

**A LIGHT SHONE DOWN ON BETHLEHEM**

During this Advent Season when we prepare for and wait with anticipation the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, we cannot avoid mentioning one more time this year the beauty and the radiance of light, let your light shine bright, Monicans.

Lights are a traditional feature of yuletide joy and color. Picture the bright lights that shine through Bourke Street Mall, the lights that twinkle along the Champs-Elysees in Paris, the shimmering lights of Times Square in New York, those glowing along Oxford Street in London, or the many that radiate joy on the Red Square in Moscow.

Lights on the Christmas tree are often the final decoration to adorn the boughs but are the most beautiful, be they colored or pearl, twinkle or steady. Shop windows are adorned with rows of fairy lights, be it the traditional Myer windows or on The Broadway in Reservoir. Churches celebrate with lights, electrical and candlelight, on Christmas Eve and Midnight Mass, and drive or stroll along suburban avenues in Ivanhoe and elsewhere admiring the decorated gardens that emanate great light off plastic reindeers, Santa's sleigh, or from the humble stable.



What drove the Shepherds and later the three Wise Men towards a humble stable in Bethlehem where Mary gave birth to the Saviour, Jesus in the presence of Joseph and a few farmyard animals? It was the Star of Bethlehem that guided the shepherds and their flocks, and the Wise Men from the East on their camels. It stopped and stayed and shone above the stable, and shepherds brought simple gifts from their fields whilst the wealthy brought great gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

The birth of the Saviour Jesus was the birth of salvation for humanity, the way back to the Kingdom of God, shattered through the acts of Adam and Eve. The starry light in the silent night lit up the sky and proclaimed to all who believe that Emmanuel was born, a King of love, peace and compassion for all persons.

We can shine our light in such a vast number of ways at Christmas. We can worship the Saviour at Church, pray to Jesus as He lay on the straw in a manger amidst the stable rubble: we can lighten up the world of those whom we love through our gentleness and reaching out at Christmas through word, gift and presence. There are many in our local society on whom we can shed our light through being with them on Christmas Day; perhaps serving luncheon; by donating gifts through charitable agencies to children and adults in need; by sending cards, giving greetings and making visits to the sick and lonely.

A very merry, happy and holy Christmas is extended to all Monican families, staff and friends. I truly hope that Sunday, 25 December 2023 will be a very special day for you in whatever manner you celebrate. We farewell the 2023 College Theme of 'Let Your Light Shine Bright' by being light to the world through the holiday season, and in preparing for the 60th anniversary of our College next year.

*"O, come all ye Faithful, joyful and triumphant,
Come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord."*

Brian E. Hanley OAM

B.A., Dip. Ed. Grad. Dip. Ed. Admin., M.Ed., MACE, FACEL
College Principal



FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Christmas is coming ...

One of the most widely celebrated events around the world, commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, is fast approaching. As schools in the Southern Hemisphere prepare to shut down for the summer season, our minds begin to move into planning mode for the weeks ahead leading into 25 December. Christmas is a time of joy, a time of giving, and of uniting with family and friends to celebrate the spirit of love and generosity towards others. As a Catholic community, we always observe this religious tradition from a premise of hope.

Our lives, local community, country, and world are far from perfect. There are always challenges and struggles we face personally and collectively. The good news of Christmas reminds us that even when the world or our individual circumstances change, the message of Christmas is steadfast. Christmas is about the birth of God's Son, Jesus. It is about how he came to give us love, hope and joy. That message is constant and does not change from year to year. When there are so many challenges and much devastation in the world, the good news of Christmas, is worth celebrating! Christmas reminds us of the need to acknowledge traditions, to decorate our surroundings with festive adorns and most importantly, to celebrate togetherness.

Many of us will attend church services, we will reflect on the nativity story, and we will celebrate the hope and salvation that the birth of Jesus Christ represents. Additionally, we will decorate our homes, with wreaths and splendid ornaments or dress a tree with lights, glimmering tinsel, and baubles. Gifts and cards will be exchanged, and festive meals shared.

Christmas carols are often heard playing in the background of preparations, on the eve of this special day, and those traditional smells permeate from kitchens everywhere, that are specifically reserved for this time of year. The last-minute wrapping of gifts and the sharing of special festive treats, with a classic Christmas movie showing, all remind us of the joy that is generated to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

So many amongst us will use the lead up to Christmas to give generously to charities by offering their time as volunteers or by donating gifts for children of families experiencing hardships. This too is the spirit of Christmas at work. This too is the joy of giving what Christmas represents. When we offer companionship to others, in which ever way we feel most open to, we are carrying out God's work.

Throughout the centuries, Christmas traditions have evolved to incorporate elements from diverse cultures and various regions of the world. Whilst Christmas is now celebrated as both a religious and cultural event, it has the commonality of bringing people together in the spirit of joy and giving. During the year, but particularly during the Christmas season, we must never forget to seek out those who may need our care, our support or friendship so that the Christmas spirit of hope, can be gifted to them.

As I wish all members of the Monican community a Merry Christmas, I shall say a special prayer for those families who may have fewer members seated at the Christmas table this year, due to illness or loss. That prayer will be extended to those who have their loved ones, far away from them and for those whose circumstances may have changed in terms of family structures for whatever reason. The Christmas season is a time of joy, hope and peace and may you find this in whichever way you choose to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ in 2023.

Have a restful and enjoyable holiday everyone.

Miss P Di Maria
Executive Deputy Principal



Thank you and Merry Christmas

As we approach the final days of this academic year, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to our students, families, and staff for their efforts throughout the year.

In the spirit of giving, our collective efforts for the 'St Vincent's Christmas Appeal' bore remarkable fruits. Thanks to the generosity of our students and families. This year has been targeted and personal to each homeroom and a great opportunity for our College to communicate to our students *what need is* and *how we can meet it*. These contributions will undoubtedly bring smiles to many young people within our community this coming Christmas.

The school holidays provide an opportunity for students and families to identify uniform items that may need replacing or mending. When purchasing school shoes, I ask families to please ensure that they meet our College uniform requirements. Please note that black runners, skate shoes, or canvas shoes are not permitted. This includes Nike air force style shoes. Thank you for your support.

We wish all students and their families a wonderful Christmas break and a safe and happy holiday period.

For your reference, we have included the following support services in case you or someone you know may require some assistance.

Kid's Help Line: 1800 551 800 - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Free, private and confidential telephone and online counselling service for young people aged between 5-25.

Nurse on Call: 1300 606 024 - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Expert health advice from a registered nurse.

Parent Line: 13 22 89 Phone service for parents and carers of children from birth to 18 years old - confidential and anonymous counselling and support on parenting issues.

Headspace: 8338 0919 with locations in Craigieburn and Glenroy, free support for young people aged 12 to 25, their families and friends. Headspace can assist young people with a range of issues including students who are feeling down, stressed or cannot stop worrying, wanting to talk about relationships, finding it hard to deal with school, university, TAFE or work etc.

Ms A Xerri
DRC Campus Leader

Miss N Meade
DSC Campus Leader





2024 Tuition Fees

Tuition Fees have been announced for 2024, please refer to the correspondence sent to you on Thursday, 9 November 2023.

Year Level	Tuition Fee	General Levy per Family	TOTAL
7	\$7,350	\$600	\$7,950
8	\$7,460	\$600	\$8,060
9	\$7,690	\$600	\$8,290
10	\$7,920	\$600	\$8,520
11	\$8,210	\$600	\$8,810
12	\$8,550	\$600	\$9,150

The tuition fee does not cover extra-curricular, optional subjects or activities. Additional charges may apply as required. These will be charged on a separate fee account.

Families with more than one student currently at the school will receive the following discount.

Second child's tuition fee	10%
Third child's tuition fee	25%
Fourth and subsequent children tuition fee	100%

Office Closure

Please make note that the Finance & Business Department at Augustine House will be closed for the holidays from Monday, 18 December 2023 until Wednesday, 17 January 2023.

Any queries had during this time frame can be directed to fees@stmonicas-epping.com which will be addressed upon return.

2024 Payment Plans

If you have signed up for a new payment plan or if you have already opted into a payment plan, you will be sent correspondence by Friday, 15 December 2023 confirming the details of your 2024 payment plan.

Finalising 2023 Tuition Fees

We would like to kindly thank those families that have paid their 2023 Tuition Fees. If you are not on a school administered payment plan, we would like to remind families that any remaining Tuition Fees are now overdue. Any overdue Tuition Fees can be made in person at Augustine House by the following methods: Cash, Cheque, EFTPOS, or Credit Card, alternatively, payments can be made online via the community (fee) portal, or BPAY.

If you are on a standard Weekly, Fortnightly or Monthly school administered payment plan, please make note that Friday, 8 December 2023 is the final payment date. Should you have any outstanding balance you will be notified and a final payment for any outstanding balances will take place on Thursday, 14 December 2023.

A requirement of enrolling your child at St Monica's College is that Tuition Fees and General Levy are paid by the due date.

Should you need assistance bringing your account up to date, please feel free to contact the Fees Office on 9409-8800 or contact us via fees@stmonicas-epping.com.

Microsoft Platform 2024

We have an important update to share regarding our school's digital infrastructure. In our ongoing efforts to improve the learning experience and streamline our digital tools, we will be transitioning from Google Drive and Google Classroom to the Microsoft Platform.

This transition is scheduled to take place on 18 January 2024 and we believe it will bring numerous benefits to both students and teachers. The Microsoft platform offers a suite of integrated tools designed to enhance collaboration, productivity, and the overall educational experience.

Key benefits of this transition include:

Seamless Integration: Microsoft tools such as Teams, OneDrive and SharePoint provide a cohesive ecosystem that simplifies file sharing, document collaboration and communication.

Enhanced Security: Microsoft's security measures will help safeguard students' data and protect against potential cyber threats.

Improved Accessibility: The Microsoft platform is designed to be user friendly and accessible for students, making it easier for them to engage in online learning and coursework.

Simplified Communication: Microsoft Teams offers a more streamlined way for teachers and students to interact and discuss assignments.

Consolidated Resources: Students will have access to a single hub for all their assignments, documents and class materials.

We understand that change can be challenging, but we are committed to providing support and resources to ensure a smooth transition. Students have been sent an email outlining this change and providing them with instructions on how to save anything from their Google Drive which will be inaccessible after 18 January, 2024. In addition, students will be provided with information about Microsoft Teams from their teachers early next year.

Thank you for your ongoing support, and we look forward to a successful transition to the Microsoft platform.

Ms M Keele
Deputy Principal (Teaching & Learning)

IMPORTANT DATES 2024

Term 1

January

18 – Office Opens

February

1 – Year 7 Transition Day
2 – All Students Commence
8 – Academic Honours Evening
13 – Term 1 College Assembly
14 – Ash Wednesday
19 – DSC College Photographs
21 – DRC College Photographs

March

6 – House Athletics Carnival
11 – Labour Day (Public Holiday) Public Holiday
12 – College Mass
19 – Parent Teacher Conferences
22 – House Cross Country
27 – Parent Teacher Conferences
28 – Teaching and Learning Day (Student Free)/End of Term 1

Term 2

April

15 – Term 2 Begins
25 – ANZAC Day (Public Holiday)

May

28 Year 10 and 11 Exams Begin

June

4 – Year 8 and 9 Exams Begin
7 – Report Writing Day (Student Free)
10 – King's Birthday (Public Holiday)
28 – Staff Wellbeing Day (Student Free)/End of Term 2

Term 3

July

15 – Staff Spirituality Day (Student Free)
16 – Term 3 Classes Begin

August

7 – Parent Teacher Conferences
13 – Parent Teacher Conferences

14 – Teaching and Learning Day (Student Free)

30 – St Monica's Day

September

20 – End of Term 3

Term 4

October

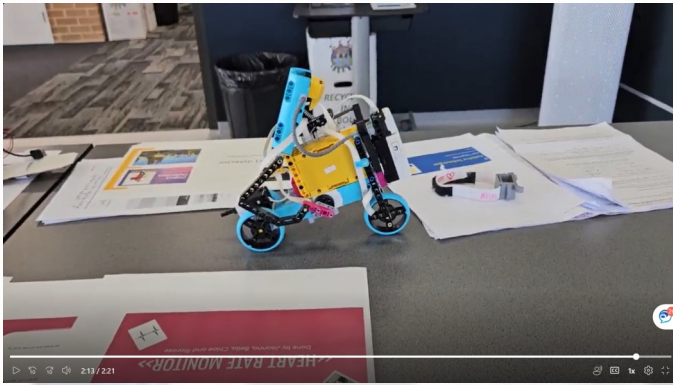
7 – Term 4 Begins
14 – Last Day of Year 12 Classes
28 – Year 7 Camp Week

November

4 – Mid Term Break
5 – Melbourne Cup (Public Holiday)
11 – Years 10 and 11 Exams Begin
26 – Years 7 – 9 Exams Begin
29 – Report Writing Day (Student Free)

December

3 – All Class Conclude



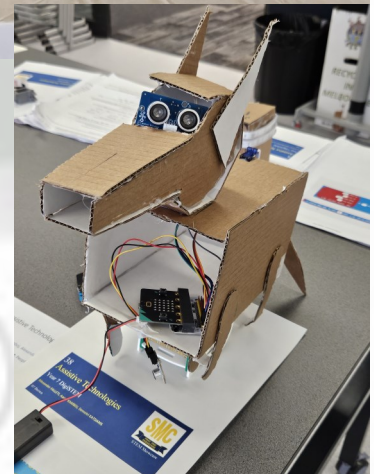
2023 SMC STEM Showcase

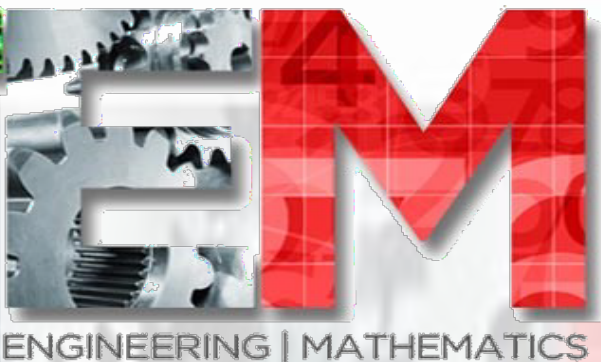
The 2023 SMC STEM Showcase was a celebration of student achievements in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. It featured 138 finalists from Year 7 to Year 12, across six faculties and five co-curricular activities. The showcase was notable for its diverse participation, highlighting students' passion and dedication to STEM through innovative projects and research. It offered 31 award categories, covering a wide range of STEM fields, including robotics, environmental science, computer programming, and mathematics. This diversity allowed students to demonstrate their skills and creativity.

A key highlight of the event was its focus on interdisciplinary excellence, with projects that integrated knowledge across multiple fields, emphasising collaboration and innovation. The showcase also emphasized the importance of co-curricular activities, displaying works from these areas that contribute to student development beyond academic achievements.

The event featured over 300 inspiring projects and presentations, showcasing students' creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and problem-solving skills. It drew active participation from parents, teachers, and industry professionals, highlighting the potential of the next generation of STEM leaders. Overall, the 2023 SMC STEM Showcase successfully celebrated the wide-ranging accomplishments of students in STEM, underscoring the importance of nurturing young talent in these fields.

Mr S Kalantzis
Senior STEM Educator





SMC STEM Showcase Awards Winners

Year 7 DigiSTEM, Assistive Technologies

1. Most Innovative Idea, Award Winners

Music Player by Zoe Pavlidis, Kayla Damtsis, Madi Riquelme

2. Best Engineered Prototype, Award Winner

Microcontroller Hand by Royce Ansah

3. Most Advanced Programming, Award Winners

Mute And Deaf Assistive Device by Sienna Trinch, Gracie Registro, Hayley Wilson

4. Best Prototype, Award Winners

Sound Sensitivity by Genevieve Warren, Ciara Marinos

Year 7 Science Mars Lander

5. Best Lander Design, Award Winners

By Dhyana Chauhan, Avneet Kaur

Year 7 Science Rube Goldberg Machine

6. Most Innovative Rube Goldberg Machine, Award Winners

By Jaanna James, Ayra Sharma

7. Year 7 STEM Award Winners

Microcontroller Prosthetic Limb by Kyle Benito, Mark Raddino

Year 8 Science, Solar Ovens

8. Solar Oven Inquiry and Design Award Winners

By Jessica Bibis, Georgia Ropkas, Hope Natis, Amylia Magro

9. Best Solar Oven Prototype Award Winners

Solar Oven by Inayat Josan, Chloe Zambello, Daniel Amato, Elias Samie

Year 8 Mathematics Challenge

10. Best Application of Mathematics Award Winners

Geometric Greeting Card by Keira O'Connor, Olivia Adam

11. Best Scalable Prototype Award Winners

Geometric Floor and Wall Tile Design by Liyansa Mahawanniarachchi, Anayah Naffa

12. Best Digital Design Award Winners

Geometric Housing by Apaar Nanda, Eashan Singh

13. Year 8 STEM Award Winners

Solar Oven Inquiry and Prototype by Rachael Numa, Emily Speers, Simrose Dalam, Ben Dimovski

Year 9 STEM

14. Best Engineered Award Winners

Sustainable tiny House And automated green House by Markos Alaveras, Dominic Kazarian, Meghana Umashankar, Madison Whiteway

15. Best STEM Inquiry Award Winner

Clean Water Project by Akshat Mody

16. Social Justice Award Winners

Water Filtration System By Aira Patel, Anna-Maria Constantin

Year 9 Science Rocketry

17. Space Altitude Achievement Award Winners

Soft Plastic Bottle Rocket by Sehajta Kamboj, Aira Patel, Swayam Nadkarni

18. Innovative Rocket Design Award Winners

Soft Plastic Bottle Rocket by Dylan Galgano, Alex Nguyen

19. Payload Achievement Award

Soft Plastic Bottle Rocket by Noah James

20. Year 9 STEM Award Winners

Affordable Energy Device Designed for Samaritan Sisters in Pakistan.
Solar Phone Charger by Dominic Kazarian, Markos Alaveras



STEM

SCIENCE | TECHNOLOGY | ENGINEERING | MATHEMATICS

SMC STEM Showcase Awards Winners

Senior Award Winners

21. Most Innovative Solution Award Winners

Ai Holographic Kitchen Assistant by Joshua Licastro, Matthew James, Justin Taturan, Long Nguyen

22. Best Programmed Solution Award Winners

Posture Sensor by Gautam Sohal, Brandon Mason, Luca Natoli

23. Best Digital System Award Winners

Vibraze By Carter Falleti, Austin Zacharia, Marcus Velante

24. Best Health Solution Award Winners

Anti Parkinson's Device by Thomas Gladman, Brahmjot Singh

25. Senior STEM Award Winners

Library Tiffany's Software by Mandy Le

Co-curricular And Other Curricular

26. Best Engineered Solar Vehicle Achievement

Solar Boat Designed by Gurmaan Singh, Saathvik Thennarasu, Arman Hajihashemi, Ethan Ajeesh

27. Monican Engineers at Work Achievement

Community Centre Designs by Gabrielle Malaga, Ekin Dang, Yenuli Peiris, Vu Tran, Claudia Bowie

28. Whittlesea Tech School Student Ambassador Program Achievement

STEM Project Designs by Akshat Mody, Arman Hajihashemi, Miley Tsilomanis, Sahibdeep Singh

29. Best Stained-glass Window and Lantern Design in Religious Education Achievement

Best Stained-glass Design by Oscar Yang

Best Lantern Design by Durva Patel, Ahana Patel

30. British Advanced Engineering Mac 3 Speed Award Achievement

Recognised For Their Jet Design That Received 3rd Place in the Melbourne Grand Prix Formula 1 STEM Challenge for Schools:

MAC3 Jet Design Team by Dylan Matlioski, Lucas Matta, Elijah Borg, Nathan Mifsud, Emile El Khoury

31. Advanced Manufactured Prototype Award Winners

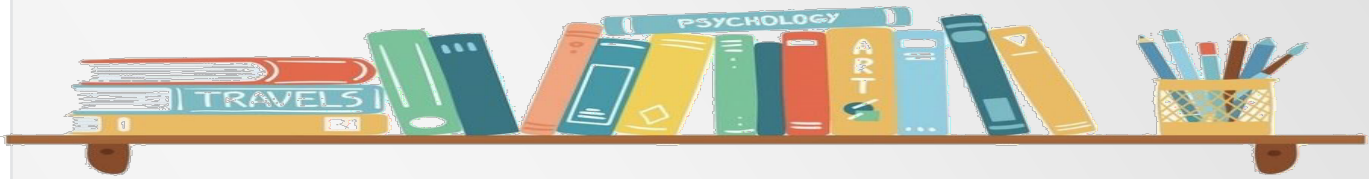
Spinning Tops by Thai Hoang

Food Serving Board by Lucas Petrou

Sound Engineering by Olivia Adam



Welcome to the LIBRARY



Did you know....our Library is available for borrowing 24/7?

As the school year draws to an end, we would like to remind you all SMC's digital library never closes and students have access to a number of great reading platforms over the summer break.

Comics Plus offers access to online comics, Wheelers has eBooks and audiobooks available and these can be accessed via our Library portal on both laptops and mobile devices. So, thousands of wonderful books are at your fingertips for the whole of the summer break!

Be sure to read and enjoy!

And of course, there is a great new selection of cool new books on display at both SJQ and PCL to entertain you on those very hot days!



Finally, the Library Services Faculty would like to take this opportunity to wish all our students, staff and their families a peace-filled, blessed Christmas and safe and happy New Year.

See you all in 2024!



HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

Please note the following dates and times:

Wednesday, 13 December -	Office closed
Thursday, 14 December -	Open – 9:00am to 4:00pm
Friday, 15 December -	Open – 9:00am to 3:00pm

The Office will be closed from Friday, 15 December 2023 and will re-open on Thursday, 18 January 2024 at 9:00am and close at 4:00pm.

Normal office hours will resume on Monday, 29 January 2024 - 8:00am till 4:30pm daily.

We will be closed on Friday, 26 January 2024 due to Australia Day Public Holiday.

Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

May this joyful season greet you with health and happiness.



As part of the College's 2022-2025 Reconciliation Action Plan, the College has committed to raising funds for the Open the Doors foundation. The foundation supports First Nations children access educational opportunities by providing financial support for basic school supplies such as textbooks, uniforms and stationery. Members of our College community can learn more about the foundation's work and make a donation by accessing this link <https://www.openingthedoors.org.au/>



OPENING THE DOORS FOUNDATION

Keeping Koorie Kids in an Education of their Choice



World of Sport



Year 8 Premier League Competition Grand Finals

Boys Basketball vs Salesian: 57-50
Girls Basketball vs Salesian: 39-68
Girls Volleyball vs Emmanuel: 2-1
Girls Football vs CRC North Kellor: 4-1
Boys Football vs Salesian: 1-0
Cricket vs Salesian: 7/118 defeated by 3/143



Boys Basketball



Girls Volleyball



Girls Football



Boys Football

Wishing staff and families a
Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year
Brian Hanley OAM
Principal

M e r r y C h r i s t m a s

MARVELLOUS MONICAN



Georgia Ropkas (8 Red) is a model student, exemplifying academic excellence and dedication to her studies. She is always willing to lend a helpful hand to those around her. Georgia is a Monican that always comes to classes prepared, is respectful and works diligently. Beyond the classroom, she has actively participated in the St. John's Program – Youth Division, showcasing a commitment to service, community, first aid and leadership. During her participation, her efforts were recognised with the Best New Recruit Award in 2022 and Encouragement Award in 2023. Georgia is also a member of the College's Youth Ministry, where she regularly attends and contributes to meetings. Georgia Ropkas is an outstanding example of what can be accomplished with dedication and kindness. We look forward to witnessing her continued growth and positive impact on our school community and beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'B.E. Hanley'.

B.E. Hanley OAM
College Principal

SMC

PRAY AND
PERSEVERE

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