Dear Parents and all in the McAuley Community,

Deserts and Mountaintops. In recent weeks, deserts and mountaintops have featured in the readings for Mass. Last week, we heard that Jesus spent 40 days in the desert to prepare himself for his ministry and was tempted by Satan. This past Sunday, the three apostles who walked up to the mountaintop with Jesus saw the transfigured Christ. I want to explore these two points as briefly as possible.

Spending time in the desert for the Jewish people at the time of Jesus was really a time for reflection and self-assessment. ‘How am I going with my relationship with God?’ would have been one of a range of issues for contemplation. Clearly, deserts are not a feature in our lifestyle in the sub-tropics, but we need an equivalent space and time to reflect on these same important issues. Where is my ‘desert’ or quiet place to reflect on my relationship with God?

In the Old Testament, mountaintops were often used as places where people encountered God. An interesting aspect from the Gospel passage this past Sunday is that the transfigured Jesus appeared with Moses and Elijah! Why did Jesus want this as part of his message? Moses was a great figure for the Jewish people and represented the Law for Israel. Elijah represented the prophets. The Jewish Law books and the Books of the Prophets make up the scriptures of Israel. So Jesus appearing with them showed he was in harmony with all that was revealed in Judaism and Jewish Law – he just wanted to take it further! Perhaps the tolerance of Jesus in embracing the diversity of Judaism is a pointer for us. Do we need to reflect on our tolerance and capacity to embrace diversity during this time of Lent?

Youth and Family Mass this Sunday at 5.00 pm at St Mary’s Church, Grafton. Please join the many young people in our parish who gather to celebrate their faith.

Congratulations. Two of our students, James Bertalli and Mitch Christiansen excelled at the recent National Under 20 Athletics Championships in Sydney. James, at 15 years of age, won a silver medal in the shot-put and a bronze in the discus and javelin, competing in the AWD Under 20 Division. Mitch ran fifth in the 100m, fifth in the 400m and sixth in the 200 metres.

Information and Social Evening for Parents of Senior Students. This is on next Tuesday evening 25th March and is a great opportunity to hear about senior study and how to support your sons and daughters in this busy time. We will start with some refreshments at 5.30pm and then gather for some input and information in two separate groups (parents of Year 11 in one – Year 12 parents in the other). This will start about 6.00pm and should take about 45 minutes.

Scholarship from St Vincent de Paul. We are thankful that the regional SVdP Society will again support a student in Year 11 for the two years of senior study with a grant of $1000 for each of the two years. Application forms are available from Mr Walsh or the Year 11 Co-Ordinator, Mr Lobsey. Criteria for selection are on the form and applications need to be submitted by next week.

Stellar. Don’t forget the great chance coming up to gain information about University study. See elsewhere in the newsletter to learn more.

Wednesday Parish Mass. Don’t forget this year there is a Parish Mass here at school at 8.50am every Wednesday during school term in the Performing Arts Room (P1). All parents, carers and parishioners are very welcome.

Laptop Changes for 2014. Thank you to parents and carers of students in Years 7 and 11 who have dealt quickly with the change-over to ‘parent-supplied’ laptops. For the few remaining, please address this as soon as possible. If you cannot pay for a new laptop and that is the reason for no response from you, please note the message on the last newsletter and reprinted here: For parents who will find it too difficult to pay for a new computer for their child, either ‘up-front’ or on time payment, please phone for an appointment to see Mr Walsh to discuss alternative arrangements. This is critical so that your child gets the full benefits of an education in a 21st Century context. No child or family must feel that this is a reason to withdraw from our school. Please check the website for up-to-date information.

Handy Hints for Improving Learning:

No.3 Organising a Learning Space for Your Child - Lighting
Natural or indirect lighting such as a desk lamp is best for learning. It is best for your child not to study under fluorescent lighting as it is related to raised cortisol levels in the blood stream (an indicator of anxiety and agitation). Cortisol also suppresses language functions. If you are purchasing a desk lamp try to avoid fluorescent lights.

From “Help Your Child Succeed at School” by Andrew Fuller www.inyahead.com.au
Curriculum

STELLAR

Next week there are a range of activities scheduled for the Stellar program. Stellar is an initiative by the Clarence Valley Industry Education Forum (CVIEF) encouraging students to consider and aspire to university after school. All Year 9 students will be involved in a university awareness day on Thursday 27th March here at the College from Periods 1 – 4. A group called Rising Generations will conduct the day and offer a comprehensive program on raising the awareness of university as an option, succeeding at school and hearing from current university students. The students will have morning tea and lunch provided. Sport will be as normal in the afternoon.

Parents are also invited to attend Stellar Recipe for Success Parent Evenings. These are being held on:
- 24 March 2014 – Maclean High School Hall
- 26 March 2014 – Grafton Community Centre
At 5:30pm – 6:30pm (with an optional extra 30 minutes to chat, look at websites, eat some food and a chat with the presenters)

**Aim:**
Provide families with information about how to support their child to reach their potential for higher education. Including information about:
- Benefits of uni
- Cost of uni
- Help with the costs
- What their children are doing at school with Recipe for Success

HOMEWORK SUPPORT

Students are encouraged to log on to the homework support link on our Moodle site to request assistance with particular learning needs. Homework support will then be given to those students according to their needs. It is aimed that support will be provided in T2 every Tuesday and Wednesday all of lunch and Wednesday afternoon from 3.15 – 4.15. Students are encouraged to bring their lunch along.

SENIOR SOCIAL EVENING

Parents of Year 11 and 12 students are invited to attend a Senior Social evening on Tuesday 25th March at 5.30pm. The evening will begin with light refreshments from 5.30pm. This will be followed by a presentation for Year 11 Parents by Ms Grace McGirr and a presentation for Year 12 Parents by Mrs Kathy Warby.

The presentations will cover valuable information on the HSC and Preliminary HSC including:
- Assessment
- Study tips
- Board of Studies rules and procedures
- HSC expectations
- Marks Journey – understanding school based assessment, HSC examinations and the ATAR.

This is a valuable opportunity for parents to understand HSC processes, rules and procedures. It would be of great benefit to all parents so that you can fully support your child through this period in their lives. Please come along to this worthwhile event.

Kathy Warby
Curriculum Coordinator

FROM THE DEPUTY'S DESK

National Day against Bullying and Violence

Today is National Day against Bullying and Violence. The continuing theme of this campaign is “Take a Stand Together”. Taking a stand against Bullying and Violence is not just the focus of one day here at the College. It is a constant theme of what we do here in terms of living out the Gospel values. Standing Together against Bullying and Violence is promoted in many ways in the College, including the Pastoral Care program, production groups coming to the College such as Brainstorm, guest speakers, digital citizenship talks and activities to name a few.

Families should check out the New version of Take a Stand Together app for students. With the Take a Stand Together app students can:
- Watch short animated stories about bullying and choose what to do from a range of responses.
- Read bullying facts and advice for different types of bullying situations.
- Create their own avatar and choose a positive anti-bullying message so they can take a stand against bullying.
- Links to the app can be found at: http://news.bullyingnoway.gov.au/whats-news/Pages/take-a-stand-together-app.aspx

I have included here an extract on the definition of Bullying From “Bullying No Way” Fact Sheet 1 - http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au/

**What is bullying?**
The National Safe Schools Framework defines bullying as repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies, e.g. the internet or mobile devices. Conflicts or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

In short, bullying is a repeated pattern of harmful verbal, physical or social behaviour which involves the misuse of power. Cyberbullying is bullying through the internet or mobile devices.

**Is every conflict between students bullying?**
Not all aggressive or harmful behaviour between people is bullying. While conflicts and aggressive behaviour need to be addressed, it is important to be clear when these behaviours are not actually bullying.

The definition of bullying has three critical aspects - a repeated pattern, the misuse of power within relationships, and behaviour which causes harm; all three aspects need to be present in order for behaviour to be called bullying.

**The Learning Environment & Year 12 Exams**
All students should be very busy in their classes, feeling settled and making the most of the learning experiences they are given. Students are completing a number of assessment tasks. All students need to be organised and diligent in their approach to assessment tasks.

We wish Year 12 all the best in their half yearly exams this week. These exams run from 20th – 27th March. These are a very important part of their assessment and we keep them in our thoughts and prayers. These exams should be used as an indication of how they are progressing and what needs to be done in preparation for the next assessment examinations in August (Trials)

**Progress Reports and Parent Teacher interviews**
Progress reports for students in Year 7 – 11 have been completed and will be sent home next week. This is a simplified report to indicate to parents how their child is progressing in various areas of each subject. Parent - Teacher interviews are scheduled for week 11 of this term - Monday 7th April and Wednesday 9th
Continued from Previous Page

April from 3.40pm – 6.30pm each night. Interviews will be booked online. The online booking process is outlined in the letter enclosed with the report. The letter has a booking code that will allow you to access the school booking site. There will be a computer available in the College Foyer for parents/carers to make bookings or the staff in the office can assist you with bookings over the phone. We look forward to seeing you in the College Hall for these interviews.

Kate Thomson
Deputy Principal

NETBALL

Thursday, 13th March, two Netball teams travelled to Trinity Catholic College to play in the NRCC competition. The 7/8 team played 6 games in total. They managed to win their games against Trinity Gold and St Mary’s White, had a draw with Xavier Blue and lost to Xavier Red, St Mary’s Red and Trinity Blue. The 9/10 Team played 3 games, narrowly losing by 1 point against St Mary’s and were competitive in their losses to Trinity and Xavier. All the girls are to be congratulated on their sportsmanship and effort on the day.

Nikita Robinson

MCC INDIGENOUS EDUCATION IN 2014

The McAuley Community would like to let all Parents/Guardians, Indigenous Elders and other Indigenous community members our plans for 2014 and a program we would like all parents and carers to be involved in at McAuley Catholic College. This year each student will have a PLP (Personalized Learning Plan). This is a program where staff members work with each student based on their own learning goals and develop ways we can help to improve their learning outcomes. The program is called “Indigenous Education School Community Partnership Plans and Personalised Learning Plans”. With the support from teachers here at the College, we are aiming to put these PLPs together with the help from Parents/Carers and Community Members.

We will be holding our first “Aboriginal Community Gathering” on:

Date: 2nd April 2014
Venue: McAuley Catholic College under the tree near the Art rooms. Light refreshments will be shared and families and members of the local Indigenous community are invited to attend.

Any parents who attend the meeting could bring information about events that are happening in the community or any events that you would like their children to be involved in. It will be an informal gathering where we share some light refreshments and show our Indigenous students that we value their education and will work to achieve their goals. Towards the end of the gathering we will set a clear Agreement for Indigenous Education in 2014.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact Rachel Johnson at the school on 66431 434 or Grace McGirr at gmcgirr@lism.catholic.edu.au

Indigenous Aboriginal Team
Rachel Johnson – Indigenous Education Assistant
Grace McGirr – Teacher Co-ordinator of Indigenous Education
Library News

**I was only nineteen**

John Schumann, illustrated by Craig Smith

A powerful and moving picture book about the Vietnam War based on the unforgettable song.

*Townsville lined the footpath as we marched down to the quay. This clipping from the paper shows us young and strong and clean. And there’s me in my slouch hat, with my SLR and greens. God help me, I was only nineteen.*

John Schumann’s unforgettable lyrics about the Vietnam War are etched in our memories and into our history books. Now they’ve been warmly brought to life by one of Australia's best-loved illustrators.

Visit John Schumann’s website
Visit Craig Smith’s website

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**Cookbook**

**Only $15 on sale at the College**

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**Happy Birthday**

Lucy Howard, Kindred Hall, Benjamin Webster, Maria Arreglo, Amber Butterworth, Christopher Byrnes, Shaun Collins, Jesse Sampson, Zoe Clark, Tanika Maycock, Sophie Pearce, Lucy Ramsay, Tasman Reimer, Jayde Weller, Briony Crawford, Aiden Lobley, Noah Green, Dylan Roberts, Lillianne Stephenson-Gordon, Bowen Tochel, Jake Pitkin, Bryce Brady-Bye, Lillian Doyle, Abigail Lydon, Quinn Greedy, Braden Lewis, Jossy Hargans.

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**MASS TIMES**

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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Mary's - Grafton</td>
<td>Saturday 6pm</td>
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<td>Sunday 8am</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Patricks - South Grafton</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sunday 9:30am</td>
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<td>Copmanhurst</td>
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<td>St. James - Yamba</td>
<td>Saturday 5:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. John’s - Iluka</td>
<td>Sunday 5pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Mary’s - Maclean</td>
<td>Sunday 8:30am</td>
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**McAuley Bags**

For Sale at the College Office - Our own environmentally friendly College bag - great for carrying extra sports clothes, shoes, swimming gear, library books etc... and just $2 each!

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**SECOND HAND UNIFORM SALES**

This is a new venture that has been set up to provide 2nd hand uniforms to McAuley Catholic College students. If you would like to buy or sell your 2nd hand McAuley uniforms please contact Maree on 0412 693 743. Only uniforms in good order and condition will be accepted for resale.