St Mary
Star of the Sea College
I AM BORN FOR HIGHER THINGS

Newsletter



FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Friday, 6 November 2026

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Do you have a hero? Have you ever had a hero? Someone you admire because of their gifts and talents, their skills or their considerable achievements? Or someone who inspires you because of their goodness; their kindness and generosity towards others, their unyielding sense of justice and compassion, their solidarity with the poor, the marginalised and the disadvantaged, their integrity? For many of our young people, heroes are often found in the form of sporting stars, pop stars or stars of stage, screen or TV, even influencers on social media. I wonder how many of us, our students included, find inspiration in people who ***are*** good and who ***do*** good rather than those who are privileged to be born with a particular unique talent or gift but who ostensibly, use that gift for their own benefit. I wonder how many of the people we look up to are actually equipped with the personal qualities, intelligence and wisdom to ***be*** the heroes they are to so many.

Last Sunday, we celebrated All Saints Day. There is likely an irrelevance to the daily lives of our young people about the significance of All Saints Day. I know. Overwhelmingly, the distraction of Halloween will have completely swamped any attention to All Saints Day. But at the risk of sounding irrelevant, I wonder if there is even something worthy of reflection about All Saints Day. At one level, the idea of '*Saints'* can present as remote or other worldly. But are they that? The thing about Saints is that once, they were ordinary people but living extraordinary lives. Not magicians. Not perfect. Just ordinary people living extraordinary lives. For me, the worthy reflection of All Saints Day is that we can find comfort and inspiration in the simplicity of the goodness of the lives of ordinary people around us. That has been my experience of people and life. It remains so. I have lived with, known and worked with people who inspire me every day to be better. People who are content with what they have rather than dissatisfied for what they have not. People who raise others up, who build relationships and community through their optimism, their kindness, their compassion, their gentle understanding, the warmth of their smile. People who struggle through personal suffering; grief, loss, disappointment, relationships and yet who still find a way to endure happily and with hope. None of these people will be canonised as Saints. But that is *what* Saints are. That is *who* Saints are. I know who the Saints have been in my life and I know who they are now. They are both gift and inspiration. I wonder if our young people know where to look for the Saints in their own life. Maybe it is worthy of reflection.

We remember all who have travelled the road of life with us,
and whose lives have touched us deeply.
God of the journey hear our prayer.

We give thanks for the gift of family members,
and for all they passed over from their lives to ours.
God of abundance hear us.

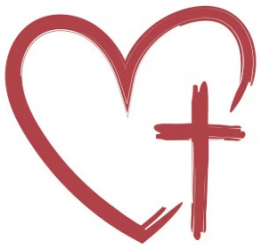
We remember the many people,
who are hearing difficult news this day.
Those who are living in dangerous or hurtful situations,
and those who are grieving the loss of a loved one.
God of strength and protection hear us.

Let us pause for our own private remembrance.

Warm regards,

Tony Fitzgerald
Principal

PRAYER – YEAR OF DISCERNMENT



Wondrous God, ever ancient, ever new.
We stand at a threshold; a God-moment
in which past graces and future possibilities fuse
into the gift that is now.
In this heart-space of time reveal to us what is possible.
May our discernment and actions
emanate always from the example of Christ's self-giving Love
challenging, true, human and holy.
Amen.

Benedictine Pilgrimage journal

UPCOMING COLLEGE EVENTS

Please refer to the College calendar and each Year Group calendar in the College App for more details of additional events over the coming weeks.

Term 4	
Week 5	• Year 11 English Extension 2 – English Teachers Association HSC Study Day at University of Sydney Business School – Monday 9 November • Year 9 Digital Media Excursion to Wollongong Beach and surrounds – Monday 9 November and Tuesday 10 November during class time • Climate FRESK Excursion to Canva Space, Surry Hills – Monday 9 November • HSC Modern History Excursion to Central Synagogue, Bondi – Tuesday 10 November • **Year 9 Activity and Reflection Days – Tuesday 10 November and Wednesday 11 November** • Community Service Lighthouse Church – Tuesday 10 November • **P&F Meeting – Tuesday 10 November** • Year 12 Formal set up Excursion – Wednesday 11 November • Horizon/Year Meeting – Wednesday 11 November • Community Service Warrigal Care – Wednesday 11 November • **Year 12 Formal – Wednesday 11 November** • Striving Stars in the PLC – Thursday 12 November • Year 11 Society and Culture PIP Prep at Wollongong City Library – Thursday 12 November • **Stars by the Sea Showcase in the SGN Hall – Thursday 12 November** • Year 11 Friday morning Pilates session in the Gymnasium – Friday 13 November

	• College Student Briefing in the SGN Hall – Friday 13 November • Year 7.3 Science Excursion to Wollongong Beach and surrounds – Friday 13 November • HSC History Extension Symposium at UOW – Friday 13 November
Week 6	• Year 9 Catechist Training – Monday 16 November • **FIX Event – Tuesday 17 November** • Community Service Lighthouse Church – Tuesday 17 November • First Nations Students – On Country Cultural Experience at Killalea State Park – Wednesday 18 November • **College Assembly – Wednesday 18 November** • Year 10 – Style Lab Wollongong – Explore Pathways in Hairdressing at TAFE NSW – Wednesday 18 November • Year 7.1 Science Excursion to Wollongong Beach and surrounds – Wednesday 18 November • Community Service Warrigal Care – Wednesday 18 November • **Principals Award presentation in the SGN Hall – Thursday 19 November** • House Debating Competition – Thursday 19 November • Year 10 Together for Humanity Incursion in the SGN Hall – Thursday 19 November • Striving Stars – Thursday 19 November • Year 11 Friday Morning Pilates session in the Gymnasium – Friday 20 November • Year Meetings – Friday 20 November • Year 7.6 Science Excursion to Wollongong Beach and surrounds – Friday 20 November

STAFF CHANGES FOR TERM 4

The following staff will be away during Term 4:

- **Mr Woolnough** will be on leave from Week 5 to the end of Term 4. **Ms Vidal** will be **Acting Assistant Principal - Administration** during this time**.**
- **Ms Kendell** will be on leave from Week 6 to the end of Term 4. **Ms Musolino** will be **Acting Data and Reports Coordinator** during this time. Ms Kendell's classes will be covered by **Ms Surreau.**

SAVE THE DATE – YEARS 7 TO 10 ACHIEVEMENT ASSEMBLY

Please note that the Years 7 to 10 Achievement Assembly will be held on **Thursday 10 December 2026** in the SGN Hall from 9am to 11am.



As prize lists are finalised parents/guardians of students receiving awards will be notified.

The two main awards that are presented during this assembly are Academic Honour and the Application Award. Criteria for these awards is included below.

ACADEMIC HONOURS

This is awarded on a per subject basis to the top 5% of the course.

Students who receive this award have demonstrated extensive knowledge of content and understanding of course concepts, and apply highly developed skills and processes in a wide variety of contexts.

To receive Academic Honours, students must have maintained consistent grades in a range of both formative and summative tasks throughout the year.

APPLICATION AWARD

Students who receive this award are required to be nominated across a number of subjects. To be eligible a student's Application to Learning report marks must also support this.

Criteria

- Completes classwork/homework
- Consistent effort throughout the year
- Positive involvement in class and group work
- Is punctual, reliable, organised and cooperative
- Works to her potential

STARS BY THE SEA

Celebrate an evening of creativity, collaboration and performance at Stars by the Sea 2026.

Featuring our talented St Mary's students across Dance, Drama and Music, Stars by the Sea brings our performers and ensembles together for a vibrant showcase of the Performing Arts.

We warmly invite parents and guardians, families, friends and members of our wider College community to join us in the SGN Hall and enjoy a wonderful evening of student talent.



HELP CREATE SAFER ROUTES TO SCHOOL FOR OUR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Wollongong City Council is working to make journeys to and from the College safer and easier. To do this, Council has created a draft Safer Routes to School report that includes a number of recommendations. Please click on the following link – Wollongong City Council - Draft Report

The Council has invited you to share your feedback by completing an on-line survey:
St Mary's Star of the Sea College - Safer Routes to School - Wollongong City Council