

# The *Morican*

ST MONICA'S COLLEGE, EPPING



1964 - 2024

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St Monica's  
Week



# 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

St Monica's Day 2024

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## Principal's Report

We all know and appreciate that schooling is about fundamental learning, growing and developing in knowledge, acquiring skills, encouraging critical thinking, analysis and expression of thought using a variety of means. St Monica's College, Epping meets each of these criteria and excels.

Additionally, though, schooling ought to be about learning new skills outside the formal curriculum. We call these co-curricular or extra-curricular activities. These are generally outside class time, undertaken freely by students, popular topics, and particular to students whose interests and talents may be somewhat outside the norm. St Monica's College has a treasure trove of co-curricular activities and our students flock to join.

I shall attempt to provide an overview of these co-curricular activities, usually found as clubs, competitions, teams, bands, and special interest groups. A list of them currently operating is featured in the College website should readers wish to read a full list.

Let us start with the arts. At our school we seek to provide students with the opportunity and training to love the arts, performing and visual (and even martial arts). In performance, a student can rehearse for and perform ultimately in the Annual Production on stage or as a stage crew member or musician. Then there is the Shakespeare Club which performs. Dance and Drama clubs will function post Production for our thespians and artistes.

Music is plentiful, not only through instrumental lessons. There are seventeen musical groups ranging from bands to ensembles to solo performing. 'Monicans in May' and 'Sounds of Spring' are public performances which draw on the talents of our students. Musicians can compete in the annual Piano Competition, attend Music Camp and/or Generations in Jazz.

Those who are interested in art may be a member of an art club, on either DRC or DSC. Students learn sculpture, develop expertise in photography, are devotees of Pokémon or Anime.

Sport galore is offered and SMC is renowned for our depth of sport, the amount of sport we offer, the quality of our sport programs and

our competitive successes and victories. Name the sport and students can be virtually guaranteed of a try-out. We compete in SACCSS and numerous other State Championships and Premier Cups – and we are fiercely hard to beat due to the training that happens before an event. The Athletic Development Program (ADP) enhances those Monicans already skilled at a high level, meanwhile, the Talent Identification and Development Program (TID) does as it is named.

House activities are held monthly and are enjoyed by many who might just miss out on higher selection. There is room and place for all in sport and House.

Those who are community minded are well catered for through Youth Ministry, Be More, the Archives Student Committee, and immersion trips to other countries and places of need in Victoria and Australia.

Accolades always for the EnviroFriends team and these students are responsible for stewardship of our site, conservation of our planet, and awareness of the dire effects of climate change. EnviroFriends at the College are present in many events and competitions, and we win significant praise nearly every time the SMC banner is displayed. It is a College-wide co-curricular activity as most other co-curricular activities are.

Civic minded students participate in the annual Youth Parliament in St Monica's Week, and many are members of Junior and Senior Student Councils. On both campuses Politics Clubs operate preparing large numbers of budding politicians perhaps.

Referring to potential skilled practitioners, just consider these opportunities offered: in Food (Paddock to Plate); medical careers (St John Youth Division); scientist (STEM activities one after the other each week), Mathematics and Physics Olympiads; solar vehicle manufacturers; robotics; coding specialist; and Science Club members.

The Libraries at the College offer a multitude of activities that engage so many students. Library Monitors have existed here for decades. Orators abound at the College and participate in public speaking and debating and public competitions throughout the year. Those who

Brian Hanley OAM



desire to see and experience the world whilst still in their adolescent years are given the chance through various programs to travel (homestay, cultural trips, sport, immersion). Major destinations for Monicans are Japan, France, Spain, USA, Philippines, Vietnam, New Zealand, Singapore, and Indonesia. The whole College knows much about Pakistan with the Presentation Sisters' visits annually.

For those notables who are passionate to display their competitive talents and skills there are seven major Principal's Awards: Principal's Gift (athletics), Principal's Ribbon for Cookery (food), Principal's Art Prize, Principal's Trophy for Technology, Principal's Shield for Chess, Principal's Cup for Song, and the oldest of the seven, the Principal's Award for Public Speaking.

This is a lengthy article for an edition of *The Monican*, but in this Diamond Jubilee Year when we celebrate and recognize our history, it is absolutely critical to assure our community and the wider community that indeed St Monica's College, Epping is a magnificent School of Educational Enterprise in 2024.

**Brian Hanley OAM**  
*Principal*

## Executive Deputy Principal's Report

Miss Paula Di Maria

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PATIENCE AND PURPOSE

*What am I going to do with my life?  
What really matters to me?*

These questions can fill us with hope and direction when we have some sense of what the answers may be. If we do not, they can present us with confusion and frustration. At St Monica's College, we take inspiration from the life of our patron saint, St Monica, whose journey embodies the profound human gift of patience. Through her unwavering faith and steadfast hope, we see how patience is not simply about waiting but is an active, purposeful virtue that shapes our path toward fulfillment.

Leading a life of purpose or making an enduring commitment to contributing to the broader world in personally meaningful ways, is associated with a range of benefits, including better physical health, enhanced psychological well-being, superior academic achievement, and enriched social connections. Despite these advantages, leading a life of purpose can be challenging for some. As many as two out of three adolescents struggle to articulate a clear purpose for their lives.

Before young people can identify a purpose, they need to connect in a process of self-exploration. Searching for a purpose in life is not often studied, but when it has been, researchers have found it to be a source of stress and anxiety, especially when it feels like everyone else has it all figured out.

So how do we as educators and parents/carers help young adults navigate the potentially distressing process of searching for a purpose in life? Emerging findings suggest practising patience may be a critical and often overlooked element of a productive and fulfilling search for purpose.

#### *What is the connection between patience and purpose?*

In our daily lives, patience and purpose are deeply intertwined, shaping how we experience growth, navigate challenges, and discover meaning. Patience is not merely the ability to wait, but the wisdom to understand that fulfillment often unfolds over time. It is the quiet strength that allows us to persevere when the path ahead seems uncertain. Purpose, on the other hand, is our guiding light — the deep sense of direction that gives our efforts meaning. Together, patience and purpose create a powerful synergy, where one nurtures the other.

We live in a world that often prioritizes immediate results, rapid success and instant gratification. The pressure to achieve can cloud our sense of purpose, leading us to rush through experiences or seek quick solutions. Yet, true purpose is rarely realized in haste. It requires time — time to grow, to reflect, and to learn from obstacles.

Patience provides the space for this growth, reminding us that the process of developing is just as important as the destination. Without patience, we risk losing sight of our deeper goals, trading long-term fulfillment for short-term gains.

In everyday moments, patience is the steady hand that helps us endure difficulties with grace. Whether it is in our work, relationships, or personal development, patience teaches us to trust that our efforts are meaningful, even when progress is not immediately visible. It encourages us to keep moving forward, knowing that purpose is not a singular event but a continuous unfolding of our potential. As the old proverb states, "Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet." The fruits of patience are often hard-earned, but they bring deeper, more lasting contentment.

Purpose, too, gives our patience direction. It reminds us why we endure, why we wait, and why we persist through adversity. When we have a clear sense of purpose, patience becomes less about waiting and more about preparing — about readying ourselves for the opportunities and challenges that await. Purpose turns patience into a hopeful act, one that is fuelled by faith in what is to come, even if it is yet unknown.

In our daily lives, the connection between patience and purpose invites us to slow down, to trust the journey, and to believe that every step, no matter how small, brings us closer to fulfillment. It teaches us that the moments of waiting are not wasted but are part of the larger tapestry of our growth and discovery. When we embrace patience, we honour the process of life, knowing that the purpose we seek is already taking shape, one moment at a time.

At St Monica's College, we walk together in this journey of purpose, knowing that patience is not passive but a powerful gift that shapes us, strengthens us, and brings us closer to who we are meant to be. We foster this patience as a virtue that leads not only to personal fulfillment but to the full realization of each individual's potential.

In our school community, we nurture this same spirit of patient perseverance in our students, staff, and families. We understand that growth, personal, academic and spiritual, is a process that unfolds in its own time. Patience allows us to embrace this process, guiding our students to persist in their learning, to reflect deeply, and to grow steadily. Like St Monica, we do not rush the journey, but trust that each step — no matter how challenging — carries us closer to our true purpose.

May we continue to reflect the example of St Monica in our lives — patient, purposeful, and always walking in faith.

**Paula Di Maria**  
*Executive Deputy Principal*



## Director's Report Dalton Road Campus

Alicia Xerri



Term 3 at the Dalton Road Campus has been pounding with energy, enthusiasm and activity. As another term draws to a close, we acknowledge the rigorous work and engagement of our students and the dedication of our staff to go above and beyond.

The month of August at St Monica's College is always one of great anticipation for St Monica's Week and the special celebrations this encompasses. St Monica's Week owes much to the hard work of staff and students who embrace what it symbolises for our College community. The vibrant atmosphere and festival spirit enhanced by the sunny skies were truly superb – a reminder that the sun always shines on Monicans.

As we begin to plan for our final term of 2024, there is a feeling that the end of the year is not too far away. Our Year 7 students will be seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, the realisation that they have made that big transition from primary to secondary and succeeded. The focus and enthusiasm of our Year 7 students shift to their camps in early Term 4, along with the excitement surrounding the St Stephen/Gaudete Campus.

Year 8 students continue to walk their journey and create new experiences and connections along the way. Our focus is to keep Year 8 students settled and engaged in the classrooms. With a busy curriculum and Subject Selection complete, it is important to keep our students working towards and completing set tasks and concentrating on their schoolwork. In saying that, our Year 8 students are active members of our campus community, excelling in all that they participate in.

A focal point for our students on the Dalton Road Campus is the importance of building resilience in the lives of our young people. This is particularly important with the work that we do with our Year 9 cohort. Our students are being taught, through various programs and more recently through the subject selection process, the importance of setting practical goals and ways to move towards them, one step at a time. We have seen much growth, self-reflection and perseverance from this cohort, building their resilience to tackle situations and face challenges in a calm and respectful way.

As we prepare to enter the fourth term, I take this opportunity to remind our families to check their child's uniform as we transition to our summer uniform. In particular, I refer to girls' dress length.

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**Alicia Xerri**  
*Campus Director DRC*

## Director's Report Davisson Street Campus

Nicole Meade



### THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSENT EDUCATION

In the current social climate, teaching consent and fostering respectful relationships in secondary schools is more vital than ever. With recent changes in government legislation and the powerful "Teach Us Consent" campaign, it is clear that students need comprehensive education on these essential topics. Consent education not only helps protect students from harm but also empowers them to create safe, respectful, and healthy relationships. At St Monica's College, we believe that a holistic approach to teaching consent is key to preparing our students for the complexities of modern life.

Recent changes in Australian law have placed a greater emphasis on the importance of consent education in schools. These legal updates reflect a broader societal movement toward addressing gender-based violence and promoting respectful relationships. In response to these changes, schools are taking proactive steps to ensure that students are well-informed about consent and their rights within relationships.

One influential initiative that has sparked much-needed conversations around consent is the "Teach Us Consent" campaign, led by Chanel Contos. This campaign has highlighted the need for consent education to be more prominent and effective in schools, ensuring that students are equipped with the tools to navigate relationships with confidence and respect. At St Monica's College, we are committed to addressing this call for action.

Our approach to consent education is comprehensive, combining tailored programs and expert guest presenters. We collaborate with organisations like Consent Labs and Elephant Ed to run workshops that provide students with expert insights into the complexities of consent. These sessions not only empower students to recognise their own rights but also emphasize the importance of respecting others' boundaries, promoting a culture of mutual respect. Our staff also engage in professional development sessions with industry leaders to ensure we are best placed to support the needs of all students in our community.

At St Monica's College, teaching consent does not stop in the classroom. We believe that every interaction in our community offers an opportunity to model and reinforce the values of consent. Whether in peer interactions, digital communication, or everyday social exchanges, understanding personal boundaries is essential for developing respectful and meaningful relationships.

By taking a holistic approach to consent education, we empower our students to build healthy relationships based on trust, respect, and mutual understanding. At St Monica's College, we are not only educating students for the classroom but for life, ensuring they have the knowledge and confidence to navigate their personal and social worlds with integrity.

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**Nicole Meade**  
*Campus Director DSC*

## St Stephen/Gaudete Campus

It is with great enthusiasm and excitement that we provide our community with an update of St Monica's fourth campus, St Stephen/Gaudete Campus. From 2025, Year 8 students will engage in a semester-based curriculum that is focussed on Literacy and Numeracy and will redefine the educational experience for our Year 8 students. The state-of-the-art facilities at St Stephen/Gaudete Campus demonstrate our significant and ongoing investment to providing our students with an 'opportunity of a lifetime'.

In an interesting twist of history, the idea of establishing St Monica's College, Epping, was born at a St Stephen's Parish meeting in 1964.

"Gaudete" is taken from the Latin word "rejoice". The term is used to emphasize joyful anticipation and celebration. This will be the enduring spirit of the St Stephen/Gaudete Campus.

Together with Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools, the College secured an opportunity to include St Stephen's Primary School into our College community. Much has been achieved since the official handover on Wednesday, 17 April. The physical appearance of the campus has changed, with visible upgrades to the external building and internal renovations, IT infrastructure and the outdoor play spaces.

St Stephen/Gaudete Campus is located 7.3km from the Dalton Road Campus. At Reservoir, students will be engaged in a learning program that will challenge, inspire and prepare them for their senior years. The vision for the St Stephen/Gaudete Campus is to provide a learning program with specific focus on developing essential skills in literacy and numeracy.

Our Reservoir campus will also operate on a 10-day cycle. Each day will follow the same structure, with the journey to include travelling from the Dalton Road Campus. Each day will have a dedicated Literacy and Numeracy period. Twice a cycle, one Numeracy period will focus on Science and a Literacy period will focus on Humanities.

Post lunch will be a Discovery/Physical Education Program involving the following learning areas, Science, Humanities, Arts, Physical Education and Technology. Through explicit instruction, students will be introduced to the key skills and knowledge of these learning areas.

Our students will benefit from modern and light-filled learning environments. We are proud to offer families in the Northern Suburbs of Melbourne, an innovative, joyful, and engaging semester-based program. Our commitment is to provide the best possible learning opportunities for our students.

As we embark on this exciting journey together, we appreciate the support of our Monican Community. In the coming months, we look forward to providing our families with more updates on the St Stephen/Gaudete Campus.



## Deputy Principal's Report Curriculum & Information Technology

Michelle Keele



In February this year, the Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) introduced a new initiative to help every student succeed: the *Vision for Instruction*.

Based on evidence of how students learn, *Vision for Instruction* promotes a consistent approach to meet the needs of all students. Research on how students learn shows that explicit instruction methods are the most effective way to help children gain the knowledge and skills they need to flourish and become lifelong learners.

This method of instruction involves teachers introducing complex skills in small steps, with clear explanations and demonstrations of what students are expected to learn. Students then practise what they learned and receive feedback from their teacher until the skill is mastered. It is commonly referred to as '*I Do. We Do. You Do.*'

Explicit instruction breaks new information into manageable parts. Lessons that begin with teacher-guided instruction and gradually shift responsibility to students through modelling and guided practice. Students achieve independent practice only after foundational knowledge is established.

The *Vision for Instruction* will benefit students by:

- Offering a focused and structured approach to gaining knowledge and developing skills
- Ensuring that clear guidance is provided
- presenting key information and knowledge before independent activities
- enabling immediate feedback

Parents play a vital role in supporting their children's learning journey. Here are some ways you can enhance their learning:

- Communicate with teachers in order to understand classroom objectives and methods.
- Encourage and celebrate both practice and achievement
- Create a structured environment. If possible, establish a distraction-free study area at home.
- Spend time reading with your child regularly. As they mature, read their English text so you can discuss stories, characters and themes to enhance their comprehension.
- Encourage critical thinking by engaging in discussions that promote reasoning and explanation.
- Model a positive attitude towards learning.
- Show your children that learning is a lifelong journey.

As mentioned in previous Monican articles, the *Vision for Instruction* aligns perfectly with the Pedagogical Framework introduced at the College at the end of 2023. This Framework concentrates on the learning environment and the instructional model: explicit instruction.

**Michelle Keele**

Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Information Technology)

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

Bernadette Harris



Our partnership with the Presentation Sisters in Pakistan continued in the month of August when the College hosted a visit from Sister Farzana Bashir pbvm. This international friendship commenced 50 years ago with a visit by former staff member Pamela Coyne to Pakistan and continues today with our fundraising and sponsorship of schools led by the Presentation Sisters.

During her stay, Sister Farzana visited classes, attended excursions and made many valuable contributions to College life. Her participation included addressing the School Advisory Council, assisting with the planning of the St Monica's Day Mass, visitation to the Sisters of the Good Samaritan, attendance at the Youth Parliament and Staff Spirituality Day.

Sister Farzana presented our third term College Conversation focussing on life and mission in Pakistan. Detailing the many ministries the Presentation Sisters are involved in across Pakistan, her address painted a vivid picture of the varied ways the Sisters reach out to serve the poor and follow the mission of Nano Nagle. Their outreach includes primary and secondary schools, education in parishes, homes, workplaces and villages. This inspirational service has contributed to rising literacy rates, especially for women.

The Sisters work tirelessly to promote justice and uphold the dignity of the human person. All who attended the College Conversation appreciated Farzana's account and admired her dedication, courage and conviction.

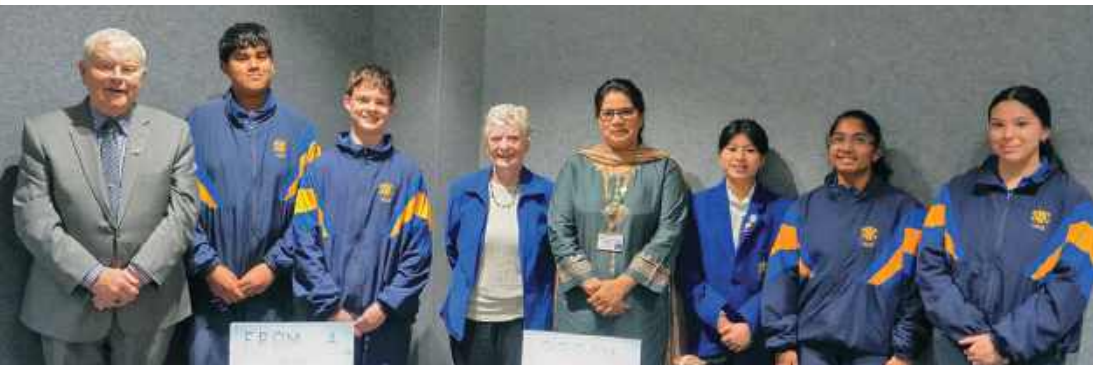
The College's commitment to living out the Kingdom Values of Compassion, Generosity and Love of Neighbour are lived out through our relationships with people from other nations of the world. These values remain mere aims and aspirations unless they are actioned and lived out within our community.

Through our annual visit from the Presentation Sisters in Pakistan and our ongoing support of their work, we are able to support a religious Order, founded in Ireland in the 1700s by Nano Nagle who bravely proclaimed: *'If I could be of any service in saving souls in any part of the globe, I would willingly do all in my power.'*

May we also do all in our power to be informed and supportive international neighbours who are guided and inspired by the light of our faith.

**Bernadette Harris**

*Deputy Principal (Identity, Mission & Community)*



## Deputy Principal's Report Professional Practice

Kirsten Hodgson



I have written extensively this year about the release of the Vision for Instruction Teaching and Learning position statement, launched by the Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools earlier this year, to guide all MACS schools in Victoria. Back in 2021, Catholic Education Canberra-Goulburn launched its version of this approach, named the Catalyst Program. Now in the fourth year of their journey, schools in this region have already trialled and experimented with implementing an Explicit Instruction model within their Teaching and Learning programs. An opportunity recently presented itself to visit schools in this area to observe their progress and discuss key learnings with their leadership teams and it was one we were keen to capitalise on.

In mid-September, I was joined by Mr Bryan Kilkenny, Pedagogy Leader, and Mr Luca Finanzio, Senior Teacher (VCE Management and Development), to visit two schools that were identified by Catholic Education Canberra-Goulburn as highly proficient schools that have experienced great success in implementing an Explicit Instruction model across their schools. The first school was St Mary MacKillop College, a co-educational secondary school, with over 2000 enrolments across two Campuses (Years 7 to 9 and Years 10 to 12). The second, Merici College, was a single-campus girls school with approximately 900 enrolments.

Both schools were incredibly generous with their time and we were fortunate to spend a full day at each school with key members of their leadership teams who presented to us on their journey, identifying both challenges and successes they have experienced along the way. The visits also included time spent in the classroom, discussing both student and teacher experiences within the Catalyst program. Both schools presented us with data that highlighted positive trends with their academic results, with both NAPLAN and literacy and numeracy results steadily improving over recent years.

The Catalyst Program, which draws from the Science of Learning research and evidence-based practices, is a system-wide approach to Teaching and Learning. Educators in both primary and secondary schools follow a consistent approach to routines and structure in the classroom and rely heavily on instruction that promotes regular retrieval of content and knowledge to better ensure that students retain key ideas. These are approaches that we are beginning to embed at St Monica's College so it was invaluable to be able to learn from schools about what worked effectively for them. Visiting a school that has a very similar context to our own was also critical as we were able to obtain some strategies for implementation in a large multi-Campus school setting.

The school visits have enabled us to return with the confidence that as a school well on its way to implementing the Vision for Instruction, we are certainly on the right path to provide a teaching and learning program that has the potential to better the learning experience for students and improve academic outcomes for all students regardless of their learning needs.

**Kirsten Hodgson**  
Deputy Principal (Professional Practice)



School visits: St Mary MacKillop College and Merici College, both in the Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra-Goulburn

## Term 4 College Assembly



## Principal's Address Term 4, 2024

Miss Harris, Staff, Year 12 Students and all Students of St Monica's College, Epping.

Our College Theme in our Diamond Anniversary 60<sup>th</sup> year, reminds us that one Sunday afternoon a priest in East Reservoir had a dream to create St Monica's College and that dream is being lived and fulfilled today by you, the Monicans of 2024. You, the diamonds of great value.

This year at Assemblies I have spoken about our past, our present, and what it means to be a Monican. This final Years 7-12 Assembly will be devoted to the future and where St Monica's College and all Monicans are headed in the next forty years.

The problem though is that I have no idea what the campuses of 400 Dalton Road, Epping, 16 Davisson Street, Epping, Falls Road, Strath Creek, and 71 Whitelaw Street, Reservoir will be like, and neither do you. So, the challenge is, 'We need to dream together'.

There are many things to consider as in forty years the Centenary of the College is celebrated, one hundred years of SMC. There could be six campuses or fewer, three thousand students or less, more buildings we cannot imagine, subjects taught that we cannot envisage.

Student Monicans, I confidently predict that you will be alive and well and mostly living close to Epping in 2064. You may have children or grandchildren who attend the school in that special Jubilee year, perhaps you will work here, be a member of the School Council. I would be delighted if someone before me here this morning was the Principal He or she could even have this academic gown!

Importantly, you will have been shaped as a person through receiving a Monican education. You will remember the values and beliefs of St Monica's College at the time of this Diamond Jubilee year. You as a compassionate, sensitive, strong, wise, generous and loving human being.

You will know the difference between good and evil, right and wrong. You will live a life of service through your leadership, parenthood, career, and your own free will. You will have stamped firmly in your mind two Monican words, 'Pray' and 'Persevere'. The sun will shine on you always.

So, this is what we must do and fast. I invite every student and every staff member to write, draw, design, or use whatever style you want to communicate your dream about St Monica's College and Monicans forty years from now. Send them your message.

The priest dreamt sixty years ago, let us dream now about the next forty years and have those dreams awakened in 2064. Of course, we shall need to bury a time capsule somewhere secret, known only to a precious few, maybe on St Stephen/Gaudete Campus where it all began. Monicans always love secrets being revealed.

Year 12 students, we shall find a way to enable you to participate in this dream writing project. Meanwhile, we farewell you this week as you conclude your secondary education. You have been outstanding diamond Monicans, young people the rest of the school admires, has looked to, envied for your spirit and who have inspired us to walk proudly in your footsteps.

This College thanks College Captains, Matthew James and Isabella Calthorpe and Vice Captains, Fotini Ambaras and Adrian Beavis. You four deserve our praise, you have earned our affection, and now we wish you well as you lead others in other places in the years ahead. I hope that you are invited to the one hundredth party.

All students in Years 7,8,9,10 and 11 are called upon to conclude the year as well-behaved and faithful Monicans, being positive, polite, well-groomed, hard working and responsible. Standards are higher now than they have been all this year. Do not let the College, your fellow Monicans or yourself down.

Year 12 students as you celebrate, graduate as successful Monicans, and parade through the doors of the Sports and Assembly Hall for the final time with pride. Our thoughts will be loving ones of you, our memories will be enriched.

In 2064, I pray that there will be beautiful celebrations and happiness abounding amongst the staff and students. In 2024, I hope that the dreams you will write for them will delight them, particularly if you are present to hand them over.

'From A Dream to Diamonds' tells the story of SMC today, may our dreams for 2064 explode like dazzling, flaming fireworks in the minds and hearts of those fortunate to be a Monican in the one hundredth year.

Meanwhile, school of 2024, live life spectacularly like diamonds, that you most certainly are.

**Brian Hanley OAM**  
*Principal*



### Annual Oration



### Youth Parliament



# St Monica's Week 2024

## Sports Breakfast



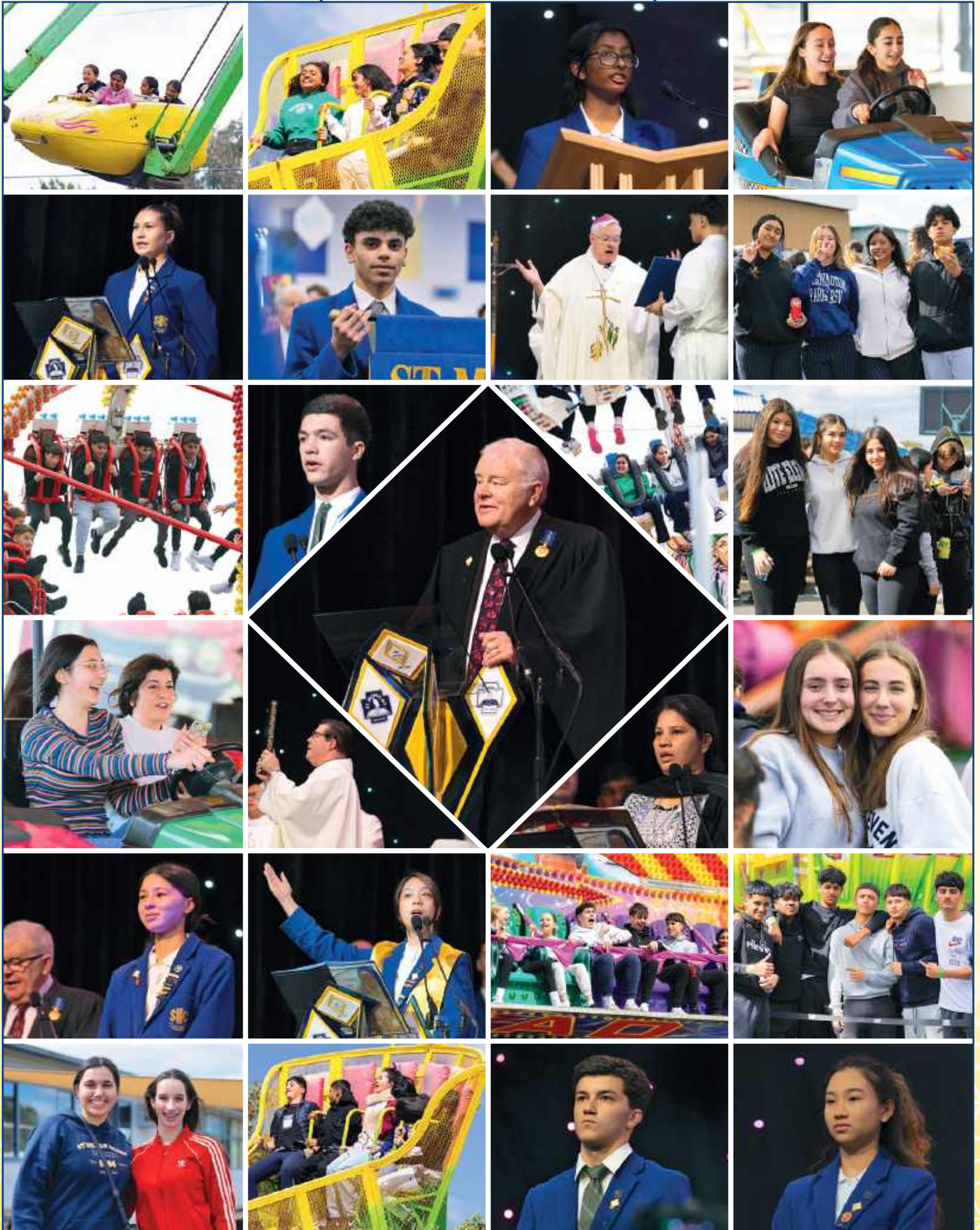
### Principal's Surprise



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# St Monica's Week 2024

## St Monica's Day





**SMC**  
**ST MONICA'S COLLEGE EPPING**  
**CLASSROOM BUILDING**  
**SCIENCE BLDG.**  
 Donated by Mrs. R. Wood P.P.  
 Donated by Madeline Campbell  
 Donor's College Captain (1984)  
 and  
 Subscribed March 17, 2004  
 St. Monica's College funds with the assistance of the  
 Government of Victoria  
 Architects: [illegible] Builder:  
 [illegible] and Lodge P/L. Wilson Construction

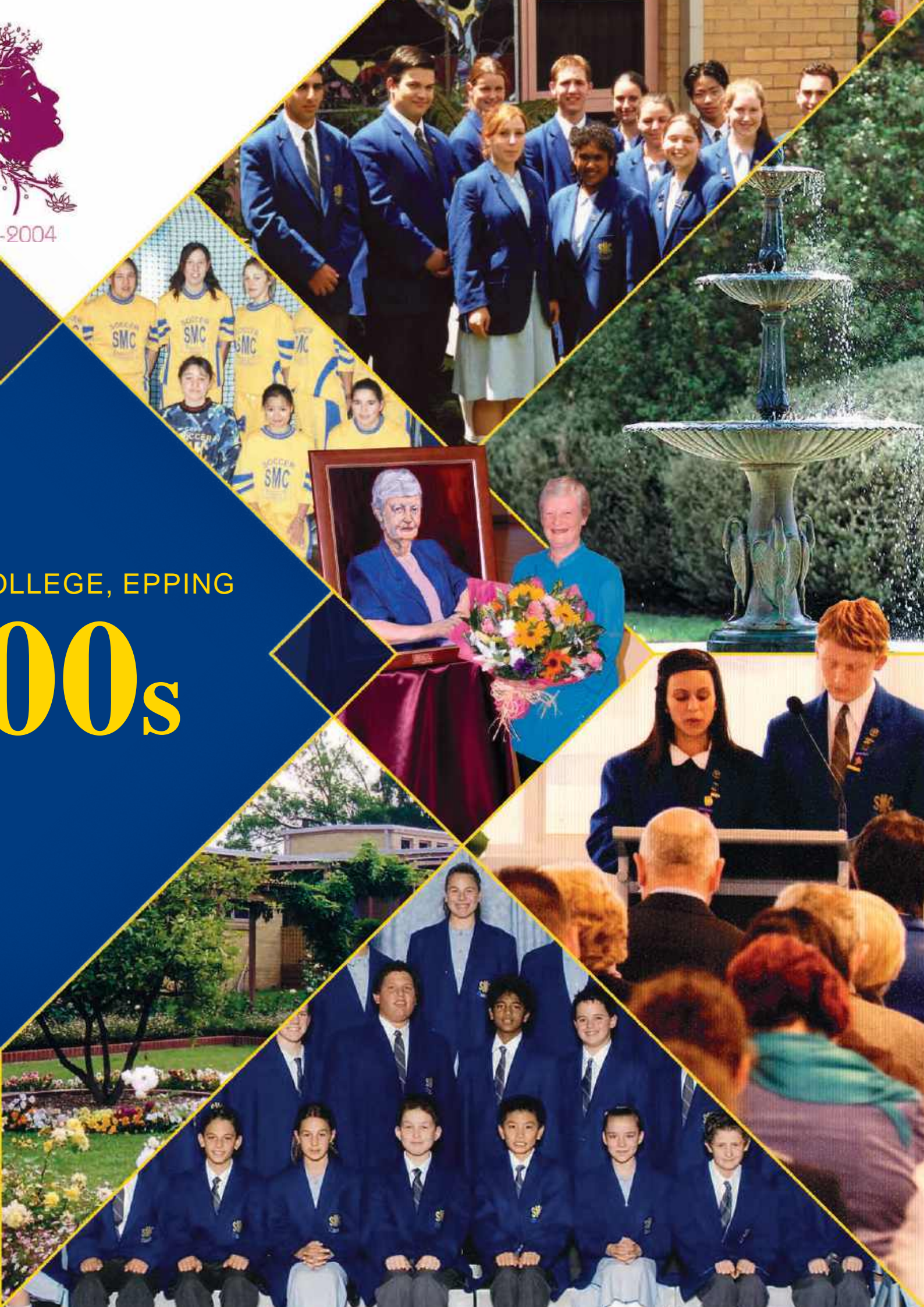
ST MONICA'S COLLEGE

200

2004

COLLEGE, EPPING

00s



## Takada Homestay Program 2024

On 14 September, 3 teachers, 13 students, gathered at Melbourne airport to begin the adventure to Japan. For some of the travelling students, it was their first time travelling overseas, for others, it was their first time travelling to Japan. All were very excited to begin the journey, as were the families that gathered to farewell the travelling party.

After the Monicans arrived in Japan, at Nagoya Airport on 15 September they travelled to the port of Tsu, via ferry. They were greeted by their host families, who demonstrated how eager they were to welcome everyone into their homes with welcome signs and gifts. This began a wonderful 10-night homestay program with students and families from Takada High.

During the homestay program, students attended classes with their host sibling, where classes were conducted in Japanese. They had the opportunity to also attend a variety of different after school clubs that included activities such as flower arranging, naginata, kendo and shogi. While attending Takada High Monicans also had the opportunity to visit Kyoto and the Kiyomizu-dera Temple, the Ise Jingu Shrine and Toba aquarium. During days off from school, Takada host families treated Monicans to a huge variety of activities and attractions such as the Ninja Museum, Suzaka City Circuit, Nara, J-League Soccer match, Universal Studios as well as attending many wonderful restaurants and family homes for feasts!

On the final morning of the Homestay program, it was hard to say goodbye, with many tears being shed, however the journey continued with students taking the train to Hakone where a lake cruise and gondola ride was undertaken. Unfortunately Mount Fuji was covered by clouds and was not visible. After this, the bus transported students to Tokyo to begin the next part of the trip. The stay in Tokyo included visits to Disneyland and a guided sightseeing tour around the city with one of the highlights being a visit to the Pokémon Centre at the Tokyo Sky Tree.

The highlights of the trip were the wonderful relationships that were created with the families and staff of Takada High and the immersion into the Japanese culture. These memories will remain with all travellers for a long time to come.

**Dean Hughes**

*Assistant Principal (Staffing & Administrative Logistics)*

## Sustainability Tour and Visit



## Worship and Faith

On Friday, 30 August, 2024, St Monica's College community came together to celebrate one of the most momentous events in the College's calendar – the annual St Monica's Feast Day Mass. This year was particularly significant, as it marked the Diamond Jubilee, celebrating 60 years of Monican education and community service. The occasion was both a time of reflection and joy as students, staff, and clergy gathered to honour the legacy of St Monica and the vibrant history of the College.

The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Archbishop (Most Rev.) Charles Daniel Balvo, Apostolic Nuncio for the Holy See. His Excellency's presence added a sense of gravitas to the occasion, and his inspiring words resonated deeply with all in attendance. He was joined by several concelebrants, including Very Rev. Archpriest Michael Kalka, Rev. Fr. Luciano Toldo CS, Rev. Fr. Anthony Girolami, and others, who brought a spirit of unity and shared ministry to the celebration.

The Mass was a fitting tribute to the enduring legacy of St Monica's College, a school that has been educating young people in the spirit of faith, service, and community for six decades. Throughout the Mass, there was a palpable sense of gratitude and reflection, not just on the past 60 years but also on the future of the College and its continued commitment to excellence.

The music for the liturgical celebration was directed by Ms Gabrielle Crowley. Accompanied by musicians Ms Jane Murone and Mr Luke Streeter, cantor Chole Hildago and St Monica's student choir. The music added a profound sense of reverence and joy to the service. Their performances uplifted the hearts of all present, reminding everyone of the power of music to bring people together in worship.

Special thanks to our maintenance and audio-visual staff, who worked tirelessly to transform the Sports and Assembly Hall into a sacred space. Also, to all those who played a role in making this day so memorable.

From a Dream to Diamonds, we move forward carrying the legacy of St Monica's College and the countless Monicans who have gone before us.

**Ferdinand D Corroya**  
Worship and Faith Minister

## Acknowledgement of Country Plaque Blessing

### Dalton Road Campus



### Davison Street Campus



## Year 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Graduation Dinner

On behalf of St Monica's College, Dimity Hughes and I had the absolute privilege of attending the Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA) Year 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Graduation Dinner with Drew Sanderson and her parents, Tamara and Andrew on Friday, 13 September at the Catholic Leadership Centre, East Melbourne.

It was an honour to be part of such a special evening, celebrating the remarkable achievements of Drew and these other young students.

The evening was a celebration of identity and hope for the future. These graduates have not only navigated the academic pressures of Year 12 but have done so while proudly carrying the rich traditions of their ancestors. Their journeys are a testament to the strength of community, the importance of cultural heritage, and the bright futures that await them all.

**Alison Fernandes**



## Junior Council Training Day 26 July 2024, Ostia Campus

The Junior Council Training Day takes place once a year, helping students to grow as individuals and as a team. This year, the Junior School Council students attended a Training Day at our Strath Creek Campus, Ostia.

The day began as soon as we arrived at Ostia, where we settled in and explored the campus. Soon after, we engaged in multiple team bonding activities including ice breakers, and reflected on our goals and what we aim to achieve as JSC students. We also explored what concepts push us out of our comfort zone, and how to try and reframe it as a learning zone. Through these activities, students were able to bond with each other and gain a deeper understanding of ourselves as leaders, both our strengths and limitations.

Next, we divided into two groups: one group took on the responsibility of cooking lunch, while the other handled the clean-up afterward. We all sat down together at the table, said grace, and enjoyed our lovely meal. This was a great way to spend time together and work as a team with a common goal. After lunch, we were given 5 minutes to prepare and deliver an impromptu speech on a topic of our choice. Although it was nerve-racking, this activity was important in teaching us how to be more comfortable with public speaking and to build confidence which is essential for student leaders. Overall, these activities helped us bond with one another and helped us to develop essential leadership skills.

Training day was a blast! It not only helped us grow our as individuals but also brought us closer together as not just a group of students but a team. We are very thankful for the opportunity to spend the day together at Ostia, and we would like to thank Ms Falcone for her organisation of the day and Mr D'Arro for his assistance. We had a fantastic time, and the day was a huge success.

**Natalia Petrusovska, 8 Emerald**



*'Teamwork and communication within our group is vital to be better leaders together.'*

**Liyansa Mahawanniarachchi, 9 Jade**



## Year 9 Retreat

On 13 September, our Year Nine students engaged in their first ever Religious Education retreat. The day focussed on the theme of, 'Reach Out! Life Choices Inspired by Faith'. The day was led by our guest speaker, Gen Bryant (GB) and her team.

Gen Bryant is an independent musician, composer, public speaker, and team builder, who has been involved in school and parish ministry across Australia for over 18 years. Gen is passionate about spreading the Gospel messages of hope, love, and justice to young people and provides interactive and engaging sessions while sharing her music and faith journey with people of all ages and all walks of life. The GB Team's mission is to create opportunities where faith, inclusion, joy, music,

compassion, and love converge to empower the lives of young individuals.

Gen and her team challenged us to reflect and pray, whilst calling us to not wait to show our gifts and talents and to not be shy. She called us to speak up, and rise, and not just talk about things, but to do something about whatever it is that we are passionate about.

Andrea Robinson of Year Nine wrote in her reflection,

*'Gen Bryant and her team performed a series of songs that allowed us to reflect on our decisions and our spirituality. This experience encouraged everyone to realise how grateful we are for everything we have. They created a positive atmosphere for us to be comfortable*

*and partake in activities. Each member had shared their own stories about what they appreciate and want to change in their relationships. We were given the opportunity to reflect on our relationships with others, which helped us to deepen our spiritual consciousness. We all actively participated in all the activities, and sang along to the songs that they had beautifully prepared for us. It was a day to remember'*

Gen and her team led us all in a prayerful meditation about being the best person we can be, but to also make sure we use those gifts to serve others in our community to make it a better place. This was an inspirational way to end such a lovely day.



## Sounds of Spring



## Principal's Cup For Song

The annual Principal's Cup for Song was held on Monday, 2 September in the Theatre of All Nations. From over 32 students who auditioned, 12 students were selected as finalists to compete in the prestigious event this year. Each student prepared one song to perform, and the standard of all performances was exceptionally high. The large audience was entertained by the diverse range of musical styles presented by our talented vocalists.

The adjudicator for the event, Ms Vicky Jacobs was very impressed with the high standard of the competition and at the end of the evening inspired students with helpful feedback to improve their skills in the future. The evening also featured a guest performance from College Alumnus, former staff member and inaugural winner of the Principal's Cup, Jay Samuel and his brother Ian, who performed two songs for the audience while our adjudicator made her final deliberations.

Ms Jacobs gave two honourable mentions to Year 9 student Alessio Scalpelli and Year 11 student Isabella Bonacci, who despite not winning an award gave technically sound and emotionally moving performances. The 2024 Encouragement Award was given to Sheriz Moreno of Year 10 for her performance of 'One Perfect Moment'. The winner of the 2024 Principal's Cup for Song was awarded to Seth Fiteni of Year 11 Jade for his performance of 'Purple Rain' by Prince.

Congratulations to our winners and all the finalists for their fantastic performances.



## Careers

With Term 3 coming to an end, Year 12 students have completed the tasks required by the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) to allow them to apply for university courses. We have conducted numerous workshops, sent out information via email, provided links to VTAC seminars and had many individual interviews to assist students with VTAC requirements for registering VTAC accounts, course application, and preferencing courses.

Working with the Year 12 students highlights the spectrum of feelings and emotions being experienced, from uncertainty through to excitement about the next stage of a student's career journey. Whether it be a TAFE course, a university course, apprenticeship/traineeship, full time/part time employment or a Gap Year, the move from the safe, stable environment of secondary school, to what is generally the 'unknown', can create mixed emotions. We encourage and assist in making well informed decisions and this can only be done with the required research.

We have had several of our graduate students seek advice and assistance from Careers Department staff. We are more than happy to assist students who have graduated but it is also worth noting that **Skills and Jobs Centres** are also available and offer free career, employment and training support services. Located at many tertiary institutions, the centres are, as stated on their website, 'open to all members of the community. Whether you are a recent graduate, an experienced worker looking for a change, or someone who has been out of the workforce for some time, Skills and Jobs Centres (<https://www.vic.gov.au/skills-and-jobs-centres#how-do-i-access-a-skills-and-jobs-centre>) can help you achieve your training and career goals.'

Researching career options can be done in many ways. Options such as work experience, Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) as part of a VET program, careers appointments, university Open Days, Careers Expos, etc., provide opportunities to gather valuable information to assist in career decision making. Recently, students in Years 10-12 were given the opportunity to attend careers expos/shows and an army expo at Puckapunyal. Students who engage with expo personnel, gain valuable insights into many and varied career options that they have been aware of, or have never heard of previously. Keeping an open mind can expose a world of (career) possibilities!

*"The only way to do great work is to love what you do.  
If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle."*

— Steve Jobs.



## Crafting Rock 'n' Roll: St Monica's College, Epping Launches Electric Guitar-Making Class

St Monica's College, Epping is proud to announce a groundbreaking addition to its curriculum this year in Semester 2: an electric guitar-making class for Year 10 students. This innovative course, a first for any secondary school, invites students to roll up their sleeves and dive into the hands-on process of crafting Telecaster guitars. The class is designed to blend creativity with technical skill, offering students a unique educational experience that exceeds traditional classroom learning.

### A NEW DIMENSION TO LEARNING

The introduction of the electric guitar-making class marks a significant expansion in St Monica's College, Epping's educational offerings. It reflects the school's commitment to providing students with diverse and engaging learning opportunities that cater to a range of interests and talents. This course stands out by merging practical craftsmanship with the theoretical aspects of electronics and design, providing a holistic approach to learning.

Under the guidance of experienced teacher Mr Di Muzio, students have been exploring various facets of guitar construction. From selecting the right types of wood to understanding the intricacies of electronics, they are gaining insights into both the artistic and technical dimensions of building an electric guitar. The Telecaster model, known for its iconic shape and rich sound, serves as the perfect project to showcase these skills.

### HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE AND STUDENT REFLECTIONS

For many students, this class represents a new frontier in their educational journey. **Matthew Schembri**, a Year 10 student, shares his excitement: *"I have always loved music, and the idea of building my own guitar is incredible. I never imagined I would be able to create something that I can actually play. It is been challenging but also really rewarding to see my project come together."*

Students are not only learning about guitar construction but also developing a range of transferable skills. **Eliose Hocking**, another student, notes, *"Working with my hands and seeing the results has been amazing. I have learned about precision, patience, and problem-solving. It is not just about making a guitar; it is about understanding the process and seeing a real and useable outcome of my hard work."* **Vaishakh Arun** adds *"Building an electric guitar from scratch is a fun and rewarding experience because you get to see your hard work come to life as you shape the instrument. Plus, you can work at your own pace, allowing you to perfect every detail and truly make the guitar your own."*

The class encourages collaboration and creativity. Students work together on various aspects of their projects, from shaping the body of the guitar to installing the pickups and wiring. This collaborative environment fosters teamwork and communication, enriching the overall learning experience.

### A NEW PATH FORWARD

The electric guitar-making class is more than just an elective; it is a testament to St Monica's College, Epping's dedication to nurturing diverse talents and interests. By offering this course, the school provides students with a platform to explore their passions and develop practical skills that will benefit them well beyond their school years.

The impact of this course is already evident in the enthusiasm and dedication of the students. As they approach the second half of the semester in completing their Telecasters, the sense of accomplishment and pride is palpable. This experience is not only shaping their understanding of guitar-making but also instilling a sense of confidence and creativity that will serve them in various aspects of their lives.

In conclusion, St Monica's College, Epping's electric guitar-making class is a remarkable addition to the school's curriculum. It offers students an invaluable opportunity to engage with both the art and science of guitar construction, fostering a new generation of skilled and creative individuals. As the students strum the final chords of their self-made instruments, they are not just celebrating their achievements; they are paving the way for future innovations and explorations in their educational journeys.

**Mr Maurice Di Muzio**, with contributions from **Vaishakh Arun, Mason Malfi, Dion Sandric, Christian Parker, Eliose Hocking, Matthew Schembri, Joe Stewart, Dom Smith**



## 2024 MACS STEM MAD Showcase

### CELEBRATING ST MONICA'S COLLEGE ACHIEVEMENTS AT THE 2024 MACS STEM MAD SHOWCASE

St Monica's College students excelled at the 2024 Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) STEM Make A Difference (MAD) Showcase, a prestigious event celebrating the innovative spirit of students across the Archdiocese. The showcase, themed "*Inspired to Act for a Better Future*," provided a platform for students to demonstrate their creativity, technical skills, and commitment to sustainability. Our students earned multiple accolades, embodying the event's theme through remarkable problem-solving, technical expertise, and innovative projects addressing critical global challenges.

Year 7 DigiSTEM student Pranav Gowrishankar made a notable impact by integrating Artificial Intelligence Augmented Reality (AI AR) Glasses into his project. His use of this advanced technology earned him selection for prestigious awards, underscoring his forward-thinking approach to STEM challenges.

In Year 9 STEM Education, Arman Hajhashemi's project, "*Mars Emergency Bunker*," earned him a finalist position in the Immersive Education Future is STEM Award. His project focused on designing survival habitats for Mars, incorporating renewable energy solutions to address challenges for future space missions.

Another impressive achievement from Year 9 STEM Education was the *Sustainable House* project by Deepika Cherukuri and Sahasra Dharmavarapu. Their eco-friendly, modular home design earned them finalist status for the MV-Scienceworks STEM by Design Award.

The highlight of the event was the Makers Empire STEM in Space Award, won by Deepika Cherukuri, Sahasra Dharmavarapu, Susmita Saga, and Alex Pullanthyanickal for their "*Earth & Space Food Security*" project, which creatively addressed sustainable food production on Earth and in space.

These achievements exemplify the dedication and innovative spirit of St Monica's College STEM students, aligning perfectly with the showcase's theme.

**Spiro Kalantzis**  
Senior STEM Educator



## Year 8 Caroline Chisholm Society Collection

Year 8 students learnt about Social Justice and the Caroline Chisholm Society in their Badano Program (Wellbeing Program). The Caroline Chisholm Society provides resources and support to mothers, young children and families in need. Year 8 students were asked to donate items if they could, including nappies, baby wipes, clothes, books, blankets,

toys and puzzles. Thank you to our generous students, their families and staff who donated items. A huge amount was collected and delivered to the Caroline Chisholm Society at the end of Term 3 which was greatly appreciated.



## Premier Football Cup Grand Final Result

2	St Monica's College vs Trinity Grammar	0
Goal Scorers: <b>Marcus Kotronis and Daniel Lazarevski</b>		



## SACCSS Senior Football

### RESULTS – GRAND FINAL

6	Senior Boys vs Marymede	0
Best on Ground: <b>Marcus Kotronis</b> Peer Award: <b>Patrick Sureda</b>		
3	Senior Boys (B) vs MacKillop	2
Peer Award: <b>Jake Grammenos</b>		
4	Senior Girls vs Emmanuel	3
Best on Ground: <b>Elle Onisiforou</b> Peer Award: <b>Alessia Di Berardino</b>		

# SACCSS Senior Basketball

## RESULTS – GRAND FINAL

52	Senior Girls vs Marymede	29
Best on Ground: <b>Maddi McGrotty</b>		
Peer Award: <b>Anna-Maria Constantin</b>		
48	Senior Boys vs CRC Sydenham	52
Peer Award: <b>Jordan Greenwood</b>		
45	Senior Boys 1B vs Emmanuel	55
Peer Award: <b>Michael Theochari</b>		

# SACCSS Athletics Competition

## INDIVIDUAL AWARDS:

13 Year Old Girl	16 Year Old Girl
<b>Bella Bernays</b>	<b>Grace Farah</b>
14 Year Old Girl	16 Year Old Boy
<b>Layla Dela Cruz</b>	<b>Jayden Inturrisi</b>
15 Year Old Girl	Senior Girl
<b>Indianna Cotsis</b>	<b>Stephanie Rozario</b>
15 Year Old Boy	Senior Boy
<b>Will Kengni</b>	<b>Grady Schroeter</b>

## SACCSS ATHLETICS RESULTS:

Junior	Intermediate	Senior
Girls – 1st	Girls – 1st	Girls – 1st
Boys – 2nd	Boys – 1st	Boys – 1st
Overall – 1st	Overall – 1st	Overall – 1st



## NEW SACCSS RECORDS:

- 15 Year Old Girls Shot Put – **Shanai Hale (SMC)** – 10.45m  
*(Previous 10.04m)*
- 14 Year Old Girls Long Jump – **Layla Dela Cruz-Smaldon (SMC)** – 5.17m  
*(previous 4.97m)*
- 13 Year Old Girls 4 x 100m Relay – **St Monica's College – Isabella Bernays, Maria Nomikos, Layla Habib, Phoenix Cotsis** – 56.49  
*(previous 56.90 — AND it was 36 years old!)*

## SACSS Intermediate Tennis Competition

Boys Singles Champion

**Joey Roney**

Boys Doubles A Champions

**Sucher Chavaan and Savio Younan**

Boys Doubles B Champions

**Alessio Scalpelli and Prithvi Bains**

Girls Singles Runner-up

**Khoma Kaushik**

Girls Doubles Runners-up

**Alexia Gerostathos and Isabella El-Darwich**

Mixed Doubles Runners-up

**Luke Spaseski and Mary Igbinovia**



## Counsellors – Wellbeing

### BODY IMAGE TIPS FOR PARENTS

Adolescents are highly receptive to the messages they receive from their parents about body image and appearance, often picking up on cues that parents may not even realise they are sending. As a parent, you have the power to shape how your child feels about their body and boost their self-esteem. Encouraging a positive body image not only helps your child feel confident in their appearance but also promotes a healthy relationship with food and exercise, reducing the risk of disordered eating and eating disorders.

This influence becomes especially important during adolescence, when concerns about appearance can lead to behaviours like skipping meals, avoiding bringing food to school, or refusing to eat in front of friends. While these habits may seem harmless initially, they can significantly impact both physical health and academic performance. Proper nutrition is essential for growing bodies and developing brains, and when adolescents do not get the nutrients they need, their concentration, energy levels, and overall mood can suffer. By fostering a healthy body image at home and addressing the underlying reasons for these behaviours, parents can support their child's overall well-being and long-term emotional and physical health.

The following Body Image Tips for Parents have been adapted from Butterfly on how to be a good body image role model for your child and the warning signs to look out for regarding body image concerns.

- 1. Reflect on your own relationship with your body:** This may not be easy but being aware of your attitude towards your own body will help you be conscious of the messages you send to your kids. Try to avoid looking in the mirror and making negative comments about the way you look. If your child sees that you feel comfortable and happy with your body, this can help them feel comfortable in their own skin.
- 2. Avoid talking about diets:** Dieting is the biggest risk factor for an eating disorder. Try to avoid talking about diets, your “naughty” eating habits, or your weight and size. This can give kids the impression that weight and size are highly valued by you and they might feel pressure to look a certain way or be a certain size. Celebrate diversity and emphasise how loved and valued your child is no matter what their weight, shape or size.
- 3. Talk to your child about the way they feel about the way they look:** Encourage your child to talk with you about their feelings. Create space to talk about things on a daily basis including what is happening with their friends. If your child feels safe to talk to you, then they are likely to share feelings about their bodies with you.
- 4. Help your child stay body confident when using social media:** Talk to your child about the realities of digital manipulation and that what they see in the media and online is not always real. Encourage them to reflect on how their social media experiences make them feel and if it is not positive then they need to change it up.

Despite best parenting efforts, serious body image issues and eating disorders do develop. It is important to recognise the warning signs of body dissatisfaction and low self-esteem as early as possible. There are certain cues you can pick up on in your child once you know what to look for.

- Withdrawal from social events and activities that they used to enjoy
- A focus on diets, calories, health and particular foods. They might talk about wanting to be healthier or fitter and become obsessive about checking the nutritional content of what they are eating
- They might become irritable or anxious around dinner time. They may refuse to eat certain foods or whole food groups
- Complaints about the way they look, e.g. “I am ugly” or “I am fat”, or negative comments about their abilities, e.g. “I am hopeless”
- Frequent self-scrutiny – such as weighing themselves or excessively looking at their reflection
- Change in clothing style such as wearing baggy or oversized clothing.

If you notice any of these signs in your child it is important to seek help as early as possible. You know your child best, so trust your instincts. If you are finding it hard to be accepting of your own body, remember it is never too late to seek help.

Butterfly can support you by calling the free and confidential National Helpline on

1800 ED HOPE (1800 33 4673) or email at [support@butterfly.org.au](mailto:support@butterfly.org.au)

**Oliver Jones, Isabella Gabriele, Nikita Rutland and Laura Guirguis**  
The College Counsellors

# Alumni

## LIFELONG FRIENDSHIPS

In 1967, four girls started at St Monica's in Year 7, their first year in the new campus, and not only did they remain friends until they left St Monica's in 1971, but they became and remain lifelong friends.

Marilyn Kearney (Renehan), Kerry McGuffie (McDonald), Suzanne Aisbett (Delbridge) and Anne Warmington (Eltringham) have been catching up regularly for lunch or dinner since leaving in 1971 and more recently getting together for a few days away together. They love reliving their school days at St Monica's and recalling their classmates. How incredibly special that they make this effort to stay connected and part of each other's lives, especially since they no longer all live in Melbourne.

These Monican friends went on to share the journey through life with each other; including further study, work, marriage, great careers, ten children and nineteen grandchildren between them. This year, these Monican alumnae turn seventy. A wonderful milestone and we wish them all a very Happy Birthday and best wishes always.



Weekend getaway at the old butter factory in Kyneton Victoria.  
Left to right: Marilyn Kearney (Renehan), Kerry McGuffie (McDonald),  
Suzanne Aisbett (Delbridge), Anne Warmington (Eltringham)



## ALUMNI GATHERING

The Diamond Jubilee Alumni and staff Gathering was held at the Dalton Road Campus on Sunday, 18 August and was a wonderful event and a resounding success.

Hundreds of alumni came together to celebrate sixty wonderful years of Monican education. Friends reunited to share stories, view archive displays, photos, uniforms and memorabilia, and reminisce about SMC. It was also an opportunity to tour the campus and enjoy a lovely afternoon tea and delightful melodies provided by alumna Rhea John (Class of 2021), Jay and Ian Samuel (Classes of 2005 and 1999).

Special thanks to the Alumni Committee who began planning and working on the event last year, the College Promotions and Events Team who did a wonderful job ensuring the day was a success and the Diamond Jubilee Committee who encouraged and supported our vision.

Perhaps the most significant part of the day was the warm atmosphere and the smiles on the faces of the staff and alumni in attendance and the many, many guests who commented that they were so glad they came. The afternoon was appreciated by so many Monicans and it was wonderful to see that every single one of our sixty years had alumni representatives attend the day.

Thank you to all those of you who joined us. It was wonderful to welcome you all back.

Monicans, both alumni and staff, you are the precious diamonds that make this Monican community so incredibly special to be a part of.

For those of you who missed the afternoon, we hope to see you at the Gala Dinner on 25 October.



1960s Group



1970s Group



1980s Group



1990s Group



2000s Group



2010s Group



2020s Group

## Alumni Gathering – Principal's Speech

Alumni, female and male, those from the original years and those most recent,

I welcome you in this Diamond Sixtieth Anniversary year to a function that celebrates your education and your identity as Monicans, whether your education at St Monica's College, Epping was during the era of leadership and stewardship of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan or if your years here were post that time within the past thirty-three years.

Be a student again and try to answer this question posed to you by Head Teacher, Hanley. What distinguishes the uniqueness of a person and informs others of their identity as a result?

For some, it is the wearing of a uniform, from the soldier to the nurse; from the lawyer in court to the tradie on site.

For others, it is the manner in which they dress, comb and color their hair, speak, laugh, prance around the room, or sit meekly in the corner.

Whatever, there is something distinguishable in almost everyone. So, what identifies you, alumni, as a Monican? Possible answers might include your shared memories; your nostalgic reminiscing about uniform colors and designs; teachers and Sisters you loved, loathed or feared; experiences you fondly remember; College Annuals you peruse from time to time.

On behalf of the past and present staff and the student Monicans of 2024 I contend that none of these matters sufficiently identify you. What does though is one clear reality – you shine like a diamond as a result of the education you received. All Monicans shine, past and present students. From the dream of one humble priest in East Reservoir parish to create a secondary Catholic College for girls in 1964 has emerged a distinguishing breed of people who have been sent out into the world, thousands upon thousands of human diamonds.

What an honor, how great an opportunity, so wonderful a life to be lived as a Monican diamond.

Now, the 2024 Monicans know they are diamonds for they are told that every day. For alumni, I need to tell you why being once a Monican, and thus always a Monican, is being a living diamond aglow.

Most importantly, you have been taught the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and that is not a lifestyle but a sacred blessing. Secondly, you have been educated in the spirit of Saint Benedict by the Sisters and since 1991 with the introduction of lay leadership an annual theme. What was your theme and how do you live it? Thirdly, you have been influenced in obvious and subtle ways what our current Decade of Truth at SMC calls, Kingdom Values – Peace, Forgiveness, Generosity, Humility, Compassion and Love of Neighbor (especially those hardest to love).

These experiences are the Monican diamond within you. A strength beyond all else, a vibrancy that sparkles and shines, a personal value so inestimable, a life embedded with a motto that calls you to pray and persevere.

Today, this College community of two thousand, two hundred students, four hundred and twenty staff, four campus sites, enrolment growth at a level never experienced before, a dream fulfilled, follows in your footsteps, stands on your shoulders, is inspired and enthused by all whose tradition and heritage as Monican we share.

Please enjoy this catching up with fellow diamonds, marvel at the College your alma mater is in this era, thank God, and share with us of today the confidence, and hope we hold for the future.

**Brian Hanley OAM**  
Principal



1964 - 2024

**DIAMOND  
JUBILEE**  
—  
*60 Years Young*

**ST MONICA'S  
COLLEGE,  
EPPING**

400 Dalton Road,  
Epping VIC 3076

9409 8800

admin@stmonicas-epping.com

www.stmonicas-epping.com

**1964  
—  
2024**