents, together with their child’s school, can help their children navigate these changes.

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Parents can help by cultivating an enjoyment of learning in their children, as well as the ability to successfully interact with other children and adults.

”

Starting school

The first transition is beginning primary school when both parents and their children will experience a new and rewarding environment that will also present a number of challenges. Parents can help by cultivating an enjoyment of learning in their children, as well as the ability to successfully interact with other children and adults.

The research is clear that those children who are familiar with picture books and print, who have been physically active, played memory games, and know the basics of adding and subtracting numbers have a head start when it comes to beginning primary school.

Practical strategies like taking part in the school’s transition program or orientation day, learning about the school’s curriculum, and talking to your child about the unique, faith-based nature of Catholic schools are also important.

Catholic schools are committed to Christ’s teachings and it is important that children are aware of the rituals and ceremonies associated with the Christian teachings and ethos of the school before they start.



Holy Saviour Parish School, Vermont South

Given the faith-based nature of the school, prospective students to Holy Saviour are introduced to the Catholic ceremonies and rituals consistent with the school’s primary Catholic ethos.

The school also supports students moving from Year 6 in primary school to Year 7 in secondary school with a Year 6 transition program titled ‘Ready’ that involves primary students completing six one-hour sessions introducing them to some of their new teachers and what they are about to experience the following year.

Activities include reading a secondary school weekly timetable, using electronic diaries, learning about homework expectations and identifying apps suitable to assist learning.

>> CONTINUED PAGE 4

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Cultivating good study habits and being willing to engage with your child about what they are learning is helpful.
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From primary to secondary

A second important transition period is when students move from Year 6 in primary school to Year 7 in secondary, and this generally involves moving to a new school. Year 7 students are very much the ‘new kids on the block’ and this often takes some time to adjust and get used to.

It is beneficial if parents prepare their children when transitioning to what is a very different environment, both in terms of the curriculum and how the school and classrooms are structured and managed.

Unlike primary school where children spend most of their time with one teacher in the one room, in secondary school students will have different teachers for particular subjects and will be expected to move around the school.

Cultivating good study habits and being willing to engage with your child about what they are learning is helpful, as is taking part in school events like parent-teacher interviews and school fetes.

The middle years

Year 9 for many secondary schools also represents a key stage as the start of the middle years of schooling presents unique opportunities and challenges at a time when students are experiencing adolescence and just before they encounter the senior school years.

Students are expected to take greater responsibility for their learning, become involved in co-curricular activities, and begin to identify what subjects and areas of learning they want to focus on as they look ahead to Years 11 and 12.

Often schools have camps and other programs where students spend a year undertaking activities and subjects that help develop resilience, independence and a more hands-on approach to learning, where students learn to collaborate and work closely with others.

Christian Brothers' College, St Kilda East

CBC St Kilda has a specially designed Year 9 program that operates on a separate campus to the main school and offers a unique educational experience. As detailed by Jennifer Knox, the school's Director of Innovation and College Development, the program was created over 10 years ago in response to education research on engagement and motivation in this phase of adolescence. A dedicated team of teachers work closely with students in order to understand them, their strengths, interests and areas for growth.

The focus is on providing a more holistic, integrated learning environment where, in addition to core subjects like Science and Mathematics, students undertake projects involving community engagement, interest-based learning, enterprise skills and practical activities like gardening, cooking and building construction.

The school also has transition programs designed to assist students and their parents titled ‘Headstart for Y11’ and ‘Headstart for Y12’. Both are designed to build a partnership between the school, teachers, parents and students with the aim of enabling students to make a positive and constructive transition from one year to the next.



Senior students

Years 11 and 12, where students undertake the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) or the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL), present unique challenges as in many ways the final two years represent the culmination of the journey that began 11 years earlier.

It is important when thinking about transition to the senior school years to realise there are a range of options available depending on a student's interests, ability and what they think is a worthwhile profession or career. Some may look to undertake academic study, while others may begin a trade or apprenticeship.

When preparing for either the VCE or VCAL students need to appreciate they will have to work under time constraints and be increasingly independent learners who are self-motivated and willing to commit the energy and time required.

Leaving school

After completing their VCE or VCAL it is important to understand the challenges students face after leaving the relatively ordered and familiar school environment. Students undertaking tertiary study will not have the same close supervision or the same tightly packed daily schedule of classes.

One of the most important and beneficial things parents can provide for their children is a worthwhile, productive and enjoyable school experience. While there are many influences that will impact on a student's journey one of the key factors is the various transition stages. As such, it is important parents assist their children by engaging with their child's school or future school to find out what arrangements are in place. †



Marymede Catholic College, South Morang

Marymede Catholic College educates students from Foundation to Year 12 and has transition programs for pre-school to Prep, primary to secondary, and finishing school to further study or work.

Carolyn Key, the college's Registrar suggests 'it is vital that students feel safe and connected in order to manage change and to learn effectively'. Central to this is the college's focus on building strong relationships between students, teachers and the school community, fostering a willingness to embrace change with optimism and confidence.

The college's transition strategies include:

- kindergarten children spending time in the primary school to become familiar with the environment they will be joining
- students in Years 5 and 6 participating in an ongoing elective program, taught by the school's secondary teachers
- parent information evenings
- Q&A panel sessions with expert staff
- 'Gearing Up for School' sessions
- student guides/handbooks.

Marian College, Sunshine West

Marian College employs a number of strategies to inform and assist both parents and students in the transition from Year 6 to the first year of secondary school. As detailed by Vicky Casey, the school's Community Development Officer, these include:

- an interview with prospective students and their parents
- a school tour
- the school's Transition Officer speaking at local primary schools
- a Year 7 orientation day for students beginning the following year.

The school's rationale for adopting such strategies is to 'create an initial positive relationship with students and families and to minimise the level of apprehension that they may have,' said Ms Casey. It is also seen as important 'to build community partnerships' and 'to engage families as active partners in their daughters' education'.



Note: some transition events may be postponed, cancelled or moved online due to COVID-19 restrictions. Please check details with your child's school or future school.

Learning Italian with the family

A new year, a new principal and a renewed languages offering. That is how the community of St Robert's School, Newtown, kicked off 2020 and, despite the challenges of remote learning for several weeks, the students and families were excited about learning Italian together.

New principal Sarah Kelly said, 'At the end of 2019, the Indonesian teacher moved on to a different role which gave us an opportunity to relook at our languages offering. We had the opportunity to keep Indonesian but the staff really pushed for the community to have a voice in what was next.'

'We went through a process with Catholic Education Melbourne and [Languages Lead] Jennifer Brown-Omichi, then we let the parents know that we would be taking time to rethink our languages offering and put some information out to the community like a strategic plan of what it would look like.'

In this new approach to language learning, everyone learns together: students in every level, as well as all teaching and non-teaching staff, and even parents and families are invited to join in.

After a well-attended parent night with Mrs Brown-Omichi and a comprehensive response to the parent survey, they began preparations to start learning Italian together in Term 2 — 'and then COVID-19 happened', said Mrs Kelly.

As it turns out, learning from home had unexpected benefits that will support language learning now that students have returned to school. Mrs Kelly said, 'We now have resources on our website for families to use in their Italian learning 24/7 and for teachers to use during class time.'

'Families are recording themselves speaking Italian and uploading it as evidence using Seesaw, which we are using much more authentically. We've been overwhelmed by the support from parents and families and by the commitment of our staff.'



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In this new approach to language learning, everyone learns together: students in every level, as well as all teaching and non-teaching staff, and even parents and families are invited to join in.

On the support they have received from Mrs Brown-Omichi and the team at Catholic Education Melbourne, Mrs Kelly said, 'they have been amazing, we're lucky to have her leading it'.

'This approach to language learning is definitely something new,' said Mrs Brown-Omichi. 'A really key element is that it has high frequency, so the students do short bursts of language every day, somewhere between 5 and 10 minutes. The community is really excited, they're really getting involved.'

'Sarah is really consultative, she wants to make sure that the community is heard. That sense of joy is what we want to bring into every school. When everyone gets involved and everyone has fun, you know it's going to be successful.'

The Letter Project

Resident of ralac's Lionsbrae Residential Aged Care and pen pal in the Letter Project



During the lockdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic, students from the Faith and Liturgy class at **Aquinas College, Ringwood**, reached out to residents of a local aged care home to offer connection and support in their isolation. The Letter Project created pen pals and friendships between the students and the residents. Year 11 students, **Grace and Reuben**, report on how the project began and their hopes that it will continue even after restrictions are lifted.

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The project not only benefited the aged care residents by helping them to feel a bit more connected and hopefully combat the feeling of being alone, but it also contributed to our wellbeing by having something to look forward to.

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Grace and Reuben writing to their pen pals



We became involved in the letter writing project over the time spent in social isolation via our Faith and Liturgy Religious Education class. When we first heard about the project of writing to elderly people at ralac's Lionsbrae Aged Care, a local nursing home, we were excited. Any sort of project that reaches out to those in need is really rewarding; knowing that you've made someone's day just makes yours a little better.

In our opinion, it is really important to connect with the older generation as they are an integral part of our community because of their knowledge and contribution to the happy lives we are able to live.

The project not only benefited the aged care residents by helping them to feel a bit more connected and hopefully combat the feeling of being alone, but it also contributed to our wellbeing by having something to look forward to.

Reaching out and connecting with those who may be isolated can really make a difference. The Letter Project is an example of the compassion we should demonstrate to those in our community. The act of going out of our way to talk to someone, whether it is in person, a message or a letter, shows them that you care about them and that you want the best for them.

Catholic Social Teaching teaches us about the dignity of the human person, that every human being is created in the image and the likeness of God and as such, has dignity and freedom.

One of the goals of the project was to give people who are feeling alone a friend, especially in this tough time we are all battling. Aged care residents may not be permitted to see their families or friends, in the interest of their safety and health, but if we can give them a chance to communicate with someone, it may give them something happy to reflect on and brighten their day.

Going forward with the Letter Project, we hope that we can establish a strong connection with our new-found friends, as we continue to send letters back and forth. Later in the year when restrictions have eased, our class is hoping to visit ralac's Lionsbrae for a morning or afternoon tea to meet our pen pals. ✦

Doing your best in VCAL and VCE

Catholic education experts offer tips and advice for parents, carers and students.

Year 12 can be a challenging time for students, parents and carers at the best of times, let alone in the middle of a pandemic.

However, there is a silver lining with schools reporting the remote learning experience and other disruptions caused by COVID-19 restrictions have built resilience, initiative and self-management skills among the Year 12 cohort of 2020.

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) has revised the dates for Year 12 assessments this year, aiming to provide sufficient time for teachers and students to complete adjusted Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) Unit 4 learning and school-based assessments, and to prepare adequately for exams.

The revised dates will allow VCE and Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) students to get their final results and ATARs before the end of the year.

Renae Bishop is a Project Officer of Improved Learning Outcomes at Catholic Education Melbourne and **Jill Fitzsimons** is the Director of Professional Learning and Partnerships, Marcellin College, Bulleen, and they offer this advice to help parents and students thrive.

“There is a silver lining with schools reporting the remote learning experience and other disruptions caused by COVID-19 restrictions have built resilience, initiative and self-management skills among the Year 12 cohort of 2020.”



Take a balanced approach and stay healthy

It's always important to maintain a healthy mind, body and relationships but especially when preparing for exams and assessments.

Students should take a balanced approach to their studies ensuring a healthy diet, plenty of water, rest and exercise, and avoid late night revision close to exams and assessments. This will improve cognitive function.

Parents should look for any sign students are becoming overwhelmed. Communicate with them, check in with how they are going and how you can help.

Manage time effectively

Staying on task and using time effectively is vital.

A calendar or wall planner is a good idea. Mark it up with important dates and use it to block out a regular study timetable. Use alarms as reminders about study plans.

Make to-do lists to break tasks down into manageable chunks and structure study sessions to allocate time across each subject area. It is important to factor in breaks around every 40 minutes. Working too long on tasks will be counterproductive.

Consider cutting back on usual activities to prioritise study. This might mean spending less time on social media or fewer work shifts for a while.

Study in a suitable space

A study space should be quiet, comfortable and distraction-free. It should also make students feel happy and inspired. Favourite pictures or objects might help.

If home is too distracting, consider studying in a library where phones and talking are not allowed.

As tempting as it is to stay in bed and revise, most people do not do their best work when in pyjamas! Get up, dress up and turn up!



Make good revision notes

Embedding information into memory requires re-writing and looking at notes repeatedly.

Venn diagrams, tables and colour codes are good ways to structure and highlight information and embed learnings into long-term memory.

Some students swear by the notes they stick up in the bathroom, on the toilet door, walls and fridges. Preparing flash cards with questions and answers is a useful and portable strategy.

Recorded video and audio summaries for playback can be helpful, particularly for visual and auditory learners.

Use self-testing

Parents and friends can help by quizzing students as they feel they are getting on top of a subject. This is a great way to identify gaps and build confidence.

Conversations on topics can also deepen thinking and help crystallise ideas.

Simulate the time pressures and time of day

Timed practice exams are helpful. Practise the time per question such as 30 questions in 30 minutes, or three essays in three hours. Practise at the exact time of the exam.

Practise handwriting. Thinking is different when writing, as opposed to typing.

Know the assessment criteria

Be clear on what is going to be assessed and how it will be assessed. Check the detailed exam specifications on the VCAA website.

Use the right pens

It may sound simple, but uni-ball pens can help improve handwriting and reduce fatigue or cramping in written exams.



Stay calm and remember that Year 12 results are not the be all and end all.



Keep in touch with your school

Stay in close contact with your school, read the communications provided and talk to teachers about anything that is unclear or if extra support is required.

It's never too late

It's never too late to develop good study habits. The sooner students get into an effective study routine, the easier everything will be, and the results will show.

Keep calm

Stay calm and remember that Year 12 results are not the be all and end all. Everyone should do their best but there are multiple pathways available to help young people achieve their goals.

Key dates*

- Monday 5 October — VCE examination centres and Student Assessment Timetables available.
- Wednesday 7 October — General Achievement Test (GAT).
- Tuesday 10 November to Wednesday 2 December — VCE written examinations held.
- Wednesday 30 December — VCE and VCAL results will be released to students at 7 am.

**dates are subject to ongoing COVID-19 related advice.*

Parents are encouraged to familiarise themselves with dates and examination rules for VCE and the GAT. Details are available on the VCAA website www.vcaa.vic.edu.au.

The VCAA is also happy to answer questions on 1800 134 197 or vcaa@edumail.vic.gov.au. +



How do we support our children through transitions?

Transitions provide the opportunity to develop many life skills that children will need throughout their life, such as the many changes that occur as things constantly move in different directions. Transitions through school prepare children to be resilient, to not fear change but to be open to new experiences and ease themselves into new situations.

By Catholic School
Parents Victoria

Transitions occur constantly throughout the journey of school. There is the transition to school which normally occurs before children begin with orientation programs. Then as they start in Foundation, getting to know teachers, their peers, how to navigate friendships and new routines. Then there are transitions into each year level, when there is a new teacher or teachers to get to know, new students in the class and various dynamics to navigate, new subjects and changes in the way children are expected to become more independent and organised.

It is tempting to protect children from change or challenges, but it is during these times they learn how to become more capable and able to manage themselves. As parents we are able to provide encouragement and support for when things become challenging, to help our children see that change is a part of life and that the more we become used to the changes that occur, the more we are able to manage them when they do happen.

During this year, everyone has been forced to change. When restrictions were introduced due to the coronavirus pandemic many parents had to adapt to working at home, some families had to change their business models to remain open and some families experienced job losses or reduction in income.

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It is tempting to protect children from change or challenges, but it is during these times they learn how to become more capable and able to manage themselves.

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Everyone had to adapt and be flexible in embracing and facing new challenges, including learning at home and the changes that came with learning, interacting, communicating with teachers and how children maintained their friendships. These experiences can be used as an example to explain and encourage children to understand that they can adapt to different situations and that they will cope.

Transitioning from one situation to another can be stressful or cause worry or anxiety. Being there for children to listen to their concerns and answer their questions will make their transition process easier to manage. The more we can help children learn that change is necessary and that it is part of learning, the easier it can be for them to feel sure about change, to embrace the uncertainty and to know that transition is a way to ease them into new situations. +

How informed are you when it comes to supporting your child's learning?

Catholic School Parents Victoria are a team of passionate parents of children in primary and secondary Catholic schools. As volunteer delegates we contribute parent perspective in education at a system, state and national level under the pillars of Parent Engagement and Parent Leadership in:



We achieve this through establishing relationships with critical partners in education, sourcing parent feedback via school representatives and CSPV parent forums, writing submissions for government and other bodies.

CSPV promotes Catholic education, parent engagement and parent leadership through forums and workshops, committees and policy development groups as well as communication with parents and schools.

CSPV invite you to subscribe to our newsletter, follow our Facebook page, visit our website or enquire about becoming a council delegate so you can be more informed to support children through Catholic education.

Visit www.cspv.catholic.edu.au/join-us or contact our Executive Officer on 03 9267 0458.



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The fullness of *life*

John Visentin, principal of **John Paul College, Frankston**, reflects on his role in leading the school, and how a disrupted year has uncovered new ways of learning in partnership with students and families.



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Seeing the students grow and learn is a real highlight. It's such a wonderful experience watching them find their way, discover their passions and seek the pathways to the things that bring them meaning.

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What does a Catholic educator require?

Faith and hope. As a Catholic educator, your faith guides who you are and what you do, and that has to be central to what you bring to the role.

The sense of hope is why I get up every morning, because I'm really hopeful for the young people I work with. Whether it's leading a school or teaching or any other role in education, it's our shared faith that gives us hope for young people. Being part of their journey is a real joy.

What do you like about leading a Catholic school?

I'm loving being a principal, as I've loved all my different roles in many schools, but being a principal gives you the freedom to make decisions that can have large positive impacts on students both in school and beyond.

Seeing the students grow and learn is a real highlight. It's such a wonderful experience watching them find their way, discover their passions and seek the pathways to the things that bring them meaning.

As a leader we get to see our young people growing into adults, and it's great to have been part of supporting that journey.

We have a significant influence in the way schools operate, and with that comes a huge responsibility to help our young people achieve their best.

What's the greatest opportunity for families?

The period of remote learning during the COVID-19 lockdown has shown us that there's a great opportunity for families to be involved in student learning, wellbeing and growth. Never before have we had such strong communication channels in our partnership between school, families and students to get the best outcomes.

The first half of Term 2 this year gave parents greater insight into what really goes on in schools and the great work that teachers do, and it's opened the door on the discussion of how we can support learners together to achieve their best.

What are your hopes for the future?

Camps, excursions and school productions have had to be postponed or modified, so I hope we're able to get back to some normality soon to continue adding to the richness that these events bring to school life.

Beyond that, I want our college to continue to be a place that provides excellent outcomes for young people; a school of joy and hope where students can be the best they possibly can be. Inspired by John's Gospel our school motto is 'with Him is the fullness of life', and I want that to be true for every student here. ✦

Students lead the way in making a difference

The generous students of **John Paul College, Frankston**, took lessons from the classroom out into the real world and saved injured wildlife along the way.

Students from Years 7 to 10 put their heads together in a bid to help wildlife through the Altitude program – a student-driven initiative using practical problem-solving skills including science, technology, engineering and arts in real-life situations. ✦



Gratitude from home

For the students at **St Paul's School, Coburg**, a whole-school activity set by principal Maria Mercuri generated an avalanche of gratitude for those on the frontline supporting our most vulnerable people during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The students produced letters, artwork and poetry to express their gratitude. A number of letters from students in Years 1 and 2 were sent to the medical staff at St Vincent's Hospital. ✦

Student art brings joy to the Austin

In a thoughtful gesture, students from **Our Lady's Primary School, Surrey Hills**, brought joy to the COVID-19 ward at the Austin Hospital.

Students from Prep to Year 6 created artwork during their remote learning program to adorn the walls of the clinic as a way to say thank you and to spread kindness. ✦



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In response to the COVID-19 impact on schools, STEM MAD 2020 will be going digital. For more information visit sites.google.com/vic.catholic.edu.au/stemmad.

Mentone on the move

St Patrick's School, Mentone, teamed up with the Level Crossing Removal Project to create a unique art display on the hoarding around the Mentone crossing removal site.

During the period of remote learning, St Patrick's School had a number of children of essential workers who were onsite at school each day. Those students helped to create the background of the artwork, while the remote learning students contributed the characters, animals and vehicles of the collage.

The recently installed artwork, 'Mentone on the move', highlights the unique historical buildings, scenery around the area and the train line moving through Mentone. It will be fun for families and students to find their characters in the completed artwork. +



Baking from home

The Certificate II VET Baking class at **Catholic Regional College, Sydenham**, continued despite students not being in the school's bakery. Students received a box of ingredients and followed along from their own kitchens.

The college's baker, Peter, set up a commercial kitchen in his garage with cameras so he could continue to teach all of his classes without interruption. Not only were students able to continue learning but they were able to share the delicious cakes and pastries being produced with their families. +



All aboard for Mother's Day

It was a Mother's Day with a difference for the students and their families from **St Anthony's School, Noble Park**.

In a time of remote learning, the St Anthony's school bus went on a special 'mum run'. The bus visited families to say 'hello' with a quick wave and to share gifts with the mums. The sentiment was simple: helping all mums celebrate their special day, as well as thanking them for working so hard to help all of the students to continue learning at home. +



The (virtual) Long Walk

Aquinas College, Ringwood, continued its tradition of marking National Reconciliation Week with a Long Walk around the neighbourhood, although it looked a little different than in other years.

The virtual Long Walk took place with students completing their own walk in the spirit of Michael Long's original walk in 2004. To support the safety of the students on campus and to involve the students who continue to learn remotely, a virtual Long Walk was created to honour this year's theme *In this together*. +

FIRE Carriers keep reconciliation alight

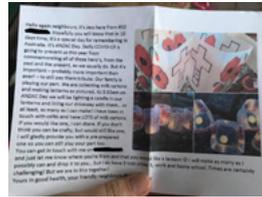
Students at **St John's School, Frankston East**, and **St Mary's School, Greensborough**, made their communities proud through their efforts to strengthen the spirit of reconciliation on Sorry Day and throughout National Reconciliation Week. Both schools participated in the Friends Igniting Reconciliation through Education (FIRE) Carrier program to continue to promote reconciliation through education. +



The spirit of Anzac is alive and well

Charlie from Prep at **St Thomas More's School, Hadfield**, worked with her Mum to generate interest in a driveway dawn service. They wrote letters to their neighbours, informing them about running the service and asked for donations of milk cartons that they could turn into lanterns.

Anzac Day holds special importance for young historian Zac from **St Patrick's School, Mentone**. The Year 1 student conducted research on his family's stories to produce two books. One book was about his great-grandfather in World War II and the other about his great-great-uncle in World War I. ✦



Supporting our health workers



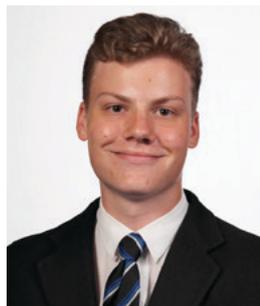
'Lest we forget' had more meaning for the community at **St Peter's School, Clayton**.

The students made a banner for the hospital workers who walk past the school to and from the train station. As well as honouring Anzacs, it was a tribute to the staff at the nearby Monash Hospital. ✦

Top All-Round VCE High Achievers

Isabelle Brugliera from **Genazzano FCJ College, Kew**, and Sam Warner from **Mazenod College, Mulgrave**, were announced as recipients of the Top All-Round VCE High Achiever Award.

Top All-Round VCE High Achiever Awards celebrate the achievements of students who have received a study score of 46 or above in VCE. ✦



Harmony in a digital world

Year 3 and 4 students from **St Gabriel's School, Reservoir**, created self-portraits to express how they feel about harmony.

As part of a Harmony Day project, the students created a talking eBook that communicates what a world of harmony means to them. ✦



VCAL Awards



Several students were awarded Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) Achievement Awards for their outstanding achievements in completing their VCAL, including: Sarah Morgan, **MacKillop Specialist School, Whittington**; Caleb Rolph, **St Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre, North Melbourne**; Celeste Curcio, Sophie Foster and Scarlet Petti, **Our Lady of Mercy College, Heidelberg**; and Courtney Waugh (pictured), **St Ignatius College Geelong, Drysdale**.

Bobbie Evans from **Emmanuel College, Altona North**, was named VCAL Teacher of the Year for his exceptional efforts in the VCAL program. ✦



Vinnies Sleepout at home

Students and their families at **Marymede Catholic College, South Morang**, attempted to experience a sense of solidarity with the homeless by having a sleepout at home: eating simple food, sleeping in a tent or on cardboard, on the patio or in the backyard.

Before the sleepout, a number of Marymede students participated in a workshop with Vinnies Youth Resource Officer, Sarah Taylor, to gain an understanding of the context of homelessness before they began their 'Winter Camp-out at Home'. +

Sustainability is everyone's responsibility

St Monica's College, Epping, proudly received the donation of a shopping trolley from Supercart Australia, which manufactures shopping trolleys and handbaskets from 100% recycled plastic.

The trolley was delivered by 'Sustainable Sally', brand ambassador, who explained how the recycled plastic bottles become shopping trolleys. +



Learning Environments Australasia Awards

St Dominic's School, Broadmeadows, has received a commendation from the 2020 Learning Environments Australasia Awards. The new STEAM Centre is a tribute to the importance the school places on providing students with opportunities to learn in new ways.

St Paul's College, Balwyn, has also received a commendation for its state-of-the-art design, helping to transform the lives of students with complex disabilities. +

Refugee Week

Despite this year's limitations **Sacred Heart College, Newtown**, partnered with CatholicCare's Settle Well program to provide stationery and raise much-needed funds to support young refugees and asylum seekers in the Geelong area as part of Refugee Week.

Student mercy and mission leader, Isabelle Mendoza said, 'The fair and human treatment of refugees and asylum seekers is important to me because even though they are in different circumstances, they are all humans just like myself'. +



ResourceSmart winners

Three Melbourne Catholic schools were recipients of ResourceSmart Schools Awards for 2020: **St Columba's School, Elwood**; **Our Lady Star of the Sea School, Ocean Grove**; and **MacKillop Catholic Regional College, Werribee**. Stephanie Young at St Columba's School was also named ResourceSmart Teacher of the Year (Primary).

The awards were announced on 5 June, World Environment Day, in a virtual ceremony hosted by broadcaster Sammy J. +



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