

A WORD FROM OUR CEO/PRINCIPAL

Dear Friends,

Welcome to this first edition of Matters for 2011. As always it has been a busy start to the year at Mater Dei. While our new school building moves towards completion, it has not been ready for the students to occupy during term one. This has caused some inconvenience but under the leadership of an extremely accommodating, supportive and optimistic staff, the students have adjusted remarkably well to temporary classrooms.

On more positive news, our new hall has been ready to occupy and is already proving to be a wonderful resource for our students. We are indebted to the many friends and supporters of Mater Dei and especially the Mater Dei Foundation for the quality of finish on the new hall.

The news that St Benedict's Catholic College would discontinue plans to build the new Catholic systemic high school adjacent to our school came as a great disappointment to all in our community. We wish Principal Michael Hanratty and his community all the very best as they look to establish their school in a different location and hope

that at some point in the not too distant future we may still establish a close relationship with St Benedict's.

Following a restructure of our Living Skills Program and Bethany Early Intervention Service at the end of 2010, each program has commenced the new year with renewed vitality and purpose. Pamela Templeton has moved from her previous role as Assistant Principal to the newly created position of Director of Services. Pamela is now responsible for both the Mater Dei Living Skills Program and the Mater Dei Early Intervention Program. We are also delighted to welcome Simone Radman, Speech Pathologist, to the Early Intervention team. Pamela's experience, knowledge, professionalism and personality have already made a significant impact on each program. With the support of staff in both Early Intervention and Living Skills, I am optimistic about the future of these programs and the quality of opportunities we may continue to offer the children and families who access each program.

Sam Giles was appointed Assistant Principal to replace Pamela and

likewise, Sam has already made a significant contribution to the daily life of our school. We also welcomed Alison Meani as our new Secondary Coordinator and Andre Daniels, on twelve months secondment from the Catholic Education Office. We are extremely fortunate to have such a competent, dedicated and caring staff who are so well led by their respective Program Managers. We look forward to sharing the fruits of their work with the students with those of you who are able to join us for various occasions throughout the year.

Our annual swimming carnival at Mount Annan leisure centre, the Mater Dei Golf Day, distribution of **PEACE EGGS** and a visit to Mater Dei by Cardinal Pell have been some of the highlights of Term One at Mater Dei. All of this of course will be trumped by our move into our new building at the beginning of Term Two. I look forward to sharing this occasion with you.

Tony Fitzgerald

To view pictures of any events mentioned in this issue of Matters, visit our galleries at www.materdei.org.au