



ST THOMAS of CANTERBURY COLLEGE

NEWSLETTER

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SCHOOL MASS AND LEADERS' COMMISSIONING



The school's opening Mass was a great occasion where the leaders were commissioned by their parents and caregivers. It was an amazing Mass to start the year on a real positive note. Pictured here is our head boy, **Joshua Maclean** receiving his badge of office from his mother.

Dear Parents/Caregivers

Nau mai haere mai. Talofa lava. Malo e lelei.

I include today an extract from an address by **Dr Wayne Tinsey**, CEO of Edmund Rice Education Australia. He makes some superb observations about the purpose and nature of Catholic schools and, in particular, schools in the Edmund rice tradition.

I once heard 'pastoral care' being described as 'shared human-ness'. Isn't this akin what we are called to do most importantly as parents and educators? Most young people won't necessarily identify with us in the role of teacher, but they will relate to and be touched by adults who strive for wholeness in their own lives, albeit sometimes imperfectly.

We teach people not subjects! In the following Carl Jung refers specifically to teachers but we can broaden it to include all who work in education. He said:

An understanding heart is everything in a teacher, and cannot be esteemed highly enough. One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feeling. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child.

I don't think Jung is saying that it is an 'either or' situation. I think we all instinctively have the deepest sense of our vocation as significant adults in the lives of our children or students when we relate with them as human beings; as awkward, as messy but at the same time, as beautiful as this may be.

Excellence in Catholic education...

Last week I received a letter from a Brother asking what were the true values upon which our schools were operating. This was in response to an article which challenged the commitment of many Catholic schools to social justice and the pursuit of agendas broader than excellence in the academic and financial arenas.

I include the following extract from a talk I gave last year at several end of year functions. I hope that it highlights the broad understanding of excellence that we pray that our schools will embrace.

"Tonight we celebrate excellence and the wonderful achievements and talents of our students in 2008. Perhaps it is appropriate on such an

occasion that we reflect for a time on how we define and understand 'excellence' in our school and in our lives in general.

To make the Gospel real in college life, we struggle with important questions:

*What is celebrated in this school? What is not celebrated?
How are resources spent?
Which voices are listened to?
Who is welcomed? Who is excluded?
How are we defining success for our students?
What values are continually reinforced in our assemblies, bulletins and year books?
How is injustice challenged in this school?
How are the less able, the less articulate, and the less presentable cared for?*

Our college has some terrific facilities and a wonderful reputation. But let us not measure the excellence of our school only by its buildings, reputation or by its academic results. What really matters is you, the community of this college, your hearts, God's grace giving you life and hope, and your commitment to serve others and share this gift with the world!

Let me now speak for a moment to parents and teachers.

At times it seems that we run the risk of teaching everything in the world to our young, except the most essential thing: the essence of full, creative and lived humanity. So I believe that the guiding intent for all education should be humanization in the fullest sense of the word.

The education we prescribe for our young people should prepare them not only for a complex and changing world, but also how to relate to other human beings.

*What about happiness and enjoyment of living?
What about courage and the conquest of fear?
What about peace of mind, the ability to give and receive love?
What of confidence, self-respect and self discipline?
What about hope for the future and contentment in later years?*

Our example is so important. As a parent and an educator I am continually challenged by the words of Carl Jung. He said that: 'Nothing has a stronger influence psychologically on their children, than the un-lived life of their parents'.

We touch the future by the quality of guidance and formation we give to emerging generations. The ultimate exam we adults face is to live in a future

created by our own children. The kind of world they commit themselves to; will arise in no small part, from the quality of our example.

Parents sacrifice much to send their children to Catholic schools. I believe we do this because we want our children to receive an 'education', not merely attain a 'qualification'. Our kids will be only half educated unless they have acquired a sense of human dignity and worth, an appreciation of life, the knowledge of how to use their limited time wisely, and the determination to leave the world a better place for their having been in it.

And finally, I speak to all the students present this evening.

Your achievement and success of this College will not be measured by exam results and by university admission scores. The measure of our success will simply be this:

How well have we prepared you to meet the challenges to come?

How generous is your spirit?

How willing are you to embrace a future with less materialism but with more of what matters?

In whatever walk of life you find yourself, whether you walk a world stage or a more humble one, are you convinced that the only way forward for all of us is in a world dedicated to the common good over individual gain?

As parents and teachers, preparing you for what comes is the great work of our lives. If we have not convinced you of the absolute necessity of living a life for others then we have failed more than you – we have failed the future – and tomorrow will be a more dangerous place because of it.

I ask God to bless this college community in its efforts to be 'excellent' in the fullest sense of the word. My sincerest congratulations and best wishes as we all strive for this excellence through embracing our shared humanity and serving as our gifts allow."

Warm regards

Christine O'Brien
Principal

IMPORTANT DATES

13 – 17 December

18 “

19 “

N Z Rowing Championships

Wednesday sport begins

College Swimming Sports

FRENCH TUTOR

Do you know anyone who can tutor French to 3 Year 10 students working on a Correspondence School programme – **Tuesday, period 1, 8.50 – 9.40am.** The tutor will be paid for one hour's work per weekly session. Please contact **Stephanie Coster, Learning Support Leader, ph 348 7010, ext. 730.**

ILLEGAL PARKING OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Please do not stop on the yellow lines outside the school entrances. To do so is an offence and it is proving to be a safety issue for staff and visitors entering and leaving the driveways. Your co-operation please.

CLOTHING NAME TAPES

The majority of clothing worn by students at the College is not named and already we have a brand new blazer and jerseys missing. If you require name tapes to be made please phone / fax **Roger** or **Judy Newick, (03) 313 6741.** Prices are: **\$12** per three meters (approximately 50 names) or **\$14** with phone numbers. No charge for postage.

GREEN RECYCLING CRATES

If you have no further use for the green recycling crates we can make use of them at school.

We would really appreciate as many as possible. If you can help, please deliver them to the office.

STUDY ZONE

Our after school '**Study Zone**' commences in the Student Centre, Learning Support from **Monday 16 February 2009** (Week 3):

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday – 3.00pm – 4.00pm

Wednesday – 2.30pm – 3.30pm

1. All students are welcome to use this opportunity to complete homework and receive help if required.
2. A staff member and / or peer tutors (Yr 13 students) will be available to provide help.

PHYSIO

Balance Therapy runs sports injury clinics at St Thomas'. Your school therapist is **Sam Greenfield**. Sam has experience in musculoskeletal physiotherapy, sports physiotherapy and on field sports injury assessment. His special interests include management of young athletes, biomechanical analysis and exercise rehabilitation. Sam is at school from 1.00pm Mondays and Fridays. If your son has any aches or pains and wants to make an appointment or just come and have a chat, feel free to speak with Sam or make an appointment with Mrs Riley. We offer free physiotherapy for ACC related injuries.

NOTE FROM DISTRICT TRUANCY SERVICE: First Term 2009

This year your school has once again agreed to put a paragraph from the DTS in their newsletter once a term. This ensures that parents know we are in your area and can assist with any attendance problems you may have with your child. Your commitment in your child's education is a vital ingredient to their success, so it is important at this time of the year that you encourage them into a daily routine before bad habits creep in. Always remember "your children live up to or down to your expectations".

Pat Hay. Truancy Officer 9821865 0292004655 Scoolscool@xtra.co.nz

PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

The Annual General Meeting of the Parents and Friends Association will be held on **Monday 16 March 2008, at 7.30pm** at the College.



Buy a lapel pin today.

These very attractive St Thomas' lapel pins are only \$10.

These may be purchased from the College office or contact beth.clayton@xtra.co.nz

SEWING ALTERATIONS / REPAIR SERVICE

If your son's uniform is in need of repair (hems, pockets, cuffs, zips, braiding etc.) please phone **Mrs Jeannette Harper, ph 348-3362, fax 348-3398.**

LITURGY

Valentine's Day Liturgy – **Friday 13 February at 7.00pm, at The Cathedral, Barbadoes Street.** A time to reflect on the gift of love for one another in marriage. All welcome. A glass of celebratory bubbly to follow.

RUGBY

It's hard to believe that we have to be thinking rugby. As you will see from your son's 2009 Planner, registration will be on **Friday 6 March** between **5-7pm** in the **Brother Dowling Centre**.

This year it will be compulsory for all boys in the U14, U15, U16 and 2nds to purchase a rugby jersey.

U13 and U12 grades and all Primary School competition on a Thursday will be supplied with the old style jerseys.

With this in mind the subs for these teams has been reduced to \$20 and \$30 per family.

Press Cup Jerseys will be supplied. Fees for the Press Cup will be \$300. A costing of the 2008 season was done and it works out at approx \$740 per player for travel, accommodation, equipment and uniform. Families involved with the Press Cup will need to be involved in fund raising activities to make up the difference.

As usual we are always on the look out for coaches/managers and therefore ask that you contact Sue Riley if you have an interest in participating.

SCHOOL SWIMMING SPORTS

This annual event will once again be held at Halswell Pool on **Thursday 19 February**. The whole school will be bussed to and from Halswell and all students are asked to bring \$4.00 to cover the cost of this transport.

SPORT/PE PACKS

Unfortunately the tops have been delayed in China with Chinese New Year. The good news is the shorts have arrived and can be collected from Mrs Riley. If you have not yet ordered this compulsory pack of shorts, PE t-shirt and house singlet, please see Mrs Riley urgently to order.

OUR LADY OF VICTORIES SCHOOL FAIR

Sunday, 22 March 2009, 11am - 2pm Garage Sale goods are wanted i.e furniture, household items, bikes, toys, books etc and they can be left at container in the school grounds between 8.30am - 3.30pm weekdays, (No broken items, or clothes/shoes or old beds or old tv's). If dropping in the weekends, please **ph Katrina 3427935**.



Sports Trip Fund Raiser!



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