

# The Monican

ST MONICA'S COLLEGE, EPPING

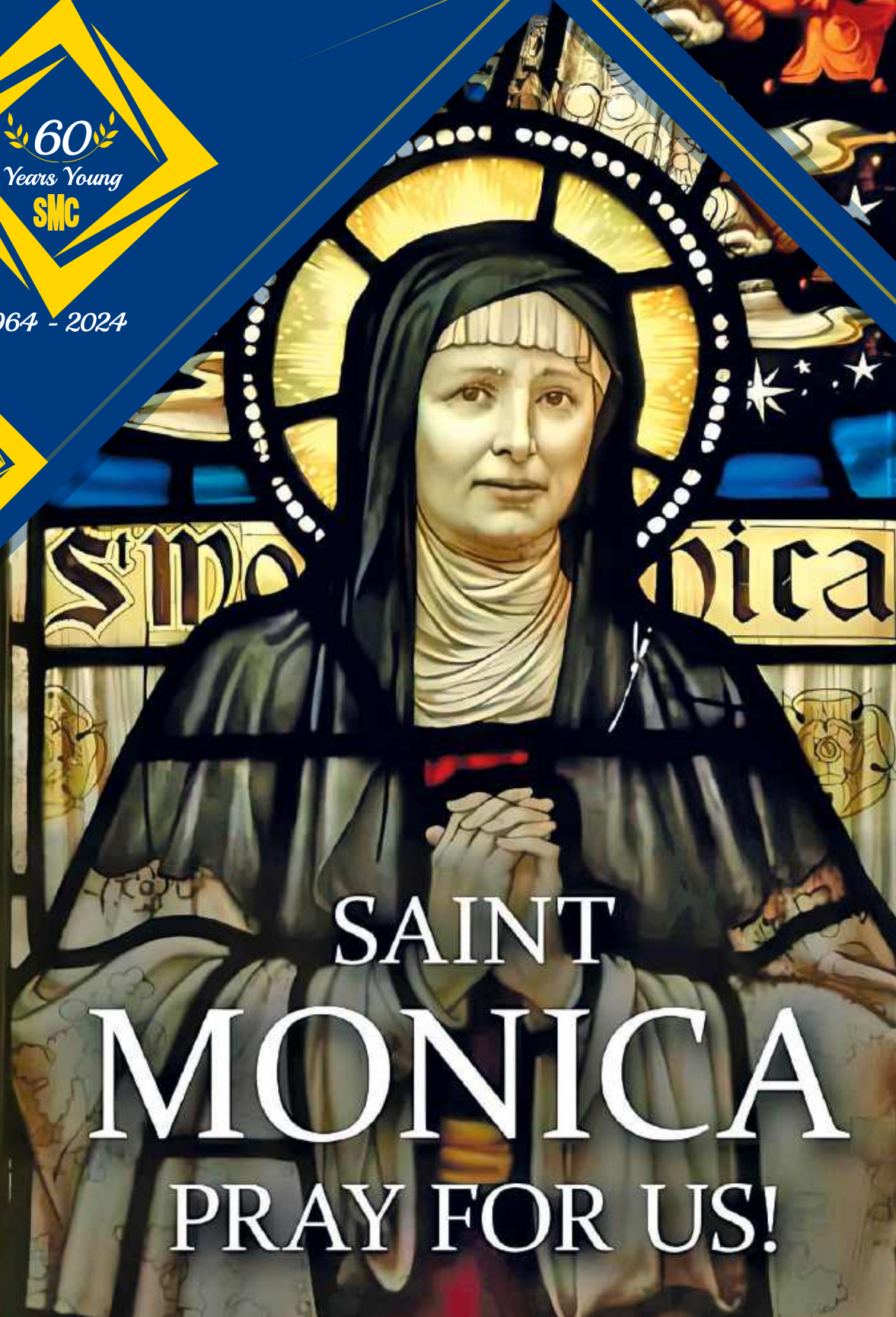


1964 - 2024

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Saint Monica



SAINT  
MONICA  
PRAY FOR US!

# The Monican

## MISSION

St Monica's College is a Catholic coeducational faith community. The school values the sacredness and wellbeing of all students, staff and parents and is committed to serving the young people of the northern suburbs of Melbourne.

We promote the truths and values of Jesus Christ and fidelity to the message of the Gospels. Through prayer and perseverance, we nurture genuine and harmonious relationships based on restorative principles.

Our teaching and learning approach is contemporary, global in perspective and aims to inspire life-long learning. We seek to stimulate and develop academic learning and students' personal world view through critical thought, whilst always being respectful of students' abilities and learning styles. We encourage and assist each Monican to reach full potential.

Student-centred educational programs and extra-curricular offerings foster respect of self, others and the environment. The College provides extensive well maintained facilities, resources and technologies which reflect an ongoing commitment to excellence and innovation.

St Monica's College celebrates its cultural diversity and draws strong identity from its past. We endeavour to empower Monicans to flourish and contribute positively to Australia and the world, now and in the future.

## OUR STRATEGIC INTENT

St Monica's College is a School of Educational Enterprise. The College is committed to adopting international perspectives focussing on global citizenship and social justice for all. There is an ongoing commitment to the development of programs and facilities including a Trade Skills Centre. The College aims to be a leader in innovation, the use of Information and Communication Technology, with state of the art resources and encouraging digital leadership. The College will continue to expand the repertoire of effective teaching practices and use of data, in order to strengthen curriculum pathways and achievement. Contemporary learning opportunities will be provided for all community members, including students, staff and parents.

### EDITORIAL TEAM

Principal Mr Brian Hanley OAM  
Ms Santina Giannetta

### COVER

Saint Monica

## Contents

Principal's Report	3	▶
Japanese Homestay Program - Host Information Evening	4	▶
Executive Deputy Principal's Report	4	▶
Campus Director's Report – Dalton Road Campus	5	▶
Campus Director's Report – Davisson Street Campus	5	▶
Deputy Principal's Report – Curriculum & Information Technology	6	▶
Deputy Principal's Report – Professional Practice	6	▶
Deputy Principal's Report – Identity, Mission & Community	7	▶
Staff Spirituality Day – High Street Bells Choir	7	▶
Staff Spirituality Day – Children First Foundation	8	▶
Staff Spirituality Day – Aged Care Visitation	8	▶
Staff Spirituality Day – Clean Up of the Darebin Creek	9	▶
Staff Spirituality Day – Supporting the Exodus Community	9	▶
Staff Spirituality Day – Walk for Autism	9	▶
Principal's Address Term 3, 2024	10	▶
Term 3 College Assembly	11	▶
1990s St Monica's College, Epping	12-13	▶
Past and Present Staff Afternoon Tea	14-15	▶
Sacred Heart Photography Competition	15	▶
Worship and Faith	16	▶
Carlo Acutis – The Price of Sainthood	16	▶
Deacon Ferdinand Corroya – Building relationship with God	17	▶
Chess	18-19	▶
Counsellors – Wellbeing	19	▶
Principal's Award for Public Speaking 2024	20-21	▶
Music Camp	22	▶
Languages and Cultures Week	22-23	▶
Careers	23	▶
Year 7 Premier League	24	▶
SACCSS Senior Football	24	▶
SACCSS Senior Boys AFL	24	▶

## Principal's Report

Our College is blest by so many matters that create a highly functioning and happy community. We are blest that in 2024 we are in probably the strongest period of our sixty year old history in relation to enrolments and stable financial situation.

We are blest through the wonderful students who attend their College daily. From the youngest to the eldest, from the most athletic to the most talented musician, from the creative artist to the Be More social justice member – Monicans are fabulous young Australians with a magnificent future ahead.

Indeed, we are blest by our 420+ staff members who serve the children and their families in a vast variety of ministries and jobs. Wherever we find them in the classrooms, on the sportsfields, in libraries, leadership or co-curricular coordination, the staff demonstrate their commitment to the College in faithful and loyal ways.

Our parents support this College and indeed they too bring blessings upon us. Their decision to enrol their child here is the beginning, then it turns into paying school fees, participating in the learning process at home, talking positively about the school to neighbors and friends, and simply preparing their child each day to come to school. Thanks are fulsomely offered to parents and family members.

Over the sixty years of our College life, blessings have abounded through the auspices of many people and circumstances: the Sisters of the Good Samaritan; the local regional parishes with their clergy; purchasing of additional properties (Davisson, Dalton, Ostia and Reservoir plus the DSC annexes on Wedge Street and the MacKillop Centre), adequate property on which to educate; ICT resources; sporting possibilities; international excursions; a strong social justice focus; environmental sustainability; great communications written and online; and generally incident-free harmony schoolwide.

Amidst all these blessings there is one further blessing to name and about which to be delighted. This is the decision by Archbishop Justin Simmonds to place the College under the patronage of Saint Monica. This Algerian

woman of the fourth century has inspired and guided us for six decades. It is from her valiant life that the revered College motto, 'Pray and Persevere' is derived. Saint Monica was and is to this modern age a woman of such bravery, faith, and love that no child ought to deny her influence on their life.

Across the centuries, Saint Monica has been acclaimed by writers, theologians, social activists, women, those in need, and those of immense faith and commitment. Her feast day is our opportunity to show to the world that her patronage is of the highest and happiest significance for us. This anniversary year will see the presence of the Apostolic Nuncio, His Grace Archbishop Charles Balvo, as our Principal Celebrant at Mass, and we shall rightfully claim to the world once more that we stand shoulder to shoulder with any school in this nation.

Saint Monica blesses us with her vision of Heaven at Ostia in the company of her beloved son, Saint Augustine, another blessing for this and all the Catholic Church. Saint Monica inspires us to do what never daunted her confidence or energy. That is to speak openly to the hierarchy of the Church; be a loving parent to her children and grandchildren; be wise and holy; be ready to sacrifice her life and happiness for the sake of her son and his relationship with God.

Monicans today proudly wear the Samaritan Sisters' cross and the 60th Anniversary diamond badge on their blazers. We see emblazoned everywhere 'Pray and Persevere'. We show the local and wider community what it means to us to be 'Monican' in name and reputation. We value our past and our traditions and are blest by them. We live alert and enthusiastically in the present, and are blest by doing so. We look ahead to the future with anticipation and the blessings that will be endowed on all those who are Monican. Once a Monican, always a Monican.

God bless all who belong to and create this extraordinary school community.

**Brian Hanley OAM**  
*Principal*

Brian Hanley OAM



## St Monica's Week 2024



### Annual Oration

60 Years Young

 7:00pm  
**26 August, 2024**  
By Invitation Only

### Sports Breakfast

Tony Shaw  
Eddie McGuire  
Jimmy Bartel

 6:30am  
**28 August, 2024**  
 Tickets  
Adults – \$55  
Child – \$35

### St Monica's Day

Celebrant –  
His Excellency  
Archbishop  
Charles Balvo  
Apostolic Nuncio  
in Australia

 10:00am - Mass  
**30 August, 2024**  
By Invitation Only



**For more information**  
9409 8800

1964 - 2024

## Japanese

### Homestay Program

**BECOME  
A HOST IN  
2025**

St Monica's College, Epping is excited to present the 2025 Japanese Homestay Program. After a successful 2024 program we invite you to register interest to be part of this incredible educational experience.

Hosting a Japanese student is open to any Monican student. Studying Japanese is not a requirement.

Host students will be given priority to travel if they wish.

#### INFORMATION EVENING:

**Tuesday, 3 September  
7:00pm**

*Places are strictly limited.*

#### RSVP IS ESSENTIAL:

Contact Mrs Enza Sinopoli  
(e.sinopoli@stmonicas-epping.com)  
No later than 2 September

## Executive Deputy Principal's Report

Miss Paula Di Maria



As we plan for the month of August when we traditionally honour and celebrate our patron, St Monica, we reflect with fondness and pride on the history of our wonderful College in this, the 60th anniversary jubilee year. Our College was formed "From A Dream to Diamonds" and it is with great humility and gratitude that we honour those who worked assiduously to form, build and create a College and a community that has as its foundations, the "Diamonds studded throughout our story; diamonds in the students; diamonds in the staff; diamonds in the Sisters; a diamond in our Saint".

The Diamond Jubilee year acknowledging "Sixty wonderful years of Monican Education" continues to be a time of consideration, of gratitude, and of celebration. People, their stories and actions, events, and traditions, have been the sparkling diamonds that have weaved the rich tapestry that reveals what it means to be Monican, to be educated in the Monican tradition, to follow the Monican way, and to brighten the world with our learnings, service, and contributions.

In 2023, the Jubilee Planning Committee was established to plan, design, and deliver our 2024 Jubilee schedule of events and commemorations. The Diamond Jubilee logo 60 Years Young, has taken pride of place on College stationery, in publications, in our classrooms, on our student planner, t-shirts, interfaces, promotional materials, memorabilia, and on the anniversary pin we wear alongside our traditional College pin in this commemorative year, uniting us in faith as together, we continue to go forth to Pray and Persevere.

Since the beginning of this historic year our community has unpacked the College Theme, listened to stories and accounts of Monican days gone by across six fabulous decades, and we have marvelled at the narratives of strength, courage and perseverance that were emphasised throughout. Together we have enjoyed photographic images and listened to testimonials of those who were present in the early days working alongside the wonderful founding Sisters of the Good Samaritan, whose mission was to provide a first-class education to the girls of the northern suburbs of Melbourne, before introducing boys to the College in 1978. The fruits of their vision, surround us today in this amazing College, that as students, staff, and alumni, we call our own.

Our rich story which commenced with the humble dream of a pastor, is acknowledged, and celebrated this year with a variety of activities, prayers, literary and creative compositions, competitions, and events that have occurred and continue to be held throughout the terms. Our Principal's Surprises each term, the enhancements to annual events with a specific Jubilee focus, a bigger than ever St Monica's Week and St Monica's Day, are all part of the celebrations. Monicans are encouraged to contribute, enjoy and be proud of their unique position where, they too are enhancing the story of St Monica's College Epping, each and every day.

Look out for the beautiful Jubilee Roses, due to be in full bloom across the College campuses during the month of August, in acknowledgment of our patron St Monica, who continues to guide us, and watch over us in the same way she watched over her beloved son Augustine centuries ago. We look forward with great anticipation, to listen to the words of his Excellency Archbishop Charles Balvo, the Pope's representative in Australia, who has graciously accepted our invitation to lead our St Monica's Day Mass in this special year for our College. The celebrations to follow will be remarkable and memorable.

All Monicans are invited to commemorate and observe the Diamond Jubilee Year, with an open heart, a sense of fun and gratitude and most significantly, with an ongoing commitment to shine brightly and share this tremendous light with the world beyond St Monica's College, Epping.

**Paula Di Maria**  
Executive Deputy Principal

## Director's Report Dalton Road Campus

Alicia Xerri



It is amazing to realise that we have crossed the halfway point of the year. With the winter solstice behind us, the days will soon start to lengthen. This term has brought us many positive experiences. I commend the student community for their hard work and diligence thus far, and I appreciate the staff for their joyful dedication to caring for our students.

We have a number of achievements to celebrate on the Dalton Road Campus. I wish to congratulate our Year 7 Premier League Teams for their performances in Term 2. Seven of the eight teams qualified for finals, with four teams, Basketball and Football (Boys and Girls) teams crowned champions. This is the first time in recent history that St Monica's College has recorded four premierships winning teams during a Premier League season. The effort, skill and teamwork demonstrated by these students is to be celebrated.

Our Year 8 students continue the conversation of consent, engaging in comprehensive wellbeing programs which address crucial topics such as affirmative consent, respectful relationships, gender stereotypes, the impact of pornography on gender-based violence and social media on self-esteem and relationships. Utilising evidence based practices, these lessons empower our young people to build healthy, ethical, safe, and respectful relationships.

Year 9 students are recognising the significance of informed decision-making. Students have engaged in careers focussed lessons through the Badano program. This program, which occurred in the first three weeks of the term, incorporated a series of engaging activities and career exploration opportunities. Through these lessons, students were empowered to make good choices regarding their subject selection, keeping their future aspirations at the forefront of their choices.

The highlight of Term 3 is, of course, St Monica's Week, and particularly for our Year 7 students, St Monica's Day. August is the month of celebration for all Monicans. On Friday, 30 August, our community unites to celebrate our patron saint, St Monica.

In our Diamond Jubilee year, this year's celebration will be extra meaningful and heartfelt. Sixty wonderful years, 1964 to 2024, of Monican education. Our Monican community has metaphorically sparkled over the past sixty years, and this makes us happy and joyful.

With our uniform of blue and yellow expanding to Reservoir in 2025, so does our rich history and traditions. We have so much to look forward to as 2024 enters its second half of the year.

**Alicia Xerri**  
Campus Director DRC

## Director's Report Davisson Street Campus

Nicole Meade



It is hard to believe that we have already crossed the halfway point of the year. Our journey so far has been filled with numerous positive experiences, and our students are to be commended for their relentless hard work and commitment.

A heartfelt congratulations to everyone involved in the phenomenal College production of Hairspray. The incredible talents and strong community spirit showcased by our brilliant students have been truly inspiring for everyone at our College. These students are an example of what can be achieved when one has the courage, confidence, and support to be fearlessly and authentically themselves.

As we move into Term 3, our Davisson Street students begin to glimpse the upcoming year. They are busy selecting future subjects, while our Year 12 students are mapping out their post-secondary pathways. The recent Subject Expo saw many families exploring available options and learning how best to assist their children in making the right choices. Here at St Monica's College, we have numerous resources and staff members ready to support both parents and students during this decision-making period. I encourage you to take advantage of all the support available to help guide your child.

Parent Teacher Interviews are scheduled for August. We strongly recommend that all families seize this opportunity to meet with teachers, celebrate their child's successes, and discuss the next steps to foster their growth. This is a crucial moment for us to unite as partners in your child's educational journey.

St Monica's Day, one of our most significant annual events, will be celebrated on Friday, 30 August. This day provides an excellent opportunity to reflect on the importance of St Monica's Day and to appreciate the vast and diverse community to which we all belong. We eagerly anticipate our students' enthusiastic participation in all the day's activities, embracing every moment to have fun and celebrate our vibrant community.

Amidst the myriad of activities and events at Davisson Street, it is essential for our students to stay focused and engaged in their classroom endeavours. With numerous important decisions to be made this term, it is vital that we equip our senior students with the confidence and tools necessary to make wise choices both inside and outside the classroom.

**Nicole Meade**  
Campus Director DSC

## Deputy Principal's Report Curriculum & Information Technology

Michelle Keele



There has been much debate recently amongst the political parties regarding young people's use of social media and how it should be managed.

The Opposition Leader declared that he would ban social media for young people under the age of 16 within 4 months of winning the next election. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has indicated that he too would back a ban if it was effective. Technology experts have responded by pointing out that bans and age verification measures are extremely difficult to enforce.

The problem is a social media ban merely postpones a young person's exposure to the platforms and is not teaching them how to manage them. When they reach the age where they are allowed to use the platform, they still will not have the skills and knowledge to deal with the algorithms and other associated issues.

The way in which we as a society have embraced social media has brought about a huge change in the way humans interact with each other because it has provided us with the ability to communicate with a large range of people leading to the creation of new relationships and a remodelling of our existing ones.

During the same period of time there has been much evidence and discussion of the levels of depression and anxiety among young people. The assumption is often made that social media is the solitary cause of these high levels. However, recent surveys have indicated that young Australians are also stressed about the high cost of living, the environment, discrimination and they often use social media to help them make sense of these issues, share their concerns and even escape from them for a short period of time. There is no evidence that a social media ban would see an instant improvement in the mental health of our young people.

One of the main reasons provided as to why any form of media regulation is required is the belief that we need to protect those who cannot protect themselves and whilst there is a case for this it fails to address the real issue; the huge corporations who use algorithms and hardline approaches to keep users (regardless of age) engaged.

It is important to accept that not all social media is 'bad' or 'good.' As with most innovation, there are positives and negatives. A blanket ban risks driving the behaviour underground, making it less likely that the young people will seek advice or assistance.

Knowledge is power, and the more someone understands how the social media platforms and algorithms work the more control they will have over what they see. The Victorian Curriculum 2.0 continues its work in relation to Digital Literacy covering the areas of digital safety and wellbeing, investigating, creating and managing and operating.

However claiming and reclaiming control of social media in relation to our young people involves more than curriculum content.

This is something the entire community needs to contribute to: schools, parents, governments and industry and the young people themselves.

Michelle Keele

Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Information Technology)

## Deputy Principal's Report Professional Practice

Kirsten Hodgson



The Professional Practice team is blessed to boast a diverse range of personnel with extensive skills across a number of key areas of curriculum and pedagogy. When the team was formed at the end of 2023, we welcomed amongst the new roles, a Leader of Innovative Learning Design. Former Faculty Leader, Mrs Amber Dal Cin, was appointed to this key role, not only for her curriculum knowledge, but also due to her commitment to upskilling herself with her recent completion of post-graduate studies, specifically a Graduate Certificate in Education (Innovative Learning Design). This qualification, completed through Queensland University of Technology, led Amber to explore the emerging field of digital education theory and practice, underpinned by the core principles of teaching and learning in a dynamic digital workspace.

Amber has been charged with a number of responsibilities in the early stages of this new role, and that has led her to work with staff to upskill their capacity to enrich their lessons and communication through the use of Microsoft TEAMS: a Learning Management System adopted consistently across the College in 2024. Amber has also recently launched a new Professional Practice site that can be accessed by all staff in the College. In a post-pandemic world, much of Professional Learning in Education has shifted to either be exclusively delivered online or a hybrid of both online and face-to-face learning. Amber has taken this opportunity to build a platform that curates Professional Learning for teaching and non-teaching staff to support them to access learning onsite, and in times that better ensure that staff absences are limited by offering access to courses at times that suit staff.

Our new Professional Practice platform consists of many functions to support staff, including:

- Resources that support our newly established **Pedagogical Framework**
- An **Educator's Toolkit** that provides resources to support a number of areas of teaching practice, such as Classroom Management, Wellbeing and Learning Diversity
- **Top Podcasts** in Education
- Resources to support the critical work of **Casual Relief Teachers**
- Resources to enrich our **Annual Development Program** that aims to nurture the professional growth of all Monican colleagues
- A **Knowledge Hub** where staff can share resources from attended conferences and seminars with their colleagues to promote greater collegiality and professional collaboration
- Easy access to referrals to our new **Academic Counselling** program
- Resources to support teachers to gain and maintain **Accreditation to Teach (or Teach Religious Education) in a Catholic School**.

This platform is a wonderful tool for our staff to access and it will continue to grow and be enriched further over time. With industry-wide staff shortages, it also enables us to access Professional Learning without having to leave behind classes to attend off-site courses. I highly commend Amber's implementation of her recent studies that have enabled her to curate quality Professional Learning for all staff.

Kirsten Hodgson

Deputy Principal (Professional Practice)

## Deputy Principal's Report Identity, Mission & Community

Bernadette Harris

The staff celebrated our heritage, mission and identity on Monday, 15 July for our annual Staff Spirituality Day. We spent time in prayer and reflected on the key stages in our history, our development and current priorities.

All present shared their memories and, as a Catholic school formed in the Good Samaritan Benedictine tradition, we were delighted to welcome Sr Michelle Reid sgs as our Keynote Speaker. As a past pupil (SMC: 1969-1971) Michelle offered keen insights about the importance of relationships, hospitality and service at St Monica's from when she was a student until the present day. We were also privileged to hear from past staff Pamela Coyne (SMC: 1969-2005), Lorraine Pratt (SMC: 1975-2010) and Vera Teuma (SMC: 1965-1966) as well as alumna Teresa Hanley (SMC: 1966-1970).

High Street Bells Choir joined us after morning tea for an inspiring performance complete with rousing encore.

Supporting people with a range of disabilities and challenges, the choir achieves so much in the area of inclusion, offering opportunities for all members to spread joy and happiness. The choir are one of our community outreach partners and our students are always keen to perform with their friends from Bells.

As a Catholic faith community, our mission is to live out our faith and gospel values. We seek to continue our long history of serving others. In this significant Diamond Jubilee year, to conclude our day we joined with our community partners in a whole range of activities. All staff embraced the opportunities to shine like diamonds, as they assisted and supported others to fulfill and live out their dreams.

**Bernadette Harris**  
*Deputy Principal (Identity, Mission & Community)*



## High Street Bells Choir

## Staff Spirituality Day



1964 - 2024

### Children First Foundation

Spending a day with fellow teachers at the Children First Foundation was a deeply moving and rewarding experience. Volunteering at Ronald McDonald House in North Fitzroy, reminded staff of the stark reality that two out of three people worldwide lack access to safe surgical care, with many of these being children from developing countries.

The facility offers a sanctuary for families from regional, rural, and interstate areas as their children undergo treatment in Melbourne.

Staff were delighted to be able to prepare dinner and snacks for the families, a small gesture of support in their challenging journey. The afternoon was a humbling reminder of

the importance of community and service, echoing the teachings of Jesus to love and serve our neighbours. As staff reflected they held the children, their families, and all those battling illnesses in prayer, wishing them every happiness, strength and healing.



### Aged Care Visitation

**Oxacare, Epping** – The afternoon started off with some sleepy residents at Oxacare Aged Care Epping, but as soon as our musicians Ross Talarico on piano accordion and Dion Hatherell on trombone started to play, the atmosphere in the room changed to sheer enjoyment. Residents who were able, got up and danced. Others clapped and swayed in wheelchairs with great enthusiasm. There were smiles from ear to ear! Staff were so grateful to have this opportunity to spread and witness such joy with the elderly residents and staff.

Visiting **Grace of Mary Aged Care** was a truly memorable experience. The residents and

staff were incredibly hospitable, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

The afternoon was filled with celebration and dancing traditional Greek dances with the residents, enjoying their favourite Eurovision song 'You Are the One.' Sharing afternoon tea and engaging in a fun game of bowling added to the delightful experience.

The residents were lovely, reminding all of the profound impact of companionship. Many expressed how important supportive company is for emotional well-being. Visiting residents in their rooms, especially those unable to join us in the common space, was

particularly touching. They eagerly shared family pictures and life stories, making the day even more special!

At **Assisi Aged Care Centre in Rosanna** staff initiated several conversations with the residents, many of whom were Italian migrants who settled in Australia shortly after the Second World War. The residents were happy to share their life stories, which included their perspectives about the differences between life in Italy and how things changed when they arrived in Australia and the difficulties that they had to confront when migrating to a new country. A great day was had by all.



# Staff Spirituality Day

## Clean Up of the Darebin Creek

On the Spirituality Day staff participated in a planting and clean up working bee alongside the Darebin Creek. They were able to clean up some of the litter that has crept under the school fence before it reaches the creek, with the most common litter being soft plastic such as chip packets.

They planted over 100 seedlings, including some river red gum trees that were locally collected and germinated by EnviroFriends. They even managed to remove some of the larger weeds surrounding our planting area to reduce the competition and improve the chances of our seedlings surviving.

Due to the College's successful planting efforts over the past decade, we have recorded increasing numbers and diversity of small woodland birds including several species of wrens, thornbills, honey eaters, fantails and more. A great afternoon was enjoyed by all.



## Supporting the Exodus Community

A group of staff dedicated to supporting the Exodus Community of the Olympic Village in West Heidelberg visited the community and met Br Harry and local volunteer Karen, who not only detailed the work Exodus carries out, but also shared their personal stories of living with disadvantage in Victoria's sixth poorest community.

They witnessed the impacts of generational poverty in Australia and the daily struggles individuals face and were fortunate to help local families by moving furniture and other large items into housing for men currently

experiencing homelessness.

Over 40 staff came together to cook nutritious and delicious food for distribution within the Exodus Community. Led by the fantastic Hospitality and Food Technology, they peeled, mixed, chopped and stirred, working towards putting together over 200 meals- lovely soups, muffins and shepherd's pies. Later in the week they proudly delivered the food to the community, providing for their Wednesday Drop-In service and door to door delivery (where staff and students were blessed to hand deliver the food we made).

Despite the challenges, staff community united by a shared commitment to uplift each other. Faith served as a cornerstone, providing hope and motivation for the residents. By treating everyone with respect and recognizing their inherent worth, Exodus fosters an environment where love and solidarity flourish, showing that true strength lies in compassion and collective support. Our partnership with Exodus allows the staff and students at St Monica's College to live out their mission of service and to do as Jesus asks 'to love one another.'



## Walk for Autism

A large group of staff came together to hear about autism and some of the challenges autistic people face. Due to the rain and cold conditions our Walk for Autism event was moved into the Sports and Assembly Hall. This did not dampen the enthusiasm and

dedication of our staff getting their steps up to support members of our school community on the autism spectrum.

St Monica's College has participated in the Walk for Autism campaign since 2019 and

in total has raised an incredible \$23,884.60 for Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) to support autistic Australians and their families. Thank you to our wonderful staff that have stepped up to show their support and improve autism awareness.



## Principal's Address Term 3, 2024

Miss Harris, Sister Farzana, Staff, and Students of St Monica's College, Epping.

In our sixtieth anniversary year at assemblies, to date there have been two themes – the past history of this school and the present beliefs and identity of this College. Awaiting us in fourth term is the future, from a dream to diamonds.

This morning, in the presence of our visitor from Paksian, Sister Farzana, I speak to each Monican personally. This is your speech.

Firstly, you are a member of a family. Now all families are different, they have more or fewer members, live together or apart, function beautifully or there is conflict. Regardless, you are a member of that family, born into it and intimately close to its members through your birth.

Each of us at some time in our life is a child of a family, grandchild, maybe brother or sister, niece, nephew, cousin to one or thirty. As you grow up and mature, one day most probably you will be responsible for your own child, and you will be the mother or the father.

We find ourselves members of organised groups, generally reflecting our interests and hobbies. These include you as team or squad member, singer, guitarist or drummer in a band or orchestra, a chess club member, loyal fan or supporter, and there are many other such groupings to which you now, did, or will belong. Each has a type of code of conduct, expectations and common beliefs, and depend on all members playing or working together. These links will multiply in number and diversity in your adult years, Monicans.

As a private, Catholic school, the number of students who belong to a religion or follow a faith is greater than in Government schools. At SMC you may be one of the majority who are Catholic, and then again you might be Orthodox in belief, following a particular branch of orthodoxy. We have Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist believers and devotees at our school. I am identifying you right now. The number of religions is greater than those I have just listed, of course, and then there are the non-believers who thankfully find a home in the spirituality and environment of St Monica's College.

How I am tempted to share this microphone with you and invite you to name something to which you belong or are a formal member – Taylor Swift fan club, McDonald's Team member, Epping Football Club, a greenie group,

a political meeting of minds, or maybe groups at school such as Be More and St John cadets and EnviroFriends.

We draw an identity in ways I have mentioned. But, student of SMC, you are likely to realise what I have not included yet, an experience that affects you daily, which to belong demands effort and sets standards of behaviour, has tradition for the oldest and newness for the youngest, in a particular stage of life you are all living through. The answer is:

You are a Monican. Let me show that with five facts.

1. Your parents enrol you here and pay money for your education within this community.
2. You travel in some manner from somewhere daily to SMC and make the afternoon return trip.
3. You wear a distinguishable blue and gold uniform just like two thousand, two hundred other students do – formal or sports uniform.
4. When present at school you individually belong to: a College, a Campus, a Home Group, Year Level, Sports House, subject classes, and many programs and co-curricular activities on offer,

*And finally,*

5. Members of the public point you out and talk about you and admire you in the street and on the train or bus. You appear in school photos, attend Monican events like this assembly, St Monica's Day, Year 12 Principal's Dinner and Graduation, and many other activities. You attend camps and so many of you together as Monicans travel locally, nationally and internationally on visits, ministries, sports tours, and intercultural experiences.

Every one of you when you look in the mirror each morning sees a Monican. Never be ashamed of yourself even if ideally you would hope to be taller, shorter, not so chubby or so skinny, have better skin or hair that behaves when you comb it. You are special and unique.

So, in 2024 what does it mean to be a Monican? You are not a teenager of 1964 when thirty girls started this school as students, or from the decades when the world changed, wars were fought, tragedies occurred, man walked on the moon, computers were built for the first time, when in 1978 this school became coeducational, not only for one gender.

Today, to be a Monican is a privilege never to be underestimated or denied.

You are called and being educated to be teenagers preparing for later life through trying your best in everything you do. Making efforts, seeking help when uncertain or unknowing, persevering as Monicans do through our school motto are your lifelong opportunities.

A modern Monican of 2024 chooses to behave in a particular way. The female and male Monican is peaceful in attitude, not violent; respects all other members of this school community rather than misbehaving or disrupting or interfering with others' teaching responsibilities and learning wishes.

A modern Monican does respect the environment and does not believe that we can pretend that our actions do not potentially destroy this planet. A Monican today who will be a true Monican tomorrow and until he or she dies, will see male and female equally, speak out against all forms of discrimination, racial and religious intolerance, bullying, injustice in politics, and greed in society. A modern Monican of 2024 informs himself or herself.

Be not afraid, be strong in what you stand for and believe, Be calm and measured, neither hot headed nor aggressive, have fun, be fit, be realistic, be pleasant to have as a friend or fellow Monican. Above all else, love God, your neighbour and your family.

Monicans, we have a wonderful month ahead of us in this sixtieth anniversary year. We are blest to have the leader of the entire Catholic Church in Australia with us for our St Monica's Day Mass, His Grace Archbishop Charles Balvo from Canberra. This is the greatest honor and compliment of our sixty years. Do not miss out on this.

We need to ensure that we celebrate with happiness, value all we have been given, honor our past, the present and what the future offers.

To you, earn your place at SMC, contribute with gusto and pride, be a contributor, not a lazy passenger.

I dedicate this speech to you individually, for your sake, one child of Year 7, 8 and 9 or one adolescent of Year 10,11 or 12. This College would exist if only for you were that necessary. Believe that, live that belief with passion, and always pray and persevere.

**Brian Hanley OAM**  
*Principal*

# Term 3 College Assembly





ST MONICA'S CO

199



COLLEGE, EPPING

90s



## Principal's Address – Past and Present Staff Afternoon Tea

### STAFF REUNION, SUNDAY, 23 JUNE 2024

Good afternoon, dear Colleagues, "Once a Monican, Always a Monican",

Our College celebrates its sixtieth anniversary this year and chose as its theme 'From a Dream to Diamonds'. This draws on the very first thought of a College for Catholic girls sometime in 1963 by a humble parish priest at St Stephen's parish, East Reservoir. What development and growth has unfolded over six decades since the College's establishment in 1964.

Diamonds are the young people, their teachers and the other staff who have worked here, this community and individuals' achievements, parents, priests, and all people who attest to the goodness and infinite worth of a Monican education.

Welcome to this function if it is your return after a lengthy period or shorter span of time, and welcome too if you were dining in the lunchroom on Friday afternoon. We gather in solidarity and with appropriate affection for the youngsters to whom we have ministered.

I firstly make recognition of Ms Concetta Cartelli the longest currently-serving member of staff, now in her 46th year of employment, having commenced in 1979. We greatly admire and profoundly appreciate Connie and several other colleagues who are still giving or gave service close to or in excess of forty years. Unfortunately, a bereavement in her family prevents Connie's presence with us this afternoon.

Monicans, there is a vast number of 'thank you's' I can and do offer this afternoon to you, shapers of minds, professional and personal mentors, committed educators, and authentic pastoral carers of young Monicans. You could not bear to listen to so many for so long, instead I shall offer thanks for four main ways you have given service to this school and the northern suburbs of Melbourne.

Firstly, that priest's original dream was to establish a Catholic school for girls based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In 2024, and for the last five years, we have been concentrating on six Kingdom Values that if proclaimed meaningfully will result in his dream being realised. These Kingdom Values are to nurture and guide our students to be people who embed in their heart and head, and thereby live, compassion, generosity, peace, humility, forgiveness, and love of neighbour (especially those most difficult to love).

Your work, former and current colleagues, has been awesome in how you have interpreted, implemented and been faithful to that responsibility of Christian ministry. You have shaped and set up for a better world by educating young Monicans over generations with these values. Thank you.

Secondly, you have understood and embraced with vigor and relish the original intentions of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan who established St Moncia's College in 1964. We acknowledge the presence of Sisters Margaret Keane sgs and Dorothy McKay sgs with us this afternoon. Sister Margaret Mithen sgs is an apology.

The Sisters' enduring commitment to youth, education, warm and genuine hospitality lived through action and their charism inspired by the Benedictine tradition, had always to be supported through the work of the other staff. You did that when you taught alongside the thirty-one Sisters, worked under their six Principalships, were generous in working in collaboration with them, and with large doses of enjoyment and in high spirits. Thank you. We continue today that partnership and will welcome another Good Sam Sister onto the staff in Term 3 this year.

Thirdly, for many years now, we have proclaimed to the public, those whom we serve in the community and parishes, and those who enquire about a Monican education, that we are a School of Educational Enterprise. That means we honor and are proud of our past, merge the best elements of it into the present and enliven it, all for the future development and happiness of our graduates.

Your work in whatever capacity at SMC has been enterprising, contemporary for the time, always aware of opportunities for our children with great faith and belief that they can take their rightful place in society and as citizens of the world. The world is bigger than Epping do not forget. Thank you for achieving what was modern for the time when you worked here, and what it means in 2024 to be educationally enterprising.

Fourthly, reflect deeply about yourself if you will, and respond to those extraordinary words of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat RSCJ that appear in bright gold letters on a bright blue background at the front entrance of the Sacred Heart Building, 'For the Sake of One Child'.

Infinite thanks for the time when you comforted the one child, when you counselled him, when you urged her to be strong. Thank you for the care and attention you gave in classrooms, to the buildings and grounds, in the Finance Office, the libraries, the science laboratories, on the sportsfields, in music rooms, at Ostia and Dalton and Davisson Campuses, and will give from 2025 when you will encounter the one boy and the one girl in Year 8 on the St Stephen/Gaudete Campus, Reservoir.

Enormous appreciation for the time you freely gave outside normal hours, in lieu of your rest and relaxation time. Your work is remembered; you are honored for the fine person you are.

I thank all organisers of this afternoon, Miss Paula Di Maria, Executive Deputy Principal, her organising committee including the amazing Promotions and Events Office and today's Organizing Committee comprised of Bernadette Harris, Lorraine Pratt, Paul White, Bradley Beecham, Claire Polidano and Alex Vavala. Thank you to all who played any part in bringing extraordinary Monicans across many decades together this afternoon.

Finally, the present staff make one promise to you whose shoes we fill and on whose shoulders we stand. We shall ensure that the dreams you had for the diamonds you educated will be built upon and polished to shine brighter for this and future generations, in the absolute Monican way, which means we shall always 'Pray and Persevere'.

Enjoy this event.

*As much as our students, staff members throughout the decades have indeed shone as diamonds. May those who serve or have served this College know and value the enormous appreciation Monican families have for their hard work and commitment.*

**Brian Hanley OAM**  
Principal





## Sacred Heart Photography Competition

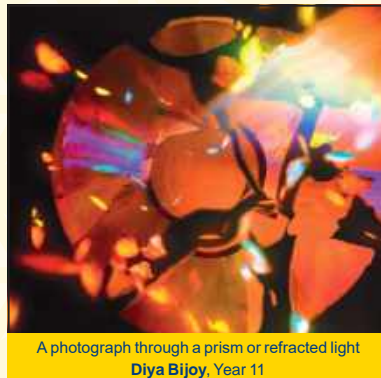
The annual Sacred Heart Photography Competition was held across the month of June in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The competition was open to the entire College community to express creativity through the medium of photography.

This year's categories were developed to embrace and celebrate the College's rich history across the past 60 years, 'From a Dream to Diamonds'. Whilst being inspired by our Monican heritage the themes allowed for imaginative visual images to be created.

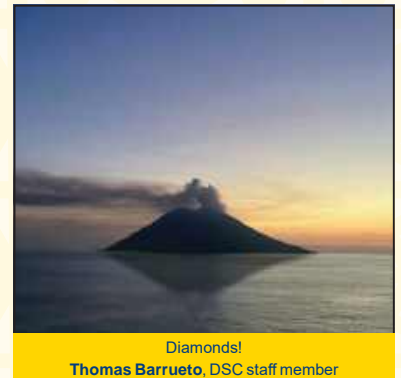
### THE AWARD RECIPIENTS FOR EACH OF THE CATEGORIES WERE:



A recreated past College photograph – **Christian Ditel, Marcus Ensabella and Nicholas Kotronis, Year 8**



A photograph through a prism or refracted light  
**Diya Bijoy, Year 11**

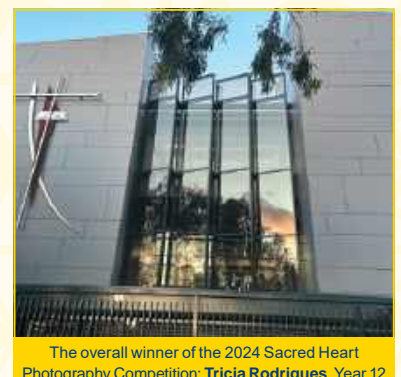


Diamonds!  
**Thomas Barrueto, DSC staff member**

60! a photograph or group of photographs that reference the number 60 – **No award given.**



The college theme 'From a Dream to Diamonds'  
**Cassandra Brennan, DRC staff member**



The overall winner of the 2024 Sacred Heart Photography Competition: **Tricia Rodrigues, Year 12**

Chosen for its reverence, this image of the Sacred Heart building embodies the College values. Geometric shapes, evident in the brickwork, window panelling and fence lines, suggest a solid structure - the physical foundation of our school. Complimenting this idea of physical solidity, the viewer can see natural forms of trees, environment, and light shimmering in the windows, reflecting the world around us, and being one with us. We stand looking upwards at what is both solid in form and solid in sentiment.

Many congratulations to all winners and entrants.

## Worship and Faith

### WHAT SETS OUR HEART ON FIRE?

The Feast of the Sacred Heart remains a vital part of Catholic spirituality, reminding the faithful of the intimate and personal love of Jesus. It continues to inspire various forms of religious art, literature, and pious practices worldwide.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart can be traced back to the early Church, where the heart of Jesus was seen as a symbol of his profound love and sacrifice. References to Christ's heart as a source of divine love appear in the writings of early Church Fathers St Augustine and St John Chrysostom.

The modern devotion to the Sacred Heart is largely attributed to the 17th-century French nun St Margaret Mary Alacoque. Between 1673 and 1675, she reported several visions of Jesus, during which he revealed his heart as a symbol of his boundless love and requested the establishment of a feast to honour it. In 1856, Pope Pius IX officially declared the Feast of the Sacred Heart to the universal Church, setting its date as the Friday following the octave of Corpus Christi.

In the tradition at St Monica's College, the Feast of the Sacred Heart is associated with reflecting on, what sets our heart on fire?, what are we passionate about?, how can we promote kinship in our community?. For some it might be promoting love and kinship through their writing, artworks and music. For example, here at our College, staff and students are encouraged to take part in the Sacred Heart Photography Competition. For others it might be helping out at the soup kitchen, cook-ups, community clean ups and sporting clubs. The aim of 'Hearts on Fire' is to enable us to stop and reflect and get involved in activities that will foster positive relationships in our Monican community and like diamonds reflect the love of Christ.

#### Reflection from Thomas Karageorgis (Fire carrier, Year 11)

My participation with the FIRE Carrier program began in the year 2023, when I joined the program, the first event I was involved in was the Roads to Reconciliation Day at Parade where a group of students from St Monica's and other schools took part in activities and listened to several speakers who talked about how we can be better people.

The Lake Mungo Immersion Trip was a very interesting experience for me, at Culpra Mili and Lake Mungo, several First Nations elders spoke to us and taught us about their customs and experiences, as well as their history. The Elders we met all were very connected to their faith and culture.

Now, what is the passion of your heart?

**Ferdinand D Correya**  
Worship and Faith Minister

## The Price of Sainthood

– by Catherine Pepinster

The Tablet, www.thetablet.co.uk, 1 June 2024

**He has been dubbed 'the first millennial saint' and 'God's influencer' – and last week the Vatican announced that a second miracle attributed to the intercession of Carlo Acutis has been recognised, paving the way for him to be declared a saint.**

**Carlo Acutis**, who died of leukaemia aged just 15 in 2006, is, for a Church longing to reach out to young people, a dream candidate for sainthood. He was very much a teenager of his time: he liked sports, played the saxophone and was bought a PlayStation when he was eight (though he limited himself to one hour a week of gaming). But alongside these typical contemporary interests was a deep faith, expressed through protectiveness towards bullied children at school, and concern for the poor and the homeless of Milan, where he lived with his family. He also put his computing skills to use for the Church. He would build websites for churches and created an exhibition of eucharistic miracles. He expressed himself in decidedly modern terms: "The Eucharist is my highway to Heaven."

Behind the headlines saluting Acutis' sanctity, there is, though, a tragedy: that a young boy with so much promise died at such a young age. Yet his mother, Antonia Salzano, told me: "It is a comfort to me that Carlo is a sign of hope that holiness remains possible in the twenty-first century." Carlo was born in London in 1991, when his mother and his merchant banker father, Andrea Acutis, were working in Britain, and he was baptised in the Church of Our Lady of Dolours run by the Servite Order in Chelsea, west London on 3 May 1991. A few months later, the family moved to Milan to run their publishing and insurance businesses.

Even at the age of three, Antonia says, Carlo loved to visit churches and to pray there. His religious fervour was a surprise. "I was not very religious myself," she explains. "But when Carlo was five I had a crisis because my father died. Carlo inspired me to change. In that way, Carlo saved me. He helped me understand that in receiving Holy Communion we have the real presence of God. It is not just a symbol. This was the discovery of my life."

Antonia recalls: "I could see always that there was something special about Carlo, yet he was also an ordinary boy. He liked sports, having friends, he loved animals. Then, when he was six years old, he first used a computer. From the age of nine he was studying computer programming and he knew he could use the internet for evangelising."

Already Carlo had a firm grasp of the heart of the Christian faith. "He said that the essence of God is love." In 2006 he became ill. At first his family thought he had flu but he was diagnosed with leukaemia, and within five days he was dead. He knew he was dying, his mother told me. "He said death was a passage from life. You have to live every day as if it's your last. As a mother I had to trust in God, that there is a reason for what happens. If we offer our suffering to God, then he can use it."

Carlo had been concerned about the poor, asking his parents for money to help the



homeless, taking them sleeping bags. His kindness had been well known in Milan, so there were calls for him to be made a saint as soon as he died. For Antonia, perhaps the most remarkable miracle of all is that after his death she became a mother again. "Carlo was my only child. I thought it was too late for me to be a mother again. Then four years after he died Carlo appeared to me in a dream. He said I would be a mother again. I was 44. And then I became pregnant and I had twins, a boy and a girl."

Antonia hopes that Michele and Francesca will be with her and their father at St Peter's in Rome when the canonisation ceremony takes place. And what if Carlo is made a patron saint of something? "It should be the internet," she suggested. "There are so many dangers in life today, including online, but Carlo showed how it is still possible to live well, to think of others, to have values."

**WHEN HE IS** declared a saint, Carlo Acutis will join a list of more than 900 people canonised so far by Pope Francis. This includes 813 people massacred by Ottoman forces in Otranto in 1480. Others include Popes John XXIII, Paul VI and John Paul II, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Archbishop Óscar Romero and Cardinal John Henry Newman – and almost all the rest are also priests, nuns and monks. Yet during Lent, Francis suggested that perhaps there should be more ordinary people canonised, saying that saints should be "those who fully become themselves, who realise the vocation of every person". Above all, he said, saints are not unreachable "exceptions of humanity" but "ordinary people" who worked diligently to grow in virtue.

That there are so many more priests and Religious among those who are made saints rather than ordinary laypeople is in part due to the large costs involved – it is often observed that religious congregations have the funds, the motivation and the resources to push for the canonisation of their founder.

Just how time-consuming and complex canonisation can be is highlighted by the case of Carlo Acutis. Officials from Rome investigating his life talked to 500 witnesses, including his family as well as doctors, scientists and lawyers. A postulator is required to get each case through the Vatican's legal tangle. In 2016 Pope Francis reformed the rules on saint-making in response to allegations of inflated fees and conflicts of interest, but it remains an expensive process. Carlo's family is in a position to cover the costs.

Pope Francis may want more ordinary people to be saintly role models, especially for young people – but further reforms to Rome's costly saint-making system will be needed if the Church is going to honour others who, like Carlo Acutis, "fully become themselves".

## Deacon Ferdinand Correya – Building relationship with God

– by Fiona Basile

[www.melbournecatholic.org](http://www.melbournecatholic.org), 2 July 2024

Broad smiles and a spirit of great joy filled St Patrick's Cathedral on the morning of Saturday 15 June as Archbishop Peter A Comensoli ordained Deacon Ferdinand Correya to the ministry of the permanent diaconate – a ministry he will exercise in the partnered parishes of St Gabriel and St Stephen of Hungary, Reservoir and Reservoir East, and St Raphael, Preston West, alongside his teaching work and family life.



Ferdinand Correya, 40, was born in Chennai, India, and migrated to Australia in 2006 with his parents, aged 22. They were the last of his family to migrate to Australia, after five of his six siblings had already moved to the country and settled in Epping, an outer northern suburb of Melbourne. His elder brother, a Salesian priest, was studying in Rome at the time. Having already completed an undergraduate degree in programming and computing in India, Ferdinand enrolled in a Master of Information Technology (Computer Networks) degree at La Trobe University, Bundoora.

During those university years in Australia, in his early twenties, his attendance at Mass 'dropped', he recalls, though he continued to visit an elderly priest regularly for the sacrament of Reconciliation. He also recalls vividly when something 'changed one evening'.

'I was working a part-time job at Coles one night, stacking shelves, and I said to myself, "There's more to life than just working behind a computer in a network engineering job." And from that point, I started seeking a deeper understanding of my life and what I wanted to do with my life.'

Having grown up in a faith-filled family—and having a brother who is a priest and who would occasionally give him a 'gentle nudge'—Ferdinand decided, aged 25, to enter Corpus Christi Seminary in Melbourne. 'I wanted to do theological studies to find out more about the faith itself and my own faith,' he says. His brothers and sisters, he says, have always been there to listen to what he has to say and to 'put me in the right direction'.

*It's a different kind of relationship between deacons and the people... I felt the role of permanent deacon could help bridge the gap between the Church and the people.*

Ferdinand remained at Corpus Christi for four and a half years before leaving to take care of his ill father. He completed his Master of Theological Studies and began working as a funeral director, which provided further inspiration as he continued to discern his vocation.

'While working in the funeral home, I saw a couple of deacons, and I could see how people related to them,' says Ferdinand. 'It's not that people can't relate to priests, but I think it's a different kind of relationship between deacons and the people, and I could see how they

brought people closer to the Church in their own way. I felt the role of permanent deacon could help bridge the gap between the Church and the people.'

Ferdinand says it was prayer and the assistance of his spiritual director at the time, the late Fr Patrick O'Sullivan SJ, that helped him discern his call to the permanent diaconate. 'Even if it wasn't the priesthood, I was called to some sort of ordained ministry,' he says. 'And after praying and reflecting, I thought the permanent diaconate was probably the best way for my ministry to be expressed.'

Ferdinand completed six years of formation for the ministry of the permanent diaconate, with assistance from the director of the formation program, Fr Andrew Jekot. During this time, he also returned to university to complete his Master of Teaching (Secondary) and met and married his wife, Lisa, in 2017. Together, they have two sons, Maximus (6) and Elijah (3), and live in Thomastown, in the outer north of Melbourne. Deacon Ferdinand is a teacher at St Monica's College in Epping, where he teaches digital technology and religious education. He is also the worship and faith minister at the college.

*When you're ready, God's ready for you as well. God is always there for you, but we need to take the first step, despite our busy schedules.*

He brings all this experience to his role as deacon for the partnered parishes in Reservoir, Reservoir East and Preston West, where he'll assist at the weekend Masses and can officiate at baptisms, marriages and funerals when a priest is unavailable. He'll also help with the RCIA program and serve as chaplain to the St Vincent de Paul conference in the area.

'I think being married, having children and working will allow me to relate to the people through my experiences,' he says. 'I can relate to people who say they're struggling with work and other commitments, and perhaps that's one of the reasons why they're not coming to church – there are just too many things going on. So I can have a chat to them, relate my own experience and invite them to participate in parish activities.'

'I'd say, "When you're ready, God's ready for you as well. God is always there for you, but we need to take the first step, despite our busy schedules".'

Ferdinand also brings the experience of caring for his ill parents, who have now passed away, to those he encounters in parish life. During the time he lost his mother, and Lisa also lost her mother, he was receiving formation in grief and loss, giving him 'a greater understanding of the process' and helping him now, as a deacon, to 'empathise with people in similar situations'.

*That's what I'm looking forward to: being with and working with the people. They don't just rely on us; we rely on them too.*

He's also looking forward to working with St Vincent de Paul, saying, 'In my heart, I've always longed to work with the marginalised'. Soon after leaving the seminary, he spent some time visiting the Youth Justice Centre in Parkville once a week, helping him to realise that working with the marginalised 'is where my greatest strength is, in terms of my ministry'. While at the seminary, he also visited the Immigration Detention Centre in Maribyrnong, where he would listen to the stories of those seeking asylum. 'I think that's what I'm looking forward to: being with and working with the people. They don't just rely on us; we rely on them too. That's where my mission lies: with the people.'

Reflecting on his journey to ordination as a permanent deacon, Ferdinand is grateful for the inspiration and guidance of Fr O'Sullivan, Peter Saunders (who was at Campion Retreat Centre in Kew) and his friend and Salesian priest Fr Arun Michael Charles. But mostly, he's grateful for the gift of faith passed on through his parents, for his extended family, and for his wife, Lisa, and his sons. Throughout the journey, Lisa has been a big supporter of Ferdinand's decision to become a deacon.

'Even before we were married, we had this conversation and she said, "You'll be great as a deacon." She's been right behind me from the very start. And my boys are very excited too,' he says. His sons remind him daily of the relationship he hopes to maintain and foster with God the Father.

'My sons look up to me. And it's not that they rely on me because they have to. It's that they lovingly look up to me,' he says, likening this love to the love that characterises his relationship with God. 'I get my strength from my relationships with the people around me, and through my relationship with God.'

## Chess

On Friday, 21 June, ten students from the SMC Knights Chess Squad represented St Monica's College at a zonal tournament held at St Leonard's College, Brighton. With a standard of chess usually reserved for State Finals, the competition was intense, but the St Monica's students performed strongly all day to finish in third place out of nine schools on 20.5 points, narrowly behind Mazenod College (22.5 points) and John Monash Science School (21 points), and ahead of both Wesley College campuses and St Leonard's College, among others.

Cruze De Giorgio won six of his seven matches to finish in 7th place overall out of 116 players, which earned him the bronze medal in the Senior Division. Angella Dcunha won five matches to finish in 18th place and she won the silver medal in the Girls Division. Special mention to Dean Wu, who not only won five matches to finish in 13th place individually, but also clinched third place for the College with a magnificent win in the final match of the tournament.

Cruze, Angella, Dean, and Ekin Dang all qualified for the State Open Championships to be held later in the year, and Angella and Gabrielle Malaga qualified for the State Girls Championships also held later this year.

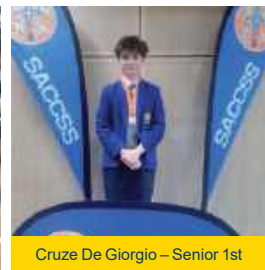
Congratulations to these students along with squad members Eric Tun, Peter Kakoliris, Justin Taduran, Manan Ahuja and Lachlan Brundell for their outstanding performances on the day. The next chess tournament will be the SACCSS Chess Championships on Monday, 22 July, followed by a Chess Victoria Zonal Tournament at Marcellin College on Thursday, 8 August.

### RESULTS

1	Mazenod College	22.5
2	John Monash Science School	21.0
3	St Monica's College	20.5
4	Wesley College Melbourne	20.0
5	Wesley College Glen Waverley	19.5
6	St Leonard's College	18.0
7	St Peter's College Clyde North	16.5
8	Brighton Primary School	4.5
9	Padua College	3.0



SACCSS Junior Champions



Cruze De Giorgio – Senior 1st



SACCSS Intermediate Team



SACCSS Senior Champions



## Counsellors – Wellbeing

### 2024 SACCSS CHESS CHAMPIONSHIPS

On Monday, 22 July, the 2024 SACCSS Chess Championships were held at Antonine College. St Monica's College entered teams in the Senior (Year 11-12), Intermediate (Year 9-10) and Junior (Year 7-8) Divisions.

In the Senior Division, St Monica's College were dominant, finishing in first place on 23.5 points to retain the SACCSS Senior Chess shield for the third straight year. Congratulations to the team of Angella Dcunha (*captain*), Cruze De Giorgio, Peter Kakoliris, Trajco Nikolov, Gabrielle Malaga, Ekin Dang and Manan Ahuja on this tremendous result. Further congratulations to Cruze De Giorgio (*11 Orange*) who was the individual Senior Division Champion, winning all seven matches, and Peter Kakoliris (*11 Blue*), who was runner-up with six wins from seven matches.

In the Junior Division, St Monica's College led all day to finish in first place on 22.5 points. Led by Mark Touma (*8 Silver — 3rd place overall*) and Christian Portnick (*7 Mauve — 4th place*) with six wins each, the team of Henry Tran, Anshdeep Aulakh, Adrian Robinson, Huy Nguyen, Sahib Bhulla and Ryan Dhingra showed that the future of chess at St Monica's will be bright for many years to come.

In the Intermediate Division, St Monica's College were among the top three teams for much of the day before dropping to sixth place at the end of the competition on 16.5 points. Well done to the team of Bradley Storer, Gabriel Cahayon, Ethan Dela Pena, Saheb Singh, Nathan Murer, Benedict Murer and Arushi Rana for the way they competed all day.

Congratulations to College Chess Coach Jake Vasilevski on these wonderful results.

### MANAGING YOUR TEEN'S ANXIETY

Anxiety, like any emotion, is a normal feeling that we experience in day-to-day life. Adolescents tend to be more susceptible to anxiety because during this accelerated period of development, the brain goes through rapid changes and is essentially remodelling itself. Picture the stress and anxiety of renovating a home – that is what your teen feels like all the time!

Approximately 15% percent of Australian teenagers experience excessive feelings of anxiety or anxiety disorders, but many more experience anxiety symptoms that they struggle to manage. Whilst anxiety is a normal part of life, persistent or severe anxiety can interfere with daily functioning and may require support from a mental health professional. Anxiety plays a role in many adolescent lives, no matter the severity. More often than not, anxiety is not a problem to eliminate, but a tension to manage.

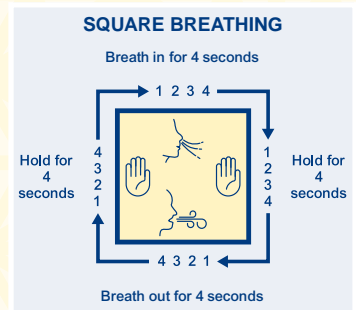
So, what can parents do to manage their teens' anxiety? Here are a few places to start.

#### 1. Embrace the anxiety of the adolescent phase

- *Get comfortable with the anxiety of the adolescent season* – it is normal. You might find yourself feeling more anxious too, that is also normal!
- *Normalise tension in life* – allow opportunities for your teen to get accustomed to the small amounts of stress and anxiety associated with life's common challenges – for example, letting them sit with hard feelings, or allowing friendship conflicts to play out without intervening, while just remaining present and listening. This builds their resilience.
- *Allow some healthy risk taking* – risk taking is essential for adolescent development. It is helpful to channel this desire for risk taking into adventurous activities, hobbies or creative exploration.
- *Facing fears head on* – when teens avoid facing their fears or challenges, it increases their anxiety around it (so avoiding anxiety, increases anxiety!)

#### 2. Practical Management

- *Breathing techniques* – research shows that slow, controlled, deep breathing exercises help calm the nervous system in times of anxiety and stress. These exercises are most impactful when practised daily – this will make it easier for your teen to breathe deeply when the major moments of stress do arise.
- *Refocus* – adolescents often describe themselves as “over-thinkers” and can get stuck in a loop of unhelpful thinking patterns. Refocussing our attention to the positives in our life can help to “break the circuit.” This could look like discussing one of their interests, putting on their favourite music, watching a comfort TV show, laughing at a funny video together or recounting a shared happy memory.



#### 3. Leading the way by managing your own anxiety

- Parental mental health is a strong predictor of adolescent mental health. Thus, its essential that you bring your own sense of calm to the room and set the tone.

**A great read on this topic:** *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt

**A great watch on this topic:** *Inside Out 2* (The kids will like this one too!)

**Oliver Jones, Isabella Gabriele,  
Nikita Rutland and Josephine Layton**  
*The College Counsellors*



SACCSS Chess Squad



Mark Touma – Junior 3rd

## Principal's Award for Public Speaking 2024

The staging of the annual Principal's Award for Public Speaking was held on the evening of Thursday, 25 July. The award has particular significance at SMC as it is the oldest and most prestigious of the Principal's Awards, running since 1994.

The award was adjudicated by Ms Amy Foster (Faculty Leader of English, Curriculum), Ms Liana Tieri, (Faculty Leader of English, Pedagogy) and Ms Jessica O'Neill (Alumni) Mr Joseph Registro, Senior Teacher (Co-Curricular Activities, International Perspectives) was the evening's MC.

Selected students from each year level presented prepared speeches ranging across a number of topics such as the future is feminism, words have power, the natural world, the end of an era and a fresh outlook. Each student is to be congratulated for their work and preparation towards ensuring their performance was of a high standard.

2024 Principal's Award for Public Speaking competitors and their speech topics were:

**Anika Nicholapillai** (12 Yellow)

**Topic:** The impact of climate change inaction on our Youth

**Niko Shibata** (11 Purple)

**Topic:** A fresh outlook

**Swayam Nadkarni** (10 Green)

**Topic:** Words have power.

**Chesna Fernando** (9 Yellow)

**Topic:** Unwrapping the 'dark' secrets of chocolate

**Natalia Petrushevka** (8 Silver)

**Topic:** Bullying and its secrets

**Gracie Registro** (8 Jade)

**Topic:** Secrets uncovered

**Miley Tsilomanis** (8 Orange)

**Topic:** The future is feminist

**Henry Tran** (8 Mauve)

**Topic:** The end of an era

**Joanna Sajan Simon** (7 Yellow)

**Topic:** The natural world

Prepared speeches were followed by impromptu speeches. Each speaker was given 5 minutes to prepare a 2-minute speech on a secret topic. A separate topic was allocated to junior and senior students. DSC students had to speak to the topic a *merciful heart*. The DRC students had to speak to the topic *our world of many colours*. In what is regarded as the most difficult part of the competition the students handled the impromptu task very well as all speakers spoke to the allocated time of two minutes.

### 2024 PRINCIPAL'S AWARD FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING WINNERS:

Principal's Encouragement Award – **Gracie Registro**

Best DRC Speaker – **Miley Tsilomanis**

Best DSC Speaker – **Niko Shibata**

Best Overall Speaker – **Anika Nicholapillai**



2024 Principal's Award for Public Speaking finalists (L-R)  
Chesna Fernando, Anika Nicholapillai, Miley Tsilomanis, Swayam Nadkarni, Joanna Sajan Simon, Mr Brian Hanley, Natalia Petrushevka, Henry Tran, Niko Shibata and Gracie Registro



2024 Principal's Award for Public Speaking Best Senior Speaker **Niko Shibata**



2024 Principal's Award for Public Speaking Best Junior Speaker **Miley Tsilomanis**



2024 Principal's Award for Public Speaking Principal's Encouragement Award **Gracie Registro**



2024 Principal's Award for Public Speaking Overall Winner **Anika Nicholapillai**

## 2024 PRINCIPAL'S AWARD FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING WINNING SPEECH

by Anika Nicholapillai

"We don't have time to sit on our hands as our planet burns." – Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, US politician and activist. Our beautiful golden land is constantly affected by heat waves, bushfires, floods, droughts which usually are a general part of nature, however, through global warming, the frequency and intensity of these weather patterns have increased. As a country that faces one of the most extreme climate disasters due to global warming you would assume that the government would be taking stronger action to reduce carbon emissions. Since 2009 there have been a series of political climate wars to reduce carbon emissions in Australia to no avail. However, the Albanese government was said to have put an end to the "climate wars" by passing the Climate Change Bill 2022, in which the bill will "enshrine into law an emissions reduction target of 43 per cent from 2005 levels by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050". Personally, I would say this is a much more decisive action against climate change than taking a trip to Hawaii. However, despite the passing of this law the Albanese government continues to greenlight coal mines, which places more burden on the youth of Australia as we struggle to foresee a future for ourselves and our children.

As the Albanese government continues to greenlight harmful coal mines and gas production methods, achieving the goal proposed in the Climate Change Bill becomes increasingly difficult. In November 2023, the government approved the Barossa Gas Project, which proposes to take gas from under the sea of Barossa and process it into fuels for use in Australia and other countries. However, this project is extremely detrimental to the environment, as when the Barossa Gas is extracted, developed, and burned it would release 15.6 million tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere annually. 15.6 million. That is equivalent to the amount of carbon dioxide released by 3 million cars each year. The consequences of the Barossa gas project are so detrimental; it would fuel coral bleaching in the Great Barrier Reef and facilitate extreme weather events wiping out habitat for already endangered species. Furthermore, the construction of the gas pipelines would cut through a habitat protection zone, further destroying critical habitat and endangering native species. The Albanese government is more than aware of these damaging and irreversible effects so why continue to condone these harmful companies that are centred around greed and capitalism rather than the welfare of the Earth? By passing the Climate Change Bill the government should be building more renewable projects so that existing coal and gas plants can be dissolved and the carbon emission goal can be achieved.

As the Albanese government continues to not realise the severity of the climate crisis, they place a burden on the youth of Australia. A survey was conducted by Orygen where young Australians between the ages of 16-25 responded on how the climate crisis is impacting their mental health and ability to perform in everyday life. The survey was able to identify that the most prevalent cause of climate distress was due to a lack of climate action by the government. So, while the government pledges to take action but not keep to their word the young adults of the nation worry for their future and the future of their children. Children are exposed to the climate crisis from a young age, since primary school, and while educating them is crucial it does also increase anxiety in children seeing how the government has done so little to combat this massive crisis. I remember being 12 years old, sitting in my poster-filled classroom with my friends while my teacher discussed the detrimental effects of global warming on our planet. When given an inquiry task to educate our suburb on climate change I truly understood just how urgent and dreadful this was. I went home to my mum crying about how I might not have a future because the world is going to burn and simultaneously drown. While my mum saw this as another typical breakdown of mine, I knew at that moment just how important this topic was to me and to my fellow peers. Why should this unfair burden be placed upon our shoulders? Why should I be the one standing here speaking on this topic while the government continues to greenlight coal mines and gas production further damaging the environment?

We have to hold the government responsible for their actions and one of the most influential ways in which we can do this is by protesting and making our worries heard. It is clear how influential protests are with the government; shown through the 2011 protests against the 'carbon tax' proposed by Julia Gillard's government. We must continue to voice our distress and emphasise the severity of the situation for our future generations. Sign petitions against the greenlighting of coal mines and the Barossa Gas Project, attend climate protests near you, or even just email your federal MP to stress the importance of taking decisive action against this climate crisis. Because as the government continues to disregard the Climate Change Bill and not make action to switch to renewable energy sources it is the children and young adults of Australia that will feel the impact of this inaction. "We don't have time to sit on our hands as our planet burns". Thank you.

## Music Camp

The annual Music Camp was held on Sunday, 21 July to Tuesday, 23 July at ADANAC CYC, Yarra Junction. 102 Ensemble music students from Year 7 to Year 12 attended the camp with clear purpose to develop repertoire and musicianship skills through intensive ensemble rehearsals. The camp also provided social benefits with current relationships strengthened and new friendships formed in a unique multi-Year level experience.

In addition to the scheduled ensemble rehearsals, students enjoyed opportunities to engage in activities such as flying fox, archery, basketball, table tennis and exploring the picturesque grounds of the facility.

The Music Captains, Dylan Matlioski (12 Green), Chloe Hidalgo (12 Mauve) and Adhyan Daga (9 Yellow) are congratulated for the outstanding leadership demonstrated throughout the camp and their preparation of a trivia quiz for all students to enjoy on the final evening.

The Music Camp culminated in Achievement Concerts which provided all participants with an opportunity to showcase their development. It was clear from the standard of performances delivered that all participants had achieved outstanding progress and this was celebrated by all involved.

Many thanks to all Music Staff who attended the camp and worked tirelessly to ensure the best possible experience was delivered.

There was a tremendous sense of gratitude from all involved and students are congratulated on their conduct, and commitment to achieving their goals and developing their passion for music performance.

## Languages and Cultures Week

St Monica's College recently celebrated Languages and Cultures Week, during which several events took place in recognition of the five languages taught at the College as well as the rich variety of cultures which exist within our school community. Among the activities held were a Greek Zorba Dancing competition, a Dodgeball World Cup tournament, a Music Showcase, a Japanese Anime Film Festival and an Education Perfect competition. Students showed great interest in all these activities as there were large numbers of student participants and spectators present at each event.

The Greek Zorba Dancing competition was a gruelling test of concentration as participating students were eliminated as soon as they incorrectly danced the Zorba. William Papahronis in Year 9 emerged as the eventual winner out of 20 participating students.

In the Dodgeball World Cup tournament, there were several teams of students representing a variety of countries. After over an hour of spirited competition, the tournament was eventually won by Greece which defeated Spain in the final.

The Music Showcase was witnessed by a large audience of students and staff who were treated to some classical Italian songs. Among the talented performers at this showcase were Isabella Bonacci of Year 11, Elian Muscatello of Year 8 and Alessio Scalpelli of Year 9.

Students who attended the Japanese Anime Film Festival were also privileged to witness some classic Japanese cinema.

In a further highlight of Languages and Cultures Week, students studying a language at the College were invited to participate in an Education Perfect Challenge so that they could put their language skills to the test. This competition was a great success as it generated a high level of engagement with 438 students participating. More information about this competition has been written in a separate article.

In addition to the numerous Languages and Cultures Week activities, students and staff were also given the opportunity to sample foods from a variety of countries.

I would like to thank all members of staff who assisted with the running of events during Languages and Cultures Week and for helping to make it such a great success.

**Chris Zuccala**  
*Faculty Leader of Languages*



## Careers



As from Monday, 29 July, Year 12 students who intend going to university in 2025, began the process of registering their VTAC account and entering up to 8 university course preferences. The Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) is the organisation that university applications go to. In the one application, students can preference up to 8 university courses.

### UNIVERSITY OPEN DAYS

One of several things that Year 12 students should be doing to research appropriate courses, is attend university Open Days (<https://careersdept.stmonicas-epping.com/for-students/year-12-resources>) – most of these are during the month of August.

When attending a university Open Day, the main purpose should be to get as much relevant information as possible. In preparation, have a list of questions ready that will ensure that you can walk away feeling confident and informed.

#### WHAT QUESTIONS TO ASK? Here are some examples:

- How else can I get into the course if I do not meet the ATAR requirement?
- How many hours per week will I be on-campus?
- What are my career options after I complete the course?
- If I study (name the course), what facilities will I have access to?
- What is the employment rate for graduates of the course?
- Is it essential to complete further study?
- What are some examples of jobs available to graduates?
- What is the completion rate of the course?
- How flexible is course delivery?
- Are there work placement opportunities?

*The above questions are just some examples. Questions could also relate to campus and student life; what societies and clubs you could join; fees and costs; scholarships.*

Students in Years 9 and 10 have also had some work, questioning, investigating, and thinking to do, in preparation for subject selection. There has been considerable time devoted to this during Badano lessons early in Term 3. The Subject Selection Handbooks have been revamped with the aim being to provide an accurate snapshot of what subjects are available, with the added resource of a QR code for each subject that, when referenced, provides more information to inform students to ensure they have the information they need to make well informed subject selection decisions. Use the following QR codes to get examples of the extra information that students can access via their **Subject Selection Handbook** (also available in electronic version: go to **SIMON Knowledge Banks** and sign in, if prompted. Open the *Subject Selection* folder and then the *Handbook* folder).

Year 9 (2024) into Year 10 (2025)  
Dance



Year 10 (2024) into Year 11 (2025) VCE VET  
Information & Communication Technology



Year 10 (2024) into Year 11 (2025)  
Legal Studies



The following slide is from a presentation to Year 10 students during careers sessions within the Badano program that focussed on subject selection:

#### What subjects should you choose and why?

- To get the most out of your senior studies, **choose subjects that you like and/or are good at.**
- To build on your skills and knowledge, **choose subjects that you like and/or are good at.**
- For an enjoyable and productive experience, **choose subjects that you like and/or are good at.**
- For your best chance of good VCE results, **choose subjects that you like and/or are good at.**



We hope the above slide gives some good direction when considering what subjects to choose

## Year 7 Premier League

### RESULTS – SEMI-FINAL

43	Boys Basketball	vs	Salesian	37
72	Girls Basketball	vs	St Francis	33
1	Girls Volleyball	vs	Caroline Chisholm	2
3	Boys Football	vs	Caroline Chisholm	1
9	Girls Football	vs	CRC NK	1
3.3.21	AFL	vs	Marymede	5.7.37

### RESULTS – GRAND FINAL

57	Boys Basketball	vs	Marymede	39
36	Girls Basketball	vs	Marymede	29
1	Boys Football	vs	Salesian	0
4	Girls Football	vs	Caroline Springs	0



## SACCSS SENIOR FOOTBALL

### RESULTS – ROUND 1

10	Senior Boys	vs	Emmanuel	1
1	Senior Boys (B)	vs	Thomas Carr	0
7	Senior Girls	vs	Emmanuel	1

### RESULTS – ROUND 2

1	Senior Boys	vs	CRC Sydenham	1
2	Senior Boys (B)	vs	MacKillop	6
5	Senior Girls	vs	CRC Sydenham	2

### RESULTS – ROUND 3

9	Senior Boys	vs	St Francis	2
6	Senior Boys (B)	vs	Penola	1
11	Senior Girls	vs	Antonine	0



## SACCSS SENIOR BOYS AFL

### RESULTS – GRAND FINAL

5.9.39	AFL	vs	Salesian	9.12.66
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SACCSS Peer Award (Awarded by opposition):  
**Tommy Vrkcic**



1964 - 2024



**DIAMOND JUBILEE**

60 Years Young

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