Dear Parents/Caregivers,

It has been wonderful to witness the enthusiasm of staff setting up and preparing their learning environments as an essential scaffold for optimising the learning opportunities for their students. As we welcome our children and families back to school this week, we are reminded of the importance of creating fertile ground in all aspects of children’s lives. As we return to our vocation and ensure the soil is well prepared for those in our charge, we have also endeavoured to create the ‘right soil’ for staff with training and preparation days last week.

During the break we were very pleased to hear the great news of several of our staff celebrating the birth of their first children. Amanda and Adam Balnaves welcomed Zach, Matt Quist and Amy Molyneux welcomed Oakley, and former staff Nathan and Sarah Wohling welcomed Tara to the world. Kim Hall celebrated her marriage to Hadley Ryan and has returned as Mrs Ryan. Congratulations to all.

We have 3 new staff on the secondary campus: Ms Kirby Heath, Ms Madeleine Osborn and Ms Sarah Smith. Ms Heath will work in the SOSE/English/RE/PE areas, Ms Osborne teaches English/RE/SOSE and Ms Smith will be the new Learning Support Coordinator (7-12). Mrs Christine Duffield returns from long service leave, Mrs Tanya Ernesti returns to full time teaching after being our Teacher Librarian at Saint John’s and Mrs Melissa Boden assumes a full time role.

In the primary campuses we welcome 5 new staff members, Mrs Kristen Murray (2/3), Ms Alex Gallagher (1/2) (STC) Ms Maddie Keen (6/7), Mrs Jenny Ness (2/3) and Miss Prue Lange (1/2) (OLHC). Lucy Kuchel returns after some years of parenting leave and joins the St Teresa’s Campus as a R/1 teacher.

Matthew 13:8

And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold. And he said, “Let anyone with ears to hear, listen!”

continued p2
A warm welcome is extended to the many new families and staff who begin their Samaritan journey with us this year and we look forward to the sharing of gifts and talents with each other as the year unfolds.

A warm welcome is also extended to those of us who are continuing as members of the Samaritan community. We pray for your continued support of the College and that we work together to create a safe, happy and prayerful learning community.

In this the 70th year of Catholic Education in Whyalla and the 50th year of Saint John’s Campus, we give thanks to the founding religious women and men of the Good Samaritan Sisters and the Christian Brothers, who met the needs of Catholic education in our town and carried out their mission with dedication and love.

We also acknowledge the faithful families who have gone before us who helped create the school environment we enjoy today.

Bringing the message of the Resurrected Christ to the students and families of our school was the mission of the Good Sams and the Christian Brothers, and this remains the mission of our College today and into the future.

Our College Vision Statement points us to the teachings of Jesus through the Samaritan stories; The Woman at the Well (Luke 4) and The Good Samaritan (Luke 10). We pray that through the example of the religious founders of our College we too can live and work together in Faith, Wisdom and Compassion.

Bernie Meixner
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN RELIGIOUS IDENTITY & MISSION
THE SAMARITAN’S SISTER

Yes, it’s true: the Good Samaritan who helped the traumatised traveller on the road to Jericho had a sister – or many sisters, as it turns out. Just as the original Good Samaritan showed by his compassion how to be a neighbour to someone in distress, his sisters continue to do today.

In fact, there are two of them, right here in Whyalla – Sister Helen Mills and Sister Sonia Wagner. They have “sgs” after their names – it stands for “Sister of the Good Samaritan”.

And that’s not all. Helen and Sonia stand in the 70-year tradition of the Sisters in Whyalla. Seventy years of being committed to Catholic education, and to ministry to people in all kinds of need, here in Whyalla.

But wait, there’s more! Sister Helen has just chalked up 50 years as a professed Sister of the Good Samaritan – and we plan to party hard, and you’re all invited to the party! It’s on Sunday, February 12, starting with the 10:30am Mass at Our Lady’s, and followed by a shared lunch. Please come and enjoy the “Oil and Wine” with the Sisters and your parish friends.

And what about you? Could you see yourself as a sister of the Good Samaritan, or as one of his brothers? Could you, like Helen, answer a call to give your life to the service of God’s people, just as Jesus, the true Good Samaritan did? Thinking of Helen as we know her, the question really is this: could you handle all that joy, laughter, prayer and hope?

Fr Jim Monaghan
FOR THE PARISH TEAM

COLLEGE NEWS

Parenting Ideas
by Michael Grose:
7 ways to make this year your child’s best year ever at school

A new school year means a fresh start for students. Regardless of your child’s performance last year, they start school with a clean slate. A break offers students the chance to begin new habits and adopt new behaviours.

Here are seven ideas to help you make the most of the fresh start and make this year your child’s best year ever at school:

1. Commit to your child going to school every day on time. One of the most important things you can do to ensure your child has a bright future is to make sure he or she goes to school every day – and gets there on time. Kids spend more time asleep than at school, so we need to maximise every day to get full value.

2. Help kids start each day well. A good night’s sleep, a healthy breakfast and some words of encouragement from you will help set a positive tone for a day of learning. This may mean that you adjust your morning routine so that kids have plenty of time get up, eat and get ready for the day.

3. Establish work & study habits. The most successful students are those that develop regular study habits that suit their lifestyle, their study style and their school’s expectations.

Find out the work expectations from your child’s or young person’s school and help them establish a work routine that matches.

4. Make sure your child gets enough sleep. Many children and young people are sleep-deprived, which impacts on their well-being and their learning. A good night’s sleep consolidates learning, as well as assist future learning.

Children need between 10-12 hours of sleep each day, while teens need a minimum of nine hours. Help kids get sufficient sleep by having a regular bed-time and get-up time each day.

Have 45 minute wind-down time each night, and remove screens and mobile phones from bedrooms.

5. Encourage kids to exercise. Kids today get less exercise than those of past generations, which is an impediment to learning and mental health. Health professionals recommend a minimum of 60 minutes of exercise per day for kids of all ages. Encourage kids to play sport; promote free and active play and look for ways to make moving part of their daily lives.

6. Focus on being friendly. Schools are very social places requiring kids to negotiate many different social situations each day. Encourage kids to be open and tolerant; to be friendly; to be involved in plenty of activities and to be social risk-takers.

7. Develop self-help skills. Successful students are often well-organised, self-directed and self-motivated. You can foster organisational skills and self-direction by developing simple, age-appropriate self-help skills related to their every day lives. Such skills as making lunches, packing school bags, and organising after school schedules can be great lessons that impact on how kids perform at school.

At the start of the school year kids are more likely to adopt changes than at any other time. Make the most of the opportunity by focusing on two or three areas to really focus on and you’ll find that the rest will fall into place.
Welcome to the beginning of the 2012 school year! I trust that the Christmas holiday season was both enjoyable and a relaxing time spent with family. Our community extends a very special welcome to all of the new students and their families and the new members of staff. We pray that they will find a unique place in the Samaritan story and that their learning and community journey will be richly nurtured by God’s blessing and the spirit of compassion in action.

It was wonderful to see so many smiling faces coming through the gates of the primary campuses. The children seemed to have enjoyed their long break but were eager to return to school to catch up with their friends and settle back into the school routine.

We welcome the new children, and their families, to Samaritan College.

STUDENT MEDICAL FORMS

I ask all families to please return medical and permission forms by the end of this week. If you have changed address or your mobile phone number, please contact the front office immediately so that office staff can revise your details. It is very important that we have this up to date information to avoid difficulties in an emergency situation.

MEET THE TEACHERS EVENING

I encourage all parents to make contact with your child’s teacher as soon as possible to open effective channels of communication. An opportunity to meet your child’s teacher will be at our annual Parent Information Evenings held on the primary campuses early next week. All parents are encouraged to attend and meet your child’s teacher and hear further information about the new school year and their learning. Good communication is one essential element of your child’s success at school.

OLHCC – Tuesday, February 7 at 7:00pm – Vessey Unit
STC – Wednesday February 8 at 7:00pm – Library

POLICY FOR STUDENTS LEAVING THE CAMPUSES DURING SCHOOL TIMES

Please be reminded of the College’s policy for students leaving during school hours. All students who have appointments during school hours must bring a signed note from their parent/caregiver. Students will then be sent to the front office by their teacher at the appropriate time to await pick-up by the person named in the note. Parents/caregivers will need to sign a student release form before the student can leave the school grounds.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our students safe at all times.

SCHOOL BANKING

School banking is available at both primary campuses.

Both Campuses are visited by Alliance One and Bank SA. Commonwealth Bank is also available at the OLHCC Campus.

Parents wishing to organise school banking for their child/children are encouraged to contact their primary campus for further details.
CRUNCH AND SIP

Each day, at approximately 10:00am, students have brain food and water to help them stay on task and to engage in high levels of concentration and problem solving. Please ensure that your child/children brings water and some fruit or vegetable to have at this time each day. Research has shown that when students have these breaks and eat this sort of food and hydrate adequately, their ability to concentrate and learn increases dramatically.

Yours in Faith, Wisdom & Compassion,
Eleni Vaivas
DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

CAR SAFETY REMINDER

A reminder to parents/caregivers dropping off and picking up students. Please be aware of students crossing roads, students walking in front of and around cars.

For STC community, please be patient when trying to get a park, double parking is extremely dangerous and illegal. Parking in the lane ways is not advised as the council officers will be monitoring this.

For the OLHCC community students are not to be dropped off or picked up by car from the front office carpark before single lessons. Sport and Recreation will need PE clothes in their double lesson and a single lesson per week, they will also have one theory lesson a week (which will be decided on by their teacher) where they do NOT need PE clothes.

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL
Ruth Donnellan
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

SECONDARY CAMPUS NEWS

A warm welcome to all of our returning families for 2012. There are quite a number of new families to Samaritan College this year and I trust that they have settled in comfortably to the community. It was pleasing to see the grandstand filled with our students on Monday morning, and I look forward to the evening of February 16 when it should be filled with the parents for our introduction to the staff for 2012.

Congratulations to all of the students who completed their SACE in 2011. The College is very proud of the efforts that the students and teachers put in throughout the year. There were 8 students who achieved an ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank) score over 90. They were Deepi Domingo 97.15; Ryan Halyburton 96.7; Kristina Kotsomitis 94.95; Alexandra McCarron 93.8; Lauren Casey 93.4; Ruby Tonkin 92.9; Izaak Gurney 92.45 and Clare Lynch 91.9. Some of whom will be invited back to be formally acknowledged at a College assembly. We wish all our students the very best for their future in the career path they choose to follow.

UNIFORM

Students are expected to ensure that they are wearing the appropriate uniform on the relevant days. They are generally only to wear their PE uniform on the days when they have a double Physical Education lesson. The exception to this is the elective Sport and Recreation, in Year 10, where these students can wear their PE uniform for the double lessons. Students do NOT need PE uniform for Outdoor Living, except when instructed by their teacher. Also students in Years 8 and 9 will need to wear their PE uniform whenever PE is timetabled, even in their single lessons. Sport and Recreation will need PE clothes in their double lesson and a single lesson per week, they will also have one theory lesson a week (which will be decided on by their teacher) where they do NOT need PE clothes.

CHANGING SUBJECTS

After the holidays it is natural that the students may have had a change of heart with regard to the subjects that they wish to study for the semester or year. There is a process that the students need to undertake if they wish to change subjects. This is to ensure that everyone, including the parents, are informed of the changes.

Unfortunately some of the classes are currently full so students cannot just expect to jump into any option they want. The senior students, those in Year 11 and 12, will discuss the available options with myself, whilst those in Year 9 and 10 have been asked to talk with their Year level Coordinator. Once a decision has been made a “Subject Change Form”, available from the College website, is completed with the signatures of the relevant teachers and a parent.

STUDENTS DRIVING

In the interest of student safety, as well as supporting the many neighbours to the Saint Johns’ Campus, the College asks that students who are driving to school complete a “Driver Permit Form”. There is generally no reason why permission wouldn’t be granted, as the form is primarily to inform us of which vehicle belongs to which student in case it needs to be moved.

We also request that parents notify the College of their consent for passengers in another student’s vehicle. The permission is only for arriving and departing the College
as students are not allowed to use their vehicles to go on excursions during the day.

John Lyons
ACTING DEPUTY PRINCIPAL (SECONDARY)

STAGE 1 AND 2
SPECIAL PROVISIONS

One of the key features of the SACE is its flexibility, and in particular the way in which assessment tasks and procedures can be modified to suit the learning requirements of all students. One of the most obvious ways in which this is achieved is through the granting of special provisions for students with physical disabilities (e.g. cerebral palsy), hearing and/or vision impairment, medical conditions (e.g. chronic fatigue syndrome), psychological illnesses (e.g. Autism) or learning disabilities (e.g. reading and/or writing difficulty). The grounds upon which special provisions can be granted are numerous, and students need not have accessed the College’s Learning Support Centre in the past (or currently) to qualify. At Stage 2 special provisions apply principally to external assessment, such as exams, and the variations include additional time, rest breaks, enlarged examination papers, and the use of a reader, scribe or word processor scribe. Applications are determined by the SACE Board, and whilst the application process itself is relatively straightforward it can be time consuming. Thus, students who feel they may be eligible are encouraged to collect the necessary application forms from my office as soon as possible.

In addition, the SACE Board can make allowances on the grounds of misadventure (e.g. student work is lost in a house fire) or personal circumstances (e.g. a death in the family). Applications can be made at any time of the year, although typically the event needs to have occurred close to the end-of-year exams for the claim to be successful. Please note that losing a USB/memory stick does not qualify as misadventure – loss of work in such circumstances will not result in Special Provisions being granted by the Board. Students are therefore strongly encouraged to keep back-up copies of their work. Likewise, students who miss school as a result of work or family holidays will not be granted Special Provisions by the Board.

Teachers are also able to modify school-assessed tasks, for example reducing the number of tasks. This would typically occur if a student has missed a week or so of school due to illness or on-going family issues. Please note, however, that such modifications are only made at the discretion of Director of Teaching and Learning. Students who feel they may be eligible are encouraged to discuss the matter with their subject teacher or me.

At Stage 1 teachers are generally given the power to modify tasks as necessary to take into account all learning styles and abilities. These modifications are determined by the teacher in consultation with the student concerned, and generally involve a reduction in the word count or students presenting information orally rather than in writing and extensions. Whilst the modifications permitted at Stage 1 are more flexible and varied than at Stage 2, teachers are nevertheless required to record these modifications on their Learning and Assessment Plans. These documents are forwarded to the SACE Board at the start of each semester and, from next year onwards, will be used to help determine whether a student is entitled to special provisions at Stage 2. Parents/caregivers who feel their child may benefit from modified assessment tasks are invited to discuss the matter with their child’s teacher(s) or me.

Tanya Gibson
DIRECTOR OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

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CANTEEN ROSTERS

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Annette Cameron
CANTEEN MANAGER

Rose Cassar
CANTEEN MANAGER

Marg Coad
CANTEEN MANAGER

COMMUNITY NEWS

HOOKED ON HOCKEY (HOCKEY PROGRAM)

Plaza Youth Centre will be running “Hooked On Hockey” every Saturday from 10am-11am, starting on February 11, 2012 at the hockey grounds located on Searle Street, Whyalla for the next 12 months. If you would like to give hockey a go turn up to the program. It will be fun. Drinks and uniforms etc will be provided or call Joanne Jones on 8645 3999 to enquire or register.