

# Principal's Bulletin

ST MONICA'S COLLEGE, EPPING

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Tuesday, 5 March 2024

A School of Educational Enterprise | Serving Catholic Education Today and Tomorrow

#### AUTUMN – A SEASON FOR REFLECTION

We have now gently moved into Autumn, that lovely gentle season of the year when landscapes change, trees transform, temperatures become more moderate, and we leave behind the heat of summer and ready ourselves for the coldness of winter.

Autumn is unique for what it can do to our mood and feelings. We have felt hot and bothered in the previous three months, wild northerly winds, blazing sun, harsh thundery storms, and long nights when we are deprived of sleep and rest.



Now, we witness gradual change, gentle breezes, leaves falling from branches and gathering on the ground peacefully during undisturbed, balmy evenings that week by week turn into much chillier and brisk experiences.

In Australia, autumn 2024 will also take the Church into the Easter season. The followers of Jesus prepare through the



final days of Lent for the Triduum, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Easter is the greatest of the religious feasts, when we mourn the death of our Saviour and then celebrate His glorious Resurrection and defeat of death and evil.

Autumn is also the three months when sports change and that great Aussie tradition of AFL football comes to the fore. Out come the Clubs' colors, we stud the boots, erect the goalposts, and create our papier mâché streamers. What joy football in autumn brings to thousands – players, spectators, Club members, Friday night TV addicts watching the game of the round.

Autumn is when we gather our wits and bits and pieces and prepare for the wintry months. Animals and insects do exactly the same as they forage for winter provisions. We collect the firewood, have the air conditioner serviced, check our wardrobes for jackets, scarves and woollen socks. It is a season of anticipation and awareness during which we ought to be ready and prepared.

At SMC, we shall continue our 60th anniversary commemorations and events with a race day, alumni events, gatherings, and story-telling galore. Examinations will occur, courses will be well and truly established and delivered, progress will continue on improvements and enhancements and growth of the school.

Colors change in autumn and nature weaves its natural magic. The trees' leaves turn into yellow and brown; grasses seem to grow greener and red sunsets disappear and skies turn a darker shade of blue. Bright whites turn into shades of grey, days grow dimmer and nights become blacker.

I wish all Monicans beautiful autumnal experiences. Let us take up the challenges of the next three months to deepen our relationship with God and each other. May our prayer life develop and deepen. Aspects of autumn never offend or present challenges too complex to bear. In a mystical way, it is the time between the hot glow of the sun and freezing chill of snow. It is the ideal season for diamonds to grow.

Mr B. 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

Students thrive at school when they feel happy, confident, and safe. Your child's wellbeing is an absolute priority at St Monica's College, Epping.

When schools work in partnership with parents/carers/guardians, external agencies or authorities, and support structures to deepen wellbeing and learning outcomes, students have greater opportunities to experience success and reach their potential in all areas – spiritually, cognitively, emotionally, physically, and socially. At St Monica's College, our policies and procedures, curriculum design and implementation, and our teaching practices, are based on evidence that highlights strong links between safety, wellbeing, and learning.

Our stance on positive relationships and interactions, student wellbeing and behaviour management, and positive behaviour plans and protocols, clearly outline expectations and responsibilities that promote mutual care, acceptance, inclusion, and respect.

Behaviours that are in direct conflict to such expectations and responsibilities are not acceptable. Every effort is made to address such concerns using an educative and restorative process to repair hurt caused or damage sustained. It is, however, unacceptable to continue to behave in a manner that negatively impacts the wellbeing of other members of the community and consequently, some students forfeit their place in the Monican community due to repeated non-adherence to the College expectations, committed to upon enrolment. Monican students and families are reminded that behaviour needs to be respectful, inclusive and in line with our Christian values at all times, whilst at school, online, and when representing the College.

College staff are well-versed, equipped and dedicated to the promotion of wellbeing across all campuses, and provide support services to both students and families as required. Families are encouraged to seek guidance and support, if you feel your child requires additional or specific wellbeing provisions, or if you feel that the actions of others, are having a negative impact on your child.

Monicans deserve to be happy, and to have the best conditions available to them to optimise their capacity to learn and flourish during their secondary school years.

Miss P Di Maria Executive Deputy Principal





#### Term 1 Parent/Teacher Conferences Years 7 - 12

Parent/Teacher Conferences for Years 7 – 12 will be held on Tuesday, 19 March and Wednesday, 27 March from 2.30 pm – 8.00 pm.

All Year 7-12 Conferences will be held online via PAM using MS Teams video conferencing. Using PAM (Parent Access Module), you will be able to book the conference times that suit you best from any internet-connected device. Access to the booking system is available from 9.00 am Tuesday, 12 March 2024.

To facilitate setup for the conferences all students will be dismissed at 12.55 pm on both days.

# Key Relationships for Positive Student Outcomes

At St Monica's College, we believe that fostering respectful and cooperative relationships between our school and families is essential for the wellbeing and success of our students. We share a joint responsibility in developing and maintaining these relationships, as they serve as a crucial channel for effective pastoral care.

Our College is an environment that focuses on collaboration, consultation, listening and using everyone's strengths to achieve common goals. We always pride ourselves in modelling positive and respectful communication, with all members of our community.

We recognize that there are times when emotions run high, and concerns about our children may lead to feelings of being overwhelmed, worry, or frustration. In such moments, it is important to be mindful of how we communicate, both verbally and electronically. The tone and content of our messages can significantly impact the outcome of our conversations and the strength of our relationships.

In particular, we urge caution when composing emails or engaging in verbal exchanges during emotionally charged situations. It is easy to let our emotions dictate our words, but taking a moment to ensure that our communication is respectful and appropriate is essential for maintaining strong relationships and achieving positive outcomes.

The benefits of home-school partnerships are apparent; we are mindful that teacher and family relationships are important for young people's social and emotional wellbeing and academic achievements. With Parent Teacher Conferences occurring on Tuesday, 19 March and Tuesday, 27 March, we encourage parents and guardians to engage with their child's teachers and strengthen the home-school collaboration.

We call upon all members of our community — staff, students, parents, and guardians —to continue working together in partnership. By fostering an environment of mutual respect and understanding, we can better support and nurture the students of St Monica's College.

Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to our shared goal of providing the best possible care and support for our community.

Ms A Xerri Campus Director DRC Miss N Meade Campus Director DSC



# THIS MONTH IN

2024

1 March

2 March

2 March

2 March

2 March

3 March

3 March

8 March 8 March

12 March

12 March

13 March

13 March

14 March

14 March

15 March

15 March

18 March

18 March

18 March

18 March

19 March

19 March

20 March

22 March

21 March

23 - 28 March

25 March

25 March

25 March

26 March

26 March

DSC Be More Meeting

High Street Bells Choir Program

DSC Youth Ministry Meeting

Junior Student Council Meeting

DRC Youth Ministry Meeting

St Peter's Literacy Program

DRC Be More Meeting

Young Women's Breakfast

DSC Be More Meeting

College Mass

DRC Be More Meeting

Student Council Youth Leadership Excursion

Oxacare Aged Care Program

Student Council Meeting

Staff Spirituality Seminar

Archdiocesan Mass

DSC Be More Meeting

Oxacare Aged Care Program

DSC Youth Ministry Meeting

Junior Student Council Meeting

**DRC Youth Ministry Meeting** 

St Peter's Literacy Program

DRC Be More Meeting

Big Group Hug Program

DSC Be More Meeting

Online Prayer

Lake Mungo Immersion

Oxacare Aged Care Program

DSC Youth Ministry Meeting

**DRC Youth Ministry Meeting** 

St Peter's Literacy Program

DRC Be More Meeting



# St Monica's College, Epping

# Enrol Now for Year 7, 2026

Dear Parents/Guardians & Carers,

If you have a child presently in Grade 6 and have not yet enrolled into St Monica's College for **Year 7, 2025** please do so immediately.

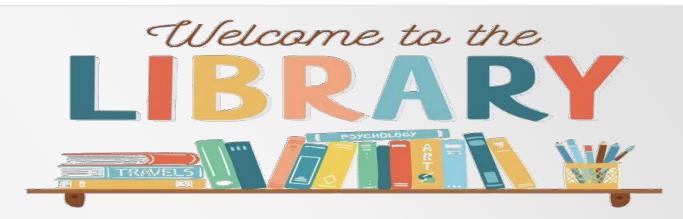
Applications for Grade 5 students starting Year 7 in 2026 are now open and will close on Friday, 16 August 2024.

Application for enrolment is available on the St Monica's College Website: www.stmonicas-epping.com/apply. Click on the apply button to complete your online form and submit with documentation required.

If you would like to attend a school tour, please visit our website to make a booking.

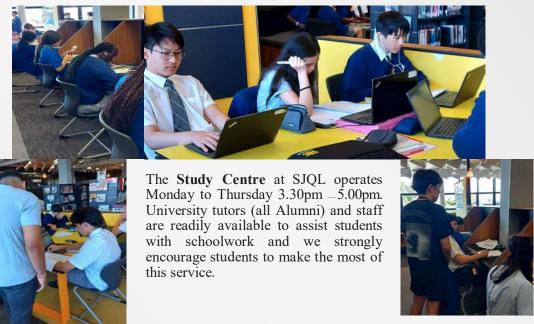
For enquiries, please contact the College Registrar, Mrs Lina Sirianni on 9409 8800 or email registrar@stmonicas-epping.com.





## Get to know your Library Pt 2: Sister Julian Quaine Library - 2024

Years 10-12 students at SMC are extremely fortunate to have the beautiful Sister Julian Quaine (SJQL) Library on the Davisson Street Campus. A serious study library offers areas for quiet study, small group work, class work and leisure reading.



Library Clubs are growing in popularity at SJQ as well. Both the **Journaling** and **Writers Clubs** have commenced this term, new members are most welcome and enquiries can be directed to Library staff for days and times.

**Beyond The Book** continues to meet regularly in the SJQ Library and our most avid book lovers can be found there discussing books, movies, a wide range of thought-provoking topics and creating wonderful artwork (see below) ...and there is usually chocolate! Enquiries to join can be directed to Ms Hall or Ms Stratton.



The SJQL also offers a number of services for students to take advantage of. Photocopying (please bring your student ID card for ease of use) and binding machines are available to all students on the senior campus via the Library. These are ideal for students preparing for exams, and we encourage students to organise themselves early in the year to avoid long queues closer to exams.

And finally, our staff are there to assist students each and every school day, so please reach out if you need any assistance at all. See you in the Library!



## DRC

#### Badano Program

Year 9 students have all been learning about the world of careers over the last two weeks during their Badano pastoral lessons. They have completed on-line quizzes to help them to identify their interests and match them to various careers that tend to match these interests. They have used the SMC Careers site to research careers of interest, finding out about the pay, average hours per week, tasks they would have to undertake and much more. Our Year 9 cohort have also been creating career plans which have prompted them to think about the different possible pathways on offer at St Monica's and the range of careers these might lead to. The Year 7 and 8 students will be introduced to careers resources and



activities in term two through the Badano Pastoral Program.

### STEM Careers

Year 9 STEM students have also listened to presentations about career options and resources that relate specifically to the STEM area.

#### **DSC**

#### ADF Girls

A number of Year 10 to 12 girls will attend an Australian Defence Force STEM International Women's Day Event on 8 March. The full-day event, held at the ADF facility at Monegeetta will introduce them to a range of new possibilities for their own careers.



Boeing MST communications equipment being tested at Monegeetta Base, where selected senior SMC girls will attend on 8 March 8 for an ADF STEM careers day.

#### Interviews

The Careers Office on DSC has been very busy with many students taking up the opportunity to discuss school subjects, university pathways, apprenticeships, work experience, and various career options with our experienced and empathic careers practitioners. Year 10 students will undertake careers lessons during the Badano Pastoral Program in Term 2.



#### **March Statements**

Tuition Fee Account Statements and Additional Charges invoices/ statements were emailed to all families on Monday, 4 March 2024.

If you have not received a copy of your tuition statement, here are some tips to correct the issue:

- Check your spam/junk folder: Often legitimate emails end up getting incorrectly marked as spam. Check these folders and ensure you mark emails from St Monica's College as "not junk" or whitelist the email address to prevent from happening again.
- Check your email storage: If your inbox is reaching capacity, it can prevent you from receiving new emails. Be sure to review your inbox often and delete unnecessary emails. You may also wish to consider increasing your storage limit.
- Review any email filters in place: Check to see if you have any filters in place that may be incorrectly diverting or deleting emails.
- Verify your email address: Contact the Fees Office to see which email address we are sending your statements to. Our system is limited and generally only sends your monthly statement to the primary debtor on the account, we can update/override this email address as requested.

Extra-curricular activities do not appear on your Tuition Account Statement, these charges are billed via a separate Tax Invoice as and when they fall due, whereby different terms and conditions apply.

#### **2024 Tuition Fees**

Please keep in mind that payments are due and payable in four equal instalments by the second week of each term if you are not on a school administered payment plan:

#### Instalment 1 – 16 February 2024

Instalment 2 – 26 April 2024

Instalment 3 – 26 July 2024

Instalment 4 – 18 October 2024.

If you are on a school administered payment plan, refer below to upcoming March Direct Debit Dates.

1 Quarterly Payments	1 Monthly Payment	2 Fortnightly Payments	4 Weekly Payments
	15 March	1 March 15 March 28 March (Thursday)	1 March 8 March 15 March 22 March 28 March (Thursday)

The College offers many payment options to enable parents to meet their fee obligations as follows:

- a) At reception (Augustine House) Payments can be made by cash, cheque, EFTPOS or credit card
- b) Online Payments via the community (fee) portal, or via BPAY
- c) Direct Debit Payment Plan (weekly, fortnightly, monthly, or quarterly) Parents that would like to enter into a Payment Plan, please contact our Fees office. Keep in mind, families opted into a payment plan will have an extended due date of up until 6 December 2024.



#### Financial assistance for Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund (CSEF) 2024 \$225.00

Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom. The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund will ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities.

School camps provide children with inspiring experiences in the great outdoors, excursions encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works and sports teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are part of a healthy curriculum.

CSEF will be provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card, veterans affairs or pension card, or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible for CSEF. The allowance will be paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions, or sporting activities for the benefit of your child.

The annual CSEF amount per student will be:

\$125 for primary school students

\$225 for secondary school students.

#### **How to Apply**

Contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from www.education.vic.gov.au/csef

#### **Accepting applications**

Parents (including guardians) no longer need to submit a new application form each year in most cases.

Parents only need to submit an application form in 2024 if any of these changes have occurred.

New student enrolments: students who have started or changed schools in 2024 or if the parent did not apply for CSEF at the school in 2023.

Changed family circumstances: such as a change of custody, change of name, concession card number, or new siblings commencing at the school in 2024.

#### **Eligibility Date**

For concession card holders CSEF eligibility will be subject to the parent/legal guardian's concession card being successfully validated with Centrelink on the first day of either term one (29 January 2024) or term two (15 April, 2024).

#### **Closing Date**

You should lodge a CSEF application form at the school by 28 June, 2024 for eligibility. For more information about the CSEF visit <a href="https://www.educationvic.gov.au/csef">www.educationvic.gov.au/csef</a>

All queries are to be directed to the Fees Office on 9409 8800 or fees@stmonicas-epping.com.

We look forward to working together throughout 2024.



# f Sport

















### SMC-Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) Industry Partnership Program

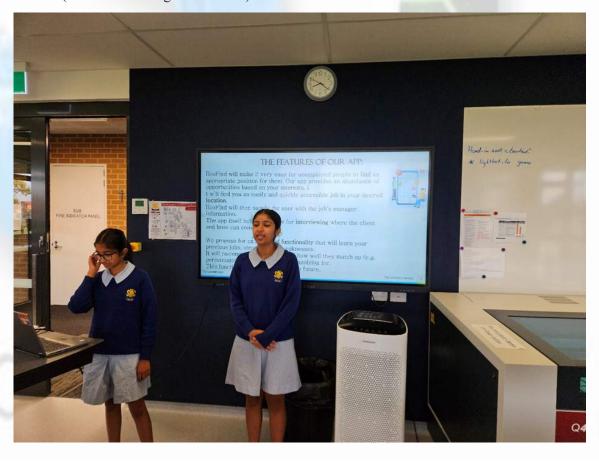
In the Year 7 STEM subject, DigiSTEM, we host an annual goIT STEM Challenge every October, which provides an opportunity for Year 7 students to engage with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through digital innovation. Students must identify a problem, develop a solution, and design a prototype. In February 2024, three teams from SMC were selected to represent the school at the national level:

- 1. BinWise by Sienna TRINCHI and Gracie REGISTRO
- 2. EcoFind by Dhyana CHAUHAN and Avneet Kaur
- 3. MoneyGuard by Tasmeen Kaur and Siana Britto

At the national level, teams from NSW, Victoria, and other states represented their schools. The innovative app, EcoFind, developed by Dhyana CHAUHAN and Avneet Kaur, was selected by TCS-Asia Pacific to represent Australia in the Asia Pacific competition. Congratulations to Dhyana and Avneet for finishing in the top two entries and earning a chance to represent SMC at the Asia Pacific competitions.

This partnership between SMC and TCS promotes STEM education, innovation, and problem-solving skills among young people, preparing them for an increasingly technology-driven world. It is a program that should be encouraged and replicated in other schools to inspire more young minds to embrace STEM education and develop essential skills for their future careers.

Mr S Bagh Senior Teacher (Future Technologies & STEM)





#### STEM Co-curricular Activities at St Monica's College

#### **Explore, Innovate, Collaborate!**

Welcome to the exciting world of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) at St Monica's College, Epping! This year, we are excited to introduce a range of engaging co-curricular activities that will ignite your curiosity, challenge your creativity, and shape your future.

#### **STEM Week Activities**

Once a term, during STEM Week, we invite you to join us for daily lunchtime challenges. Dive into the realms of:

- Science: Uncover the mysteries of the natural world.
- **Digital Technologies**: Explore coding, algorithms, and digital problem-solving.
- Technologies and Engineering: Tinker, build, and innovate.
- Mathematics: Sharpen your mathematical mind.

Whether you are passionate about coding, constructing, or cracking puzzles, STEM Week has something for everyone!

#### **Design Thinking Sprints**

For those with a burning desire to create, our problem-based Design Thinking Sprints await. Choose from these exciting fields:

- Robotics: Program VEX and SPIKE Robots to tackle real-world challenges.
- <u>Coding</u>: Participate in fun online challenges and friendly competitions.
- <u>Makers</u>: Embark on a design thinking journey using microcontrollers, 3D printing, laser cutting, and more. Turn your ideas into practical solutions for real-world problems.
- Model Solar Vehicle Challenge: Design and build solar-powered cars or boats. Test your engineering prowess in our school competition.

#### STEM Talks and Astrophotography

Expand your horizons with STEM Talks <u>inspiring speakers</u> will delve into topics that pique your interest. And if you have ever gazed at the night sky in wonder, our astrophotography sessions will let you capture celestial beauty through telescopes and cameras.

#### Join Us!

Your STEM experiences at St Monica's are an opportunity to make friends, develop new skills, and—most importantly—have fun! We cannot wait to witness the incredible projects you will create.

Mr S Kalantzis Senior STEM Educator





#### A Spark of Creativity in Year 9 Quest

Written by Mrs M Bagh, dedicated to the Year 9 Quest Girls Group.

#### A Prelude....

Listening to Tones and I perform "Diamonds" for over 50,000 attendees at Marvel Stadium in her supporting role alongside Pink on Saturday, 24 February 2024, served as a profound reminder of the inherent brilliance and worth possessed by every individual present. Each person in that stadium, and indeed beyond, carries remarkable capabilities and possess a unique essence gifted only to humanity. We possess the remarkable ability to innovate, invent, create, and articulate emotions. Furthermore, we have the capacity to ponder life's mysteries, delight in its joys, and navigate its surprises and challenges. Like the repetitive yet resonant lyrics of "Diamonds," we shine brightly, akin to precious gems concealed within the depths of unexplored mountains waiting discovery.

The subsequent return to work and studies on Monday, 26 February, following the electrifying Pink concert, left attendees filled with a sense of excitement, awe, and inspiration. Alecia Moore's breathtaking trapeze performance evoked images of Tinkerbell and memories of childhood imaginations igniting a renewed vigour within all who witnessed it. This energy resonates deeply with the ongoing narrative of St. Monica's College, now celebrating its 60th year of educating girls in the Northern suburbs of Epping. Over the decades, this College has served countless individuals, contributing to the brilliance of diamonds, rare and irreplaceable.

Among these rare diamonds are the Year 9 Quest girls: Enara Adam, Alessia Gravina, Renae Jabo, Anastasia Machado, Chelsyee Parisi, and Isabella Vescio. Embracing the 2024 College theme, "From a Dream to Diamonds," this term they have embarked on a collaborative STEM project, cultivating essential skills for the 21st century: communication, collaboration, creativity, character building, and critical thinking. Central to their project is a large laser-cut artwork, featuring the symbolic tree of life adorned with dangling colourful diamonds—a testament to survival, cosmic connection, and hope.

Guided by Andrea Mathios, Laboratory Technician and STEM Team Leader, the group learn the basics of lighting and electrical circuits to choose specific lighting for their art piece to radiate aesthetic harmony. Under the guidance of Mr. Frank De Cata, STEM School Officer, the team learn the basics of the laser-cut machine, enlarging their drawings and cutting them out on wood ply. Amidst the challenges encountered along the way, the group uncovers invaluable insights into their own identities, the diverse qualities of their peers, and the values underpinning their collective effort.

As the project reaches its midpoint, we wait in anticipation to unveiling the final masterpiece, hopeful to inspire hearts and minds.

Stay tuned for the next Bulletin, showcasing the finished project.

Enjoy the photos that provide a snapshot into the process of the STEM project thus far.



Thinking about the theme using a workstation learning protocol.



Creating an inspiration splashboard about the 2024 College Theme



Drawing the first draft of the Tree of Life



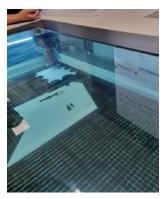
Drawing the border for the shadow box



Hand drawn diamonds are scanned through the computer, enlarged and ready to cut using the laser cut machine.



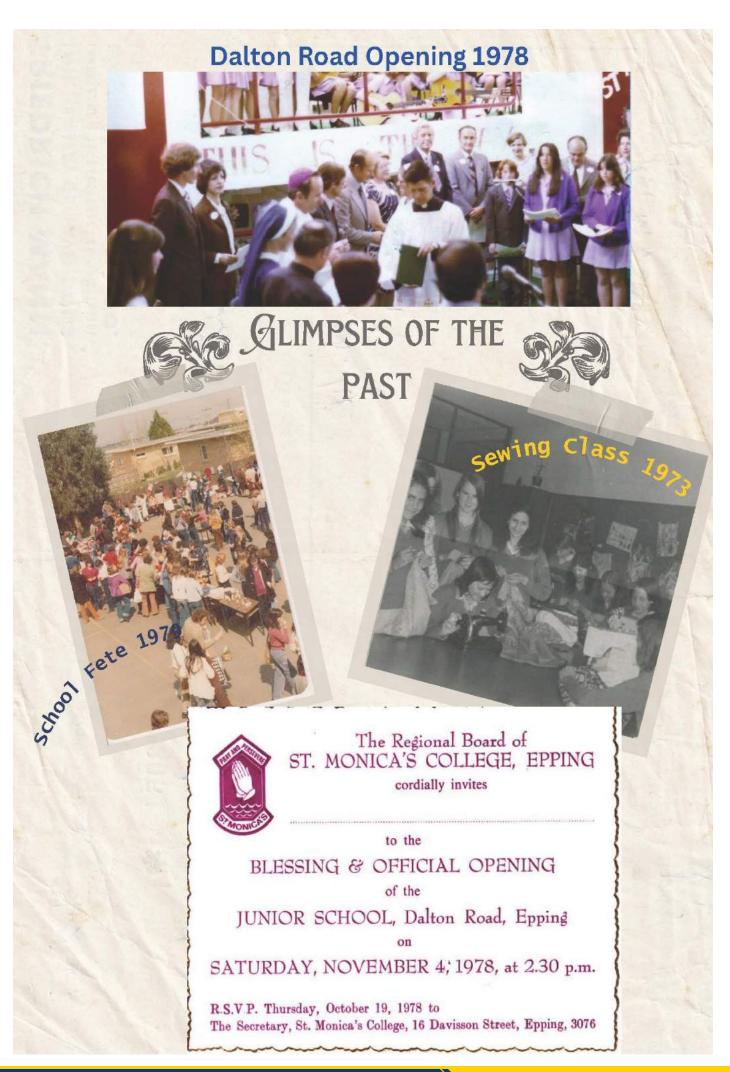
Diamonds have been cut using the laser cut machine



Mr F De Cata shows the students how to use the laser cut machine



Sneak preview of the border of the shadow box.



# The Debaters Association of Victoria — Competition

The first round of The Debaters Association of Victoria schools debating competition for 2024 commenced at Loyola College on Monday, 26 February. The results were.

#### A Grade

**Topic**: That the government should not build safe injecting rooms

SMC 1 negative 226 defeated Mill Park SC affirmative 223 (Best speaker Niko Shibata)

#### C Grade

**Topic**: That the government should financially incentivise people to move to regional Victoria

SMC 1 affirmative 227 defeated Northside Christian College 1 negative 225 (Best speaker Anna-Maria Constantin)

#### D Grade

**Topic**: That contact sports should be banned in schools

SMC 2 negative 226 defeated Eltham College 2 affirmative 223

(Best Speaker Andrea Robinson)

We thank all students for their time and effort in preparing for their debates. It was a fine set of results for SMC teams with SMC students being awarded best speaker in each grade.

Next round of debating is scheduled for Monday, 18 March.



## MARVELLOUS MONICAN



This month's Marvelous Monican is Angelica Banquil of 9 White. She is very studious, wanting to maximise her learning opportunities while here at SMC. Angelica regularly attends ASH. She studies with her friends, using this time to collaborate and help each other. Angelica likes writing and English literature. She has been playing volleyball since Year 7. Angelica is an advocate for social justice and is part of Be More and the Junior School Council and was part of the community cook up last year, providing food to disadvantaged people. In her spare time, Angelica does volunteer work for the City of Whittlesea. Here she assists in fundraising to support those struggling with disabilities and mental health, to help increase people's awareness of the environment and promote sustainability.

Angelica's passion to help others stems from her origins. Her parents migrated to Australia from the Philippines. When in the Philippines, Angelica was able to witness firsthand the struggles with poverty by her own family and their community. It has given her an appreciation for what her parents have been able to provide for her and her

siblings here in Australia. She wants to honour her parents by getting a good education and completing further studies. Angelica wants to give back to those less fortunate than her.



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