



Thursday 16th April 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Re: COVID-19 Update No 7.

(COVID-19 Update No. 8 will be emailed during the week beginning Monday 20th April)

Please be aware until further notice the College Office will close at 4.00pm.



*Gracious God,
Give us ears to hear;
Eyes to see;
Hearts to love;
And hands to act;
So that 'we are shining lamps, giving light to all around us.'
Amen*

Term Two is Underway.

Will our initial move to remote learning be perfect? No. Will there be issues? Yes. Will there be times of frustration and raised stress levels? Yes, we are human. Will our collective resilience get us through Term 2? Most definitely and our students have the capacity to be more resilient than we give them credit for. We have remote learning – the glass is half full. Together we will make remote learning experience a valuable one.

Week One and Two

Please be aware that students F-10 are working on the school work sent home that has been in recent Covid-19 Updates. This work was planned in Week 9 of Term One because at that time there was no decision as to the possibility of when remote learning would begin and staff had less than three days to organise and prepare work for these two weeks. Interactivity between school and home is happening at a very fast rate. Students are consuming their work quickly, which is terrific. Staff are aware of this and providing more appropriate work as needed before we revert to the Week 3 structure. *You will receive early next week information on daily/weekly timetables; class routines & structures; communications; curriculum time expectations and more, so that as from Week 3 the home (school) diary will be clear as to how each week will look – structure and routine are important.* Please be aware that learning at home is different from remote learning at school. An obvious statement I know, but importantly students will need breaks but still require routine and structure.



IT Support

Surveys have been completed; Mrs Melville has done a sterling job to put all the pieces of the puzzle together in considering the IT support needed at home for families who have limited connectivity and or devices. There have been announcements by the Victorian State Government that all students will receive access to a device. This announcement on devices was for State school students, and not for Catholic schools, as non-government schools are primarily funded by the federal government and parent fee contributions, hence we are doing our best to ensure there is support for families. In addition to our classroom Chromebooks 40 Chromebooks have arrived today that were sourced from a Melbourne outlet and will be loaned for remote learning. We are waiting on confirmation of Telstra supported connectivity for families who live in black spots and or do not have connectivity. Parents have been emailed of the day/time to collect the devices.

Absent from School

If you child(ren) is sick on any day please use the normal procedures for informing the Office so the class teacher(s) is informed.



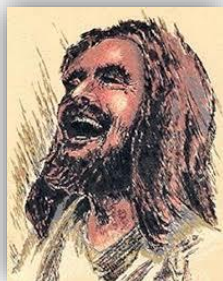
Thank you for your Kindness – Your Generosity

St Mary's received a phone call late yesterday from Nicky Keating of Addelston Estate. The Estate has donated a substantial amount to the College towards the purchase of our 40 *Chromebooks* for remote learning. How generous this donation is and this kindness shows the spirit of God comes in different ways and forms, but often out of the blue and when most needed. Our sincere thanks to Nicky and the Estate for being so gracious in wanting to help St Mary's.



Thank you for Generosity of Spirit

Many thanks to the parents who have dropped off morning tea and or other eats to keep the energy levels of staff going. The midnight oil has been burning brightly for staff well and truly since last term and since the initial announcements of movement to remote learning.



The Marian Term 2

The Marian will revert to weekly this term (as from Week 3) so that College connection is frequent. The Marian we hope will be full of positive snapshots of life in remote learning land. So please send any photos; funny stories and points of interest to marian@smseymour.catholic.edu.au. It is important for the College community to connect and to have a few laughs amidst the current lifestyle changes. College Counsellor (Mel Nuttall) will contribute weekly to the Marian.



The Vocation of Our Staff

Schools can often be the topic of conversation at a BBQ, social function and alike, which is all good. Now days social media can also be a positive conversation forum – excluding the famous key board warrior. I can say with some knowledge on the subject that the teaching and non-teaching professions are a vocation....more than a job and we influence and change lives. Outside of the most important influence in any child's life (their parents), so often it is the teacher or non-teaching staff member who inspired a

child, a teenager, a young adult to achieve greatness. The staff at St Mary's like any other school are working double time at present. There are no complaints because we're all in this together. God bless our staff!

Everyone's resilience will be tested over the oncoming months. We do not need to be rocket scientists to know that we (teachers, parents and students) would prefer life to get back to normality, especially for the academic; social and emotional wellbeing of all. BUT remote learning (as designated by the government and CECV Criteria) is what we must do Australia wide in this moment in our history if we want to get back to normality. If it requires a school term of remote learning to help control the spread of Covid-19 then that is what is to happen. It only takes the innocent actions of one person to cause business; health care and other vital work places along with hundreds more to be required to isolate. The fruits of our labour can be seen in that if we social distance and where possible isolate, the curve will and is flattening. BUT we cannot be complacent.

In most walks of life at the present time for most of us our emotions are heightened, people are stressed, worried and most are out of kilter – all completely understandable. My thoughts are often with those

parents on the frontline in hospital and particularly working in acute medical care! If you are frustrated; worried; not coping then please feel free to contact me. If you need to vent, then vent to me. Everyone is struggling and St Mary's College staff are doing outstanding work and to our very utmost to support all families and students. As my 91 year old father said to me on the phone during the week, *"Do you have a job and are you well?"*thanks for the reminder dad.



Google Classroom

This link provides you with the steps for students to join a meet.google.com session with the class teacher. This is the video linked forum that teachers will use with students and classes. Our thanks to Glenn Stead (ICT Support) for putting this guide together. <https://sites.google.com/smseymour.catholic.edu.au/ictknowledge-base/video-conferencing-meet-google-com>

Secondary Morning Greeting

The message below was emailed to Year 7-10 students before school Wednesday to welcome the secondary students back to Term Two. The secondary students did not receive the group email due to email groups needing to be updated. It would be appreciated if parents could please show your secondary child(ren). The email issue has been fixed and secondary students have received today's greeting.

Morning Year 10 to 7.

Our College Prayer

Gracious God,

Give us ears to hear;

Eyes to see;

Hearts to love;

And hands to act;

So that 'we are shining lamps, giving light to all around us.'

Amen

If we think back to last term, none of us would have thought remote learning would be on for Term 2. It is different but we will all succeed. You have the work for Week 1 and Week 2. It is not your normal weekly workload because at the time of organising this work (three days before the start of the holidays) no one knew if Term 2 would begin on time. So Week 1 and Week 2 is set at about 50% of your usual work and as from Week 3 you will get back to normal.

*These learning activities are not 'fillers' or 'busy' work and will need to be submitted as per teacher instruction via **SIMON**.*

*There will be and already there is teacher/class face to face contact happening, which is important. and **next week your parents and you will receive the routine and structure for the term.***

We teachers and your parents are going to rely on you to step up and take responsibility for your learning.....words we so often talk about at school. Australia wide students will be remote learning.....we all need to do our bit to ensure Covid-19 becomes a distant memory.

Stay well and stay connected.

Mr Smith

PS You are welcome to email me to let me know how you are going. Go the Hawks!



Best wishes and stay well.

Wayne Smith

Principal

DipEd(ACU) DipRed(ACU) BEd(ACU) GradCertEdAdmin(Edith Cowan)

GradDipRed(ACU) MEdAdmin(Charles Sturt) MTheoSudies(BBITAITE)

PS. Rosey the Wombat's Reading Time begins tomorrow. Rosey has an exciting competition to announce to the students F-10!

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