



CEO/Principal's Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

The final newsletter for 2011 comes of course during Advent, a graced time of waiting in hope for the birth of Christ. In a world where the 'instant' is highly prized— instant food, instant service, instant reply, instant response, instant gratification—the season of Advent reminds us of the grace that comes with patient and contemplative waiting. It is perhaps a time to give consideration to re-ordering our lives' priorities in order to reflect a commitment to the true meaning of Christmas, that is the hope and promise that inspires our lives from the birth of Christ.

It has been quite an inspiring end to our school year at Mater Dei. Our inaugural Performing Arts Night last Friday was spectacular in so many ways—the achievements and performances of the students, the inspiring support of the whole of the Mater Dei staff and the spirit of pride and joy the evening generated. Thank you to all who were involved in contributing in some way to the wonderful success of the night. A particular thanks to Mr Andre Daniels for his enthusiastic, creative and competent leadership of staff and students.

On Friday morning at our end of year Mass and Secondary presentation, we will farewell our Year 12 students who will be leaving Mater Dei. They go with our prayers and best wishes and an invitation to always feel welcome. The year 12 students who are leaving Mater Dei are:- Jacqueline Adam, Fergus Mackinnon, Alicia Brylewski, Elizabeth Cross, Lily Dobson, Kate Feeney, Dearnna Fisher, Amy Henderson-Smith, Joseph Marando, Rebecca Rodrigues.

In farewelling our year 12 students, it is timely to acknowledge and thank the staff who have worked with our senior classes throughout 2011:- Mrs Alison Meani, Mrs Donna Dunstan, Mrs Glynis Patrick and Mrs Coleen Merlino. Each in their own way has been a wonderful role model and teacher to the students.

We will also announce at Mass the recipient of the 2011 Peace Prize, Alicia Brylewski. Alicia is a thoroughly worthy recipient of this important prize in the life of our community and everyone joins with me in congratulating Alicia and thanking her for the contribution she has made to our community.

Congratulations also go to our school leaders for 2012:-

Secondary House Captains—Laura Gow, John Zarzour, Jake Nelson and Phoebe Said

Primary House Captains—Miles Andrews, Chelsea Morris, Nicholas Pithio and Olivia Veneran

Year 12 Councillors— Emma Harrison, James Fitzpatrick, Julian Kennedy and Sarah Bean.

Once again, each is a worthy recipient of the leadership position awarded them. Particular congratulations to our 2012 School Captains, Rachel Patterson and Joel Beers, who we know will be great ambassadors and role models.

As 2011 draws to a close, our community has much to be thankful for and more to look forward to in 2012. In Term One next year we look forward to launching our Future Directions Statement, the product of widespread consultation throughout 2011 and to the long awaited official opening of our new building. We also look forward to building on some of the initiatives of 2011.

In closing, may I take the opportunity to thank the entire staff of Mater Dei. During a period of significant change and at times, considerable disruption and inconvenience, their commitment to our students and children across all programs, including Early Intervention, has been unwavering. They are an extraordinarily generous and committed group of professionals and people with open hearts, who have responded positively to new ideas, new ways and new leadership. I am as proud as I am sure you are grateful for their work. In particular, my thanks to the Leadership Team:- Samantha Giles, Debbie Gates, Anne Lauder, Pamela Templeton and Jeanie Heininger, who have responded magnificently with professionalism, initiative, creativity and hard work in the leadership of their respective programs. Thank you also to the School Executive:- Samantha Giles, Alison Meani, Helen Fahey and Rebecca Gibbs, on whom we all depend for meeting the challenges of running the school. They too complete their work with great grace and dedication.

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Finally, my thanks to all families for your support and understanding in our care of your children. Be assured that all members of staff at Mater Dei understand the responsibility and appreciate the privilege of working with your children. May you enjoy a peaceful Christmas and holiday season.

Tony Fitzgerald,
CEO/Principal

The following Primary R students received Citizenship Awards recently:-



Mitchell Anthony



Noah Giles

END OF YEAR REPORTS

Coming home at the end of next week will be each student's End of Year Report for 2011.

If your child is not at school on the day the reports are distributed, then the report will be mailed to your home address. Enclosed with the report will be a social story for your child regarding their class and teacher/s for next year.

END OF YEAR ARRANGEMENTS

Friday 16th December

Last day of school for all Kinder to Year 10 students

Living Skills Program ceases for Year 5 to Year 10 students for 2011

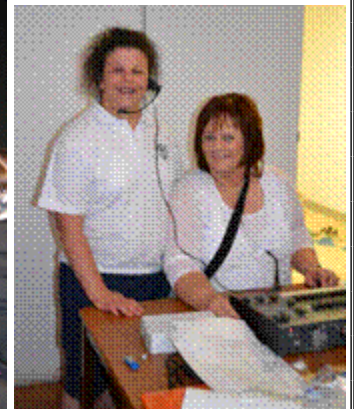
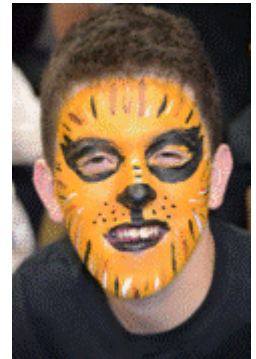
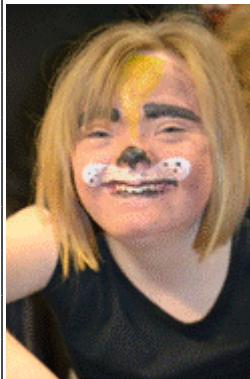
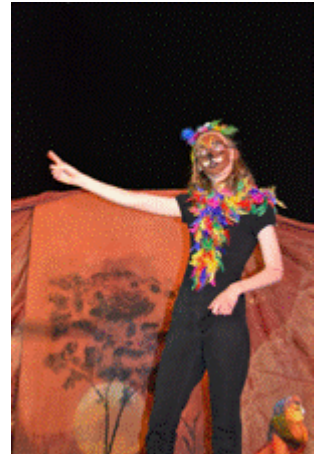
Primary End of Year Assembly 9:30am to 10:30am held in the Hall

Morning Tea provided for visitors from 10:45am to 11:30am

Year 11 and Year 12 Formal 6:30pm to 10:30pm Camden Lakeside Country Club



Our Performing Arts Night had many stars—a DVD is being produced, which will be available for \$5.00. We will advise via sms as soon as possible.



Mater Dei Living Skills Program (LSP)

As we near the end of Term Four I refer our families to these important matters:

*Families have completed their **Transition Visits** to the relevant Houses in which their daughters and sons will be participating in the 2012 LSP. We have received good responses from the students, their parents and our Social Educators regarding this new initiative.

*Students have all received **their striped bags** to pack their clothes and special mementos to bring to their Houses when the 2012 LSP commences in Week 1. The striped bags will be used to store the students' linen on the nights that they are not in the Houses.

*We have forwarded letters confirming **the students' 2012 placements** with full details regarding each House including the address, phone number and Social Educators who will be supporting and providing duty of care for the students in 2012.

*The 2012 LSP commences **on Monday 30 January** ie the first day of Term One.

*The 2011 LSP **Christmas Party** was a great success this year as virtually every student attended the night of celebration, shared dinner, danced to their own selection of tunes on the juke box and received a small gift to commemorate their immersion in the 2011 Program whilst their families enjoyed dinner in the adjoining bistro or took the opportunity to do some Christmas shopping. **A genuine "Thank You" to the members of staff across the various programs who joined us for the Christmas Party. The students were thrilled to have you party with us.**

Mater Dei Early Intervention Program (EIP)

Similarly I refer our families whose children have been receiving services in the EIP during 2011 to these important issues:

*Next week families will receive letters confirming **their children's plans** for 2012 with full details regarding Early Learning Groups, Educational Support, Transition To School Plans, Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy.

*We have been delighted to include Melissa McMartin, a 1st Year OT student, into the EIP during the last two weeks of Term Four to undertake her practicum under the supervision and guidance of our own OT Amy Watkins. We all wish Melissa every success with her continuing studies and look forward to staying in touch with Melissa as she progresses in her career.

*We are excitedly anticipating the **2011 Christmas Party** in the EIP Hall on Tuesday 13 December next week from 10.00 to 11.30 am. This will be a wonderful occasion to celebrate our children's successes during 2011 and for families to make arrangements to stay in touch during the holidays.

And finally on behalf of the team of professionals in both the Living Skills Program and the Early Intervention Program may I wish each and every child, student and their families our Christmas Blessings for a holy, safe and relaxing time with those you love. We all look forward to once again working with you and for you to provide the best possible service to your children in 2012.

Pamela Templeton, Director of Services

MEMORY STUDY FOR CHILDREN WITH DOWN SYNDROME

The University of NSW is looking for participants aged 6 to 17years with Down Syndrome to participate in a memory study. The study is on campus, parking is free and you will be paid \$10 to cover petrol costs. The participant will also get to choose a small thank-you gift to take home at the end of session. If you are interested or would like to participate, please contact Lynette Roberts on 0405 721076 or at lynette.roberts@unsw.edu.au

CAMPBELLTOWN ARTS CENTRE JANUARY 2012

SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM

A large variety of workshops are available at the Campbelltown Arts Centre in January. For information and bookings please ring Nikoleta on 4645 4294.



Included with this newsletter is a copy of a 'thank you' letter from the University of Western Sydney.

P & F Christmas Message

The members of the P&F committee wish everyone a Very Happy and Safe Christmas and an enjoyable school holiday.

If you answer yes to the following, give us a call!!

**Looking for a Christmas present this year?
How about Mater Dei Chardonnay?
2011 vintage available for \$10 a bottle or \$100 for a case of 12**

**Also do you have your Christmas cards yet?
Mater Dei cards available \$5 for 12**

Call Debbie or Carmen in the Development Office 4655 7481

Diary Dates for 2012

***Mater Dei
Charity Golf Day
Monday April 2
Twin Creeks Golf Club,
Luddenham***



Ladies Lipstick Luncheon

***Friday, May 11,
The Cube, Campbelltown
Catholic Club***



Tickets for luncheon and sponsorship packages for both events are on sale now. Visit www.materdei.org.au or contact the Development Office.

***Thanks to everyone who has supported the work of the
Development Office this year.***

I wish you a peace-filled Christmas and a lovely holiday time!!

Debbie Gates