



8 December 2011 Edition 5:4:11

A Christmas Prayer

In the most humble of surrounds
In the silence and the holiness of the night
Surrounded by people of good will
Jesus Christ was born into our world
May we discover again this Christmas
In our lives and in our world
The gifts that Jesus brings:
Peace, Gentleness, Compassion, Love
May we be surprised
As we find these gifts
In the most unlikely of places
And in the most unlikely of people.
Amen



FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Families,

Since early times, Christians have celebrated Christmas from December 25 through to the Epiphany – as a season, not just a day. The church calendar today extends this celebration until the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

From the beginning, the readings and prayers for the season have expressed the Church's understanding that Christmas is more than a commemoration of Jesus' birthday. It is rather the celebration of the beginnings of the mystery of salvation – of Christ's birth, revelation to the Jewish shepherds and the Gentile magi, baptism by John in the Jordan and first miracle – the changing of water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana. In all these saving events, we know that the Word is made flesh and dwells among us.

All this cannot be fitted into one day. Despite what the commercial world might try to suggest, Christmas celebrations are not over and done with as the sun sets on December 25 and the shops prepare for 'post-Christmas' sales!

Christmas has its own octave during which the feasts of St Stephen, St John and the Holy Innocents are celebrated. These saints are seen as having a particular relation to the Christmas mystery and are traditionally honoured as companions of Christ. The Sunday within the Christmas octave is celebrated as the feast of the Holy Family.

The last day of the Christmas octave, 1 January, is observed as the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. Like the fourth Sunday of Advent it highlights the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the incarnation and manifestation of the Saviour.

In the Eastern Churches Epiphany was the original feast of Christ's birth. When adopted in the West it became a celebration of the revelation of God's eternal plan of salvation in Christ. This was represented traditionally in the story of the magi. The custom of keeping Christmas decorations up until Epiphany helps to show that these two feasts are very closely linked.

Unfortunately this rich diversity of solemnities and feasts is often written off or forgotten during the holiday mentality. Using special Christmas vestments, candles, flowers, banners, music, etc for the whole season at Mass is meant to remind us and help us maintain the spirit of Christmas joy. Also we should keep singing Christmas carols, especially those carols and those verses that move us beyond the baby in the manger.

Christmas is a season, not just a day so the special things we do for others should be carried on throughout the season. In fact, as Catholics, we should carry on doing good all year round, helping those less fortunate and reaching out to make a difference.

As Christians, we have a real word of hope that so many in this world are longing to hear: that God became one of us and remains with us. Jesus did not remain a helpless infant, but grew up, lived and died and rose again. Most importantly, he is still Emmanuel, 'God with us', here and now, in the reality of our everyday lives.

People need to hear the real message of Christmas – that Jesus is *Emmanuel*, "God-with-us", here and now in the trials and tribulations of our lives. Christmas celebrates not only the light of the star over Bethlehem, but Christ as the light of the world.

May the light of Christmas shine upon you this season. I wish all of our community, students, parents, teachers and parishioners a happy, holy and peaceful Christmas that sustains you during the new year!

MAY YOU ALL HAVE A BLESSED AND PEACEFUL CHRISTMAS SEASON!

Yours faithfully

BRENDAN J WATSON OAM - PRINCIPAL

FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

As this is the last opportunity I have to communicate with our community it would be remiss of me not to say a very sincere thankyou to our families that have supported us this year—parents and students alike.

To all those returning in 2012 all students are to be at the College on Thursday 2 January in full summer uniform by 8.45am ready for tutor at 8.50am. Year 11's will commence with an Assembly at 9.00am and our Year 12's will gather in the Hall for their Asseby at 9.50am. So that it is clear to all families, the requirement when your son or daughter arrives at the College on Thursday 2 February I advise you of the of the following requirements regarding the Uniform policy.

Boys

- The shirt is to be the CRC Sydenham short sleeved shirt.
- The socks are to be dark blue or black

Girls

- The summer dress is not to be short


Students who do not conform to the Uniform Policy of the College could fact the possibility of being sent home.

To our Year 12 students of 2011—on behalf of all the staff at the College we wish you all the very best for when you obtain your results on Friday 16 December. For those who will need to change your preferences information pertaining to this was in the last College Newsletter.

All the very best for a very happy and holy Christmas.

Leo McInerney - Deputy Principal ~ Student Wellbeing

How to download the 'CRC Sydenham' iPad app from the iTunes App Store

Go the iTunes App Store  on your iPad. In the search bar (located top right of screen) type In "CRC Sydenham" and click Search.

See top right Arrow
Once the CRC Sydenham iPad app icon appears, click on it.

On the left hand side under the CRC Sydenham iPad app icon, you will see a green rectangular button saying "FREE" or "INSTALL APP". See Arrow on left hand side

Double click it, and then enter in your Apple ID and password. Once completed the CRC Sydenham app will download onto your iPad for use.



End of 2011, Beginning of 2012 – VCE and VCAL

Over the past two weeks we welcomed Year 12 students for 2012 during our Transition program and Year 11 students during our Orientation program. These programs were designed to immerse students into school life at Catholic Regional College Sydenham. Students commenced their course of study and were given homework to complete over the Christmas break. Students should be completing the set homework tasks as well as revising the work completed. Texts for English, English Language and Literature should be read during this time. Year 11 students are expected to complete 2-3 hours of home study each night. Year 12 students are expected to complete 3-4 hours of home study per night. A study timetable is recommended for all students to set out their home study program.

If students want to make a change to their course (subjects they have selected) this must be done by Monday 12 December 2011. No changes to courses will be permitted in Semester One 2012.

The 2012 School Year commences with a full day of classes for all students on Thursday February 2. This includes VET programs that operate beyond normal school hours. These programs include: Community Services, Sport and Recreation, Food Processing (Baking), Hospitality, Signage and IT.

VCAL Program Update

VCAL students were introduced to the requirements of their program and those in Year 11 in 2012 have also been inducted in the use of iPads. The iPad usage and care guidelines that were provided to parents and students at the iPad Rollout Evening were explained to students and they have been assisted with the creation of various software accounts that will be required for learning tasks within the VCAL Program. These students should also download the College Diary App through iTunes by searching for "CRC Sydenham" in the iTunes store. This diary app will assist students with accessing information about College events, session times and other relevant information such as student policies.

Work Placement is an integral component of the VCAL Program and a means of achieving numerous learning outcomes within the program. All VCAL students are required to attend work placement one day per week. This is compulsory for all VCAL students and therefore they must also have employer details finalised before the beginning of 2012.

VCE Results

2011 VCE Unit 3&4 results will be available from Friday 16 December 2011. The College will be closed on Friday; however will be open on Monday 19 December. Students who feel that they need to contact the College for support on Friday are encouraged to call Leo McInerney on 0437 360 801. Monica Dennis - College Psychologist will be available on Monday and Josie Albano - Careers Counsellor will be available on Monday 19 December and Tuesday 20 December for pathways counselling. Any students who feel that they may need to change their plans for 2012 based on the results that they received are encouraged to contact the College for assistance.

We wish all of our students success and happiness in their future endeavours and all families a safe and happy Christmas.

Jeff Mulcahy – Deputy Principal: Learning and Teaching
Maria Caroli - Director of Curriculum

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

DATES The College Office will re-open on
 Monday 9 January 2012

The first day for teaching staff is
 Monday 30 January 2012

The first day for students is
 Tuesday 2 February 2012

TERM DATES FOR NEXT YEAR

Term One 02/02/12 - 30/03/12
 Term Two 16/04/12 - 29/06/12
 Term Three 16/07/12 - 21/09/12
 Term Four 08/10/12 - 21/12/12*

*Classes for Year 12 finish on October 23 2012, followed by VCE Exams which run from 01/11/12 until 23/11/12

FEES

All 2011 fees should now be finalized. If you have any concerns regarding fees please contact the Business Manager - Doug Roulston on 9361 0005. Parents who indicated on their re-enrolment form for 2012 that they would like to see the Business Manager to discuss school fee payments should contact us as soon as possible in order to make an appointment.

The fee structure for 2012 will be:

Year 11/12 (over 2 years)
 \$10,953.00 (without Parish deduction)
 \$7,353.00 (with Parish deduction)

Year 12
 \$5,322.00 (without Parish deduction)
 \$3,522.00 (with Parish deduction)

Several subject areas which have high running costs also have compulsory charges – these subjects include Art, Drama, Geography, Foods, Wood, Studio Arts and will be invoiced separately.

We have EFTPOS available for school fee payments. Feel free to phone and make a payment on your fees, or arrange a Direct Debit if that suits you better.

We have also introduced a set and forget policy where families can commit to a payment plan to suit their requirements via direct debit or credit. We encourage all families to adopt this new policy.

SCHOOL BOOKS

Books ordered through Landmark School Supplies will be available from Catholic Regional College – Sydenham on Tuesday 24 January 2012 between 8.30am - 3.30pm from Room A2.



YEAR 11 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

As a Catholic College the Religious Education programme is a central element and requires all students to undertake study in Religious Education classes. The commitment of students and families to this study underpins enrolment at the College. In Year 11 students attend a compulsory overnight retreat. This commitment is central to the Religious Education program at the College. These will take place between Thursday 19 April and Friday 27 April 2012.

YEAR 12 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

There is the option of a Voluntary City Retreat for any interested Year 12 students. This will take place during the mid year school holidays 2012. For specific information, please contact Paul Reed (Faith Development Co-ordinator).

BUS TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS



A new timetable is currently being formalised. Please contact Westrans on 131 638 or log onto Metlink (Route 461) to view the timetable.

The Department of Infrastructure and Transport has informed the College that there will be an increase in the number of buses available during peak times for students travelling to and from Caroline Springs. At the moment they depart from Caroline Springs Shopping Centre at 6.43 am, 7.23 am and 8.03am

WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

All Year 11 students who are not in a class or on a work placement on a Wednesday afternoon are involved in our co-curricular program. Students have made their selections for Term 1 next year and the first session will be on Wednesday February 8th. Activities run during Period 5 & 6 each Wednesday A. Students are not permitted to leave the campus during lunchtime. If the activity students have selected is an active one such as sport or fitness then the CRC Sydenham PE uniform is compulsory. If students are participating in other activities such as cooking and jewellery making they are permitted to wear the CRC Sydenham PE uniform if they wish - it is not compulsory. Students who are travelling off campus for their activity will receive a parental permission form in the first week of Term 1. We look forward to students getting involved for another year of the program.

Sarah Nailer - Student Wellbeing Director

East Timor Action Group 2012 ~ An Alternative to "Schoolies"

In this newsletter, we take great pride and pleasure in launching the 2012 East Timor Action Group – an opportunity for each of our Year 12 students to get involved in a most exciting 12 month project!

Let's start with the 'Schoolies' experience at the end of next year as I suspect many of our students have already begun planning for this end of year event. Like quite a number of Schools around Melbourne – concerned about the excesses of this experience and what it says about a student's attitude to the world and how we should mark significant transition moments in our life – we want to offer an alternative to 'Schoolies'. To let you know that at the end of Year 12, there are other, more constructive, less self centred options available to you.

Our plan is to take a group of students in late November/ early December to East Timor to complete a volunteer work program.

For 19 years the students and staff at Catholic Regional College have provided support in many significant ways to the people of East Timor. The country has been through a long period of struggle on the way towards nationhood, which was achieved in 1999. Subsequent years have not been easy for the people or the governments. Throughout this time we have been able to express solidarity with the young people and the teachers in schools at Maliana and Railaco through teacher visits and fundraising for school buildings.

Currently, the School is sponsoring the education of twenty-one students in the village of Railaco and this year's fundraising effort will go towards supporting these student's as well as providing practical teaching materials needed by the school.



In 2004, 2008 and again in 2010, groups of students and staff have visited East Timor and specifically helped with English classes in the school in Railaco.

We are planning to take another group of students from Sydenham at the end of 2012 for the express purpose completing a volunteer work program. We invite all Year 12 students, who have already participated in supporting our relationship with East Timor through the major fundraising activity in 3rd term, to express their interest in being part of this initiative. This 'expression of interest' does not commit a student at this stage to the trip but helps us gauge the level of student of interest in such a project and to provide interested students with more specific information as it becomes available.

While still in the planning stages, we are looking at organising:

- An educational project (teaching English) at the school in Railaco
- A building project which we will complete while in Railaco
- Involvement in the work of one of the many aid agencies working in East Timor and help them complete specific work project.

At the beginning of the 2012 school year, we will officially launch the 2012 East Timor Action Group where specific details will be available of dates, cost and the specific work we will complete during our time in East Timor.

There are numerous benefits in being part of such an experience. It will contribute to student's growth as a person as well as give student's the opportunity to experience another country and culture. Student's will be introduced, first hand, to the plight of Australia's nearest neighbor and, most importantly, will be able to put into practice the principals of Social Justice and Christian Charity that have been so much a part of their Catholic education up to this point.

If you wish to discuss this further you are welcome to speak to Paul Reed at the College. Otherwise at this stage we ask that you email Paul at reep@crtsydenham.net or complete the 'Expression of Interest' form below and return it to the College. More information about the history of our involvement in East Timor can be found on the college website at <http://www.crcsydenham.net/international-connections/east-timor-project>.

Expressions of Interest Form – 2012 East Timor Action Group

Students Name: _____

Tutor: _____

Parents Signature: _____

(Please Return to Paul Reed at Catholic Regional College, Sydenham)