Dear Parents, Friends, Staff and Students,

“May God bless and protect you and make you the instrument of His glory.” CATHARINE MCAULEY

The enrolment process for Year 7, 2016 is now well underway. Wednesday 29th April was the Enrolment Interview evening at Catherine McAuley and prospective Year 7 students for 2016 were interviewed by our staff. Thank you to Ms Marina Kazzi and Ms Jacqui Hamilton who organised this important event and to the interviewing staff and student ambassadors on the night. Feedback from parents centred very much on how impressed they were with Catherine McAuley girls’ confidence and warm, friendly approach. First round offers will be made to successful applicants over the coming weeks. We have received applications well in excess of places and unsuccessful applicants will be informed by letter by the beginning of June and, where eligible, offered a place on our waiting list.

The Catherine McAuley Parents and Friends group met on Tuesday 5th May and as always it is wonderful to meet with such supportive and enthusiastic parents. Meetings are held once a term and all parents are most welcome. Please don’t hesitate to contact the school if you would like more information about our P&F group.

Congratulations to students who competed in the recent NSWCCC Swimming Carnival at SOPAC, Jasmine James-Howard (Year 7), Olivia Andree-Evarts, Ella Tauroa (Year 8), Kayla Hine (Year 10) and Nicola Watts (Year 12).

Sports Uniform: We are currently exploring ways to upgrade the school sports uniform and tracksuit for 2016. Any new items of uniform would only apply to incoming Year 7 students for 2016. I would be interested in any feedback from parents regarding our current sports uniform. Please make any suggestions and feedback by clicking on the following link: Click to access survey form

The month of May has traditionally been observed as the month of Mary, the Mother of Jesus and Mother of the church. Thank you to Ms Genevieve Banks our Religious Education Coordinator who has been leading staff and students in a Marian Prayer Group on Fridays in ‘Mary’s Garden’ which is a dedicated prayer space at Catherine McAuley. Staff and students also have the opportunity to attend Mass each Friday morning from 8:00am in our Mercy Chapel.

Regards

Ms Laetitia Richmond
Principal
This week, Mercy International Association has requested that our prayer intention be for those who are suffering persecution for their religious beliefs. The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom has released a report describing violations of religious freedom in more than 30 countries. Dr Katrina Lantos Swett, Chair of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom states:

“We are witnessing levels of persecution of ancient Christian communities of the Middle East at levels that are something that we have not seen, one could almost say, in millennia. It’s very disturbing and disheartening.”

We pray for the Christian communities in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Israel, and especially Iraq, facing rising persecution and intolerance from Muslim extremists. We pray also for other minorities and everyone suffering because of the violence of the Middle East.

During the Term 1 school holidays, I was privileged to have had the opportunity to be a pilgrim with fellow Religious Education Coordinators from the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta. We travelled to many amazing places which were associated with the life, ministry, death and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Our guides in Jordan and Israel were Christians, living in the birthplace of Christianity as a minority group. We were told that Nazareth, the town where Jesus grew up, was once a predominantly Christian town. Now very few Christians live in Nazareth. Christians in the Holy Land face many challenges.

I returned home to Australia with a profound sense of gratitude. As a woman in Australia I am free to practice my religious beliefs. I will not be denied education because of my gender and am free to pursue further studies at university. I am entitled to vote and cannot be silenced or ignored because I am female. During pregnancy and childbirth I was supported by well-trained and qualified medical experts. I enjoy these freedoms and rights because past generations have advocated strongly for equality.

Mother Catherine McAuley saw the plight of the poor and vulnerable woman and children of Dublin. She knew that education was vital if their standard of living was to improve. She also knew that because of the harsh penal laws many Irish people had much to learn about their Catholic faith. Just as Mother Catherine McAuley was challenged in her lifetime to assist those in need, we must support those who require assistance in today’s world. We should never underestimate the power of prayer.

Ms Genevieve Banks
Religious Education Coordinator
Study Skills Tip

It’s All About Attitude

When students start secondary school they are usually very positive and optimistic about school. Then things can start to get harder, a bit more challenging, maybe they get a bad mark and become discouraged or maybe their friends start to influence their attitude. Some students are able to overcome these challenges, while others let it affect their attitude and application to school.

Take the time to determine reasons to put in effort into your schoolwork.

Think about which of the following reasons might be motivating for you:

- To achieve the best mark you are capable of at school.
- To give you lots of options for what subjects you can choose in the senior years.
- To give you lots of options of what you can choose to do when you leave school.
- To have a personal sense of satisfaction about doing your best.
- To show your gratitude to your parents for giving you an education.
- To avoid getting in trouble from your teachers.
- To avoid getting in trouble from your parents.
- To avoid getting a detention or other negative consequences from not working.
- To avoid disappointing your parents.
- So you don’t feel bad about wasting your parent’s time and money giving you an education.

We often talk about ‘carrot’ and ‘stick’ people. If you want a donkey to move forward, you can either lead it forward with a carrot (a reward) or whack it with a stick (punishment).

Some students are motivated by working towards rewards, positive consequences of doing the right thing, while others are motivated to avoid negative consequences. Which do you think you are?

Understanding what motivates you and what affects your attitude can make it easier for you to make positive changes.

Learn more this year about how to motivate yourself and deal with distractions and procrastination by working through the units on www.studyskillshandbook.com.au. Our school’s access details are: Username: McAuley Password:189results

Ms Debbie Grigson
Assistant Principal
(Pastoral Care/Administration)

Mercy in Action News

Mercy in Action Students Visit Nursing Home

Our MAG students (Mercy in Action Group) visited Cabrini Nursing Home, Westmead last week as part of their twice a term visits. The students sat with the residents during a special Mother’s Day concert and helped hand out red roses to the female residents.

MAG students visiting residents at Cabrini Nursing Home.
Clare and Dobson Houses held a Mother’s Day Stall this month to raise money for Mercy Works. The students enjoyed buying gifts for their mother's and over $1500 was raised for educational programs in Timor Leste. Both Clare and Dobson have further fundraising activities coming up this term so we will keep you posted!

Mrs Maria Ekde
Dobson House Patron

Year 10 Students Participate in Peer Education Program

On Friday 8th May, Year 10 PASS students were involved in the Students As Life Style Activists Program, or SALSA, which is a unique peer education program for students to increase physical activity and improve nutritional intake. SALSA is a partnership project with the Mt Druitt Medical Practitioner’s Association, Sydney University, the Western Sydney Health District and Rooty Hill High School.

SALSA educators (university students) trained our Year 10 students to be peer leaders for the program in a one-day workshop. Our Year 10 students will now use their acquired skills in facilitation and leadership to teach Year 8 students about the importance of physical activity and nutrition which will take place over four lessons.

Mrs Jessica Muggleton
PDHPE Teacher
Our Year 7 students are about to embark on a film making project as part of their Project 21 course. The Mercy Day Short Film Festival, or MERCYFEST 2015, will see Year 7 students in groups of four script, film, produce and edit a film which must tell a story about how mercy makes a difference to the world.

Project 21 is a new course our Year 7 students are undertaking this year to integrate information technology and project based learning into their studies. It is designed to develop a deeper thinking in our students. During Term 1 the students focused on ‘keys to successful learning’ whilst during Term 2 the students will work with iMovie as they produce their short film.

The films must be four minutes in length, include the MERCYFEST 2015 signature item of a tea cup and tell the story about how mercy makes a difference to the world focusing on either a) the work of Catherine McAuley, b) the Sisters of Mercy and their work to support people in need or c) mercy in action at Catherine McAuley Westmead.

Once all films have been completed each House will nominate one finalist and all seven finalists will be uploaded to the school Facebook Page where parents, students and staff will be able to vote for their favourite film. The winner will be announced on Mercy Day.

On Monday 11th May MERCYFEST 2015 was launched to the Year 7 students. The students spent some time listening to guest speakers, including our student Social Justice Leaders, speak about social justice at the school. They also listened to a presentation given by Ms Margaret Coulter from Mercy Works who spoke about the many social justice projects which Mercy Works is involved in.
Congratulations to our school debating teams who have been performing well in the CSDA Debating Competition which takes place each Friday night. There have been four rounds so far and our students have been performing well.

Round 1: Wins from Year 10 and Year 12
Round 2: Wins from Year 7 and Year 11
Round 3: Wins from Year 7, Year 8, Year 10 and Year 11
Round 4: Win from Year 11

So far our Year 11 Team have won three out of four rounds and are now on their way to the elimination rounds of the debate - they just need to win one or two of the next two rounds.

We wish our debating teams all the best with the rest of the competition.

Year 12 Geography Visit Cockatoo Island

The Year 12 Geography class travelled to Cockatoo Island this month to investigate the urban dynamics of urban decay and urban renewal. The past uses of Cockatoo Island as a convict prison, shipyard and naval dockyard were compared to the current day uses as art studios, camping ground, accommodation in renovated old buildings and more recently as the film setting for ‘Unbroken’.

While travelling on the rivercat from Parramatta to Cockatoo Island the changing nature of land use along the Parramatta River was observed. Where there were once factories are now townhouses and apartments, all developed as part of urban consolidation in Sydney.

Mr Mick Otter
HSIE - Social Science Coordinator
Senior Dance Students Work With Leading Choreographer

Senior Dance students attended an incursion earlier this month with leading choreographer Sue Healey. Our school hosted the incursion in the Morley Centre where they were joined by other dance students in the diocese. The incursion was organised by Captivate. Dance Teacher Ms Karin Smith has written the below report:

The Year 12 Dance Elective students and I had an experience to remember earlier this month as we were able to have an in-depth conversation about the HSC prescribed piece, ‘Fine Line’, with the choreographer Sue Healey herself. Year 12 students are familiar with Sue Healey’s work, as her famous dance film ‘Fine Line’ is one of the prescribed dance pieces that HSC students study and analyse for their HSC Core Appreciation exams.

Sue Healey spoke gracefully about her work and then walked our McAuley students and students from other high schools through exercises that she had undergone with her dancers. Students were lead through choreographic tasks exploring different aspects of space and how we relate to our environment. Students were then taught a movement phrase which explores the use of linear lines and personal space. They were then given the task to create a set for a group by using white string to house their dance environment. This is a choreographic method which Sue Healey uses in her work ‘Fine Line’. Students then performed their group pieces.

Following the practical workshops students took part in a theory appreciation and analysis session with Sue where she showed video footage of her works and led students through an in-depth analysis of her work ‘Fine Line’. The day concluded with a question and answer session.

This incursion allowed us to experience true composition and manipulation in dance. It was a rewarding opportunity that will assist in our dance education.

Ms Karin Smith
Dance Teacher

Dance Students Attend Workshop With Contemporary Dance Artist

On Friday 1st May, Year 9 and 10 Elective Dance students went on an excursion to Connect Dance Studios, Parramatta to participate in a workshop hosted and taught by Raghav Handa. Mr Handa is the choreographer and performer of Tukre, which means ‘Pieces’ in Hindi, and which is currently showing at Parramatta Riverside Theatre.

His dance work represents and explores how lineage and rites of passage transcend borders. He creates a memory map of his heritage and history through his music and dance. Mr Handa dances to show how his personal history is passed down through bloodlines and ancient traditions.

During the workshop we worked on his style of composition which is using circular and linear motion. We also explored the ranges of motion and quality of movement that we can achieve by improvising and learnt from his expression and techniques.

Following the workshop we went to Parramatta Riverside Theatre to watch the performance of Tukre. It was a very inspiring and majestic performance to watch, rich with cultural props and knowledge of his ancestral past, in which he dances to express his life. It was a very enjoyable and memorable day with opportunities that not many people get to experience.

Bianca Hu
Year 10 Dance Student
On Monday 4th May we had five students represented PDSSSC at the NSWCCC Swimming Carnival at The Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre, Homebush. Jasmine James Howar, Year 7, Olivia Andree- Evarts, Year 8, Ella Tauroa, Year 8, Kayla Hine, Year 10 and Nicola Watts, Year 12. They all swam extremely well and three have gained a place in the NSWCCC Swimming Team and will compete on the 18th May at the NSW All School Swimming Carnival. Congratulations to these girls.

On Tuesday 5th May we had around 20 students from Years 7 - 12 represent Catherine McAuley at the PDSSSC Cross Country Carnival held at Eastern Creek Raceway. It was an extremely hot day but all girls raced well and gave their all. We are fortunate enough to have four students go through to represent PDSSSC at the NSW CCC Cross Country Carnival which will be held on 12th June also at Eastern Creek. These students are Jasmine James-Howard, Year 7, Olivia Morales, Year 7, Sinead Elliott, Year 8 and Maddi Finch, Year 12. Congratulations to these girls.

The Oceania Athletics Championships were held from 8th - 10th May in Cairns. This is a competition that hosts elite athletes from various countries in the Oceania region. Emily Rotunno, Year 10 represented Australia at these games in the event of Hammerthrow. She was out thrown on the last attempt which meant she came in 2nd with a final distance of 53.71m. This is a massive achievement for Emily as she had just completed her Year 11 half yearly exams then jumped on a plane to compete at an international level. This silver medal has pushed Emily to keep training hard and strive for a gold medal at her next meet.

Ms Brooke Robson
Sports Coordinator
Canteen Assistant Required

4 hours per day, 10:00am - 2:30pm
Days Negotiable
Prior experience is essential,
Please provide a brief resume, including at least two referees,
to Ms Lisa Lane, Canteen Manager,
or email llane@parra.catholic.edu.au

NEPAL EARTHQUAKE APPEAL

On 25 April 2015, a 7.9 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal between Kathmandu and Pokhara. The devastation in Kathmandu is immense, and communities across India and Bangladesh have also been affected. The Nepal government announced that there have been more than 7,900 deaths reported, and it is estimated more than eight million people have been affected.

As emergency relief operations were taking place, a second earthquake of 7.3 magnitudes struck Nepal on 12 May 2015. With more than 540,000 homes already destroyed or severely damaged, shelter remains a vital priority.

Over 39 of Nepal's 75 districts have been affected by the earthquakes. Caritas Australia staff are currently on the ground and working alongside Caritas Nepal to coordinate the emergency response, which will include providing emergency shelter, food, water and hygiene kits.

"It was the worst earthquake I have ever experienced in my life. Lots of houses have fallen down and there are lots with cracks. Thank God it was during the day and on a holiday as many people were outside when the quake happened." - Fr Pius Perumana, Caritas Nepal Director - after the 25th April earthquake.

"You could see the sway of the three story building, the ground rocked like we were out in a large ocean swell, which made it difficult to reach the evacuation point." - Melville Fernandez, Caritas Australia Humanitarian Manager - after the 12th May earthquake.

Catherine McAuley is responding to the devastation in Nepal through prayerful support and a bucket collection. The appeal starts Monday 18th May 2015. Each lunchtime students will move through the playground collecting loose change from students. In Homeroom on Monday students will view a powerpoint provided by Caritas Australia on the facts relating to the impact of the earthquake. On Tuesday the SRC will led their Homeroom in a special prayer for Nepal and on Friday at our 8:10am mass in the Chapel we will pray especially for the people of Nepal.

All money raised by Catherine McAuley will be donated to Caritas Australia. Your donation will allow Caritas Australia to respond to immediate needs such as shelter, clean water and home necessities such as cooking kits, while also supporting the long-term recovery work as communities rebuild their lives and livelihoods in Nepal and the wider region.