From the Principal

HSC Exams

HSC Exams concluded on Friday 11 November with Hospitality in the morning and Design & Technology in the afternoon.

Brutal, punishing and disheartening. That’s what year 12 maths students were served yesterday as they sat for their maths extension 1 HSC examination. The paper, taken by more than 9000 students across the state, was described by one maths teacher with more than 40 years’ experience as cruel and difficult. “I am appalled that an examination committee could set such a difficult paper which gives the competent student little chance to show what they know,” said Keith Hartmann, who has been the head of mathematics at several NSW schools.

“It continues a recent trend in HSC maths where the majority of questions are beyond the level of all but the most talented. Many students who have worked hard at this difficult course will leave their 13 years of school mathematics with a feeling of failure. The examiners should be ashamed of themselves. They are doing a disservice to mathematics education.” Mr Hartmann said, it was disheartening and discouraging to teachers and students who would feel little sense of achievement after two years of study. He predicted the average mark would be less than 50 per cent and said he would be writing to the Board of Studies to demand the release of students’ raw marks.

From Gary Borg,
Principal Mother Teresa Primary

A big thank you in allowing two of your student leaders James Younes and Mark Elias to speak at our New Parents Information Evening. They did a wonderful job and shared many insights into school life at Marist (they spoke very highly of PBL and the influence it has had on their learning!) They were very proud of their school and exemplified confident young men hoping to make a difference in the world. They did the school proud!

Many thanks to Mr Sullivan for coordinating and transporting the young men. I hope we will be able to continue to develop our relationship with the staff and students of Marist when we move to the Darcy Road site.

2012 Coordinator Appointments

Mr Kurt Challinor - Religious Education Coordinator
Mr Victor Hunt - HSIE Coordinator
Mr Anthony Blomfield - Maths Coordinator

Marist of the Year

Congratulations to Mrs Larraine Gudgeon who was awarded Marist of the Year at a school assembly on Tuesday 1st November. Mrs Gudgeon manages the canteen and this is a well deserved award.


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Br Patrick Howlett
Principal

Diary Dates for Term 4, 2011

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You can subscribe to the Parramatta Marist Newsletter - just go to the website www.parramarist.nsw.edu.au and click on the ‘Subscribe to our Newsletter’ tab. The newsletter will be emailed to you.
Marist Youth Forum

Matthew Elias and Anthony Younan of Year 11 attended the Marist Youth Forum on 7-9 October (last week of the October school holidays). The topic of the forum was social justice.

Anthony Younan  Matthew Elias

Snap Shot 2011

Congratulations to Dane Bracewell of Year 8 who entered the photography competition ‘Snap Shot 2011 Teenagers Photographic Prize’ and was one of 400 hundred entries from all over the world.

Dane’s work was selected to be exhibited at the Penrith Regional Gallery. The exhibition is still open and closes on 13 November. Well Done Dane!

Miss Mari
Creative Arts Teacher

From an Ex-Student

My name is Miles Stewart and I was a student of Parramatta Marist from 2001 to 2006. I enjoyed my time at Parramatta Marist. The education and teamwork I learnt here helped my application and soon afterwards acceptance into the Australian Defence Force as a Combat Engineer.

To date, I have been in the Australian Army for close to four years, and what an experience it has been! Travelling around Australia for different exercises and training courses is a big change from being in classrooms.

I am based at Holsworthy Barracks in Sydney for now, have recently finished my second promotion course for the title of Section Commander and will lead approximately 12 soldiers to normal day work or if deployed, to the battlefield.

Today I have returned to Marist and all the good memories come flooding back. For the students a message: study hard, do your best, but most of all enjoy your time at Parramatta Marist High School.

Miles Stewart  Ex-student

School Visits

On Wednesday 26th of October ten teachers from St Ignatius Riverview visited Parramatta Marist. Riverview were keen to experience the changes in classroom practice implemented at Marist and hopefully take back some innovative ideas. The focus of the day was to provide the teachers with a complete PBL experience. The first session involved a group of year 11 students releasing a problem to the teachers, then teasing out what they knew and did not know about the problem. This was definitely an enlightening experience for all teachers involved to have students challenge them in such an articulate way about the way they teach.

In the second session a group of student leaders gave the group a snapshot of the school and they were extremely impressed with the new sonic art room. In the third session, the group attended a variety of workshops facilitated by Marist staff on a number of different PBL elements. Finally, the Riverview teachers were required to present their key take away’s from the day and how they would attempt to solve the problem they received in the morning. Overall, the day was a great success and the students involved are to be commended on the way they articulated the benefits of PBL in their own context.

Feedback from attendees included:

• Thank you very much for the opportunity to visit your school and experience PBL. The day was really well set-up. There was real value involving students and offering site visits prior to teacher workshops as it provided the context and a point of reflection. Thank you to the wonderful staff for giving up their free time, much appreciated! Please let us know if we can assist you in any way.

• Came looking for new insight into how to incorporate how technology can be introduced to the classroom. I find looking at Cath Tech classes and programs are very helpful. Your professional presentations and running of the day were excellent. Thank you for your efforts.

• An excellent day with very good presenters. The students who talked and led us around were very impressive. Well organised day. Impressive school! My feeling just from today is that PBL has a place at Riverview...

• I would see it as a part option is the best model would be somewhere in-between this model and the traditional- i.e to use both models in our teaching. Overuse of either model would also lead the students being bored. Thank you for today.

• Great being able to talk to the students and have them as guides- as they are the products of the environment and were great advocates for the speaking skills that they obviously develop in these projects.

• Thanks- a very interesting day which gives me a lot to go away to consider. Great day- informative and thought provoking, structure of the day – very good, student presentation- impressive well mannered, polite and confident reflected the positive contribution of PBL.

Mr Hays
Senior PBL Coordinator
On 31 October the Years 8 and 9 Cricket Team went to Oakhill College to compete in the Berg Shield. It is a cricket knockout competition for catholic schools in NSW. A great sunny day, playing on a turf pitch was paradise for the team.

Parramatta Marist won the toss and elected to bowl. The team did very well after being 2-35 at drinks. The team kept the ball in good areas for the first 15 overs. As we walked back out on the field, the team knew that the opposition were going to start scoring fast. After two great run outs and four solid catches the team came back into the innings break feeling very confident. 9/76 was a great effort from the bowlers and all of the bowlers kept bowling tight.

After a solid start to the innings we lost two quick wickets, 2-30 at the 9 over mark. At half time of our innings the team was 2-51. Peter Broschofsky and Alan Phillip won the game for Parramatta Marist with a 46 run partnership.

Parramatta Marist finished off with 3/79 with six overs remaining. The team will play again in a few weeks with great confidence after a solid win in Round 1 of the Berg Shield.

Peter Broschofsky 9.3
Team Captain

After a slight delay, the Internal sports program kicks off again this week. Students have been able to select over 10 different sports online and form teams with their friends. This new system of selecting sports online gives the boys a wider variety of choice as well as being able to choose sports that they are interested in.

MCS summer sport is under way with five basketball teams and four cricket teams all competing in one of the strongest schoolboy competitions. Both students and coaches have been in training from the middle of term 3 and results so far have been promising.

Mr Scanlon
Sportsmaster

After 12 years of being Principal at Sacred Heart School, we are saying goodbye to Mrs Diane Katalinic.

Please join us as we honour her with Mass at Sacred Heart Parish Church on Friday 9 December 2011 at 7.00pm.

Please contact Rachael in the school office on Ph: 9635 1758 or email sacredheartwestmead@parra.catholic.edu.au for more details or to RSVP.
Dear Principal

On 4 August the Minister for Education, the Hon. Adrian Piccoli MP, announced that School Certificate tests would not continue beyond 2011.

The announcement represents the first step in a process to develop a new record of achievement for students who leave school before attaining their Higher School Certificate. The Minister has requested the Board undertake that process in consultation with teachers and the broader community.

In 2012 and beyond, there will be a new record of achievement. The formal title of this record of achievement is yet to be determined as are the details of how it will be implemented. Those details will be finalised in the course of the consultation process.

The consultation will be conducted from September 2011. It will include an online survey that will allow all teachers, parents, students and interested community members to have their say directly to the Board of Studies NSW.

In addition, teachers will be able to provide input to their representative bodies which, in turn, will be invited to participate in consultation meetings with the Board.

The new record of achievement will be finalised by the end of the 2011 calendar year. Please continue to monitor the Board Bulletin for progress reports.

Fundamental principles on which the new record of achievement will be based are outlined in the Board’s Discussion Paper <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/schoolcertificate/sc_review.html>.

In terms of planning for students currently in Year 10, or who will be entering Year 10 in 2012, it is important to note that:
- There are no changes to the current curriculum requirements.
- There are no changes to the requirements for accreditation or registration.
- School Certificate tests will take place in 2011 as per the published schedule.

This represents a great opportunity for teachers to be involved in crafting a new record of achievement, which reflects the future needs, and demands of students and employers.

Yours sincerely

Tom Alegounarias

President
22 August 2011