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Friday October 28

Important Dates

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<td>Oct 31</td>
<td>School closure days</td>
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<td>Nov 1</td>
<td>Melbourne Cup Holiday</td>
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<td>Nov 2</td>
<td>MOGS Sports Night 5pm – 8pm</td>
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<td>Nov 7</td>
<td>School Photos Prep Orientation 1.45 – 3.10</td>
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<td>SLC Sexuality Parent and Child night</td>
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<td>Nov 11</td>
<td>Rememberance Day prayer 11am</td>
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<td>SLC Charcoal Lane Restaurant</td>
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<td>Nov 10</td>
<td>Twilight working Bee 3.15pm</td>
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<td>Nov 14</td>
<td>Prep orientation 9am – 11.30am</td>
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<td>Dec 14</td>
<td>Graduation and End of Year mass and family celebration 6pm</td>
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<td>Dec 15</td>
<td>Last day for students Assembly 12 noon</td>
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It is good to be back with you all after 7 weeks away. Part of that time was Study Leave, where I joined a group of 30 other school leaders from across Victoria. The last four weeks were travel through Europe with Annette, my wife. Amongst the more memorable places that we visited were Flanders Fields in Belgium and Assisi where St Francis lived over 800 years ago. His spirit is still alive amongst the olive groves and hills around this beautiful city.

I am so grateful to both Matthew and Michelle for their leadership while I was away. It was liberating to be able to be present in a place such as the university in Leuven and be confident that school was in such good hands while I was away.

Of course the biggest worry for me was missing out on the incredible month that saw the Bulldogs create their own history. I watched the Grand Final in Tuscanny, Italy on my mini iPad and was ready to tell anyone I saw that the Doggies had won. The fact that many we saw that weekend didn’t speak English didn’t worry me, they could see that I was a very happy man.
Part of my time away was spent at Catholic University in Leuven, Belgium. The University of Leuven was founded at the centre of the historic town of Leuven in 1425, making it Belgium's first university. Since the fifteenth century, it has been a major contributor to the development of Catholic theology. It is considered the oldest Catholic university still in existence. It was an amazing place to study.

I was part of a larger group of school leaders from across Victoria. Over three weeks, I attended a series of lectures and meetings that explored the nature of catholic schools in contemporary times. In particular, we looked at the identity of catholic schools and how we maintain a presence of the catholic tradition in a changing and diverse society.

At the heart of the program was a research project entitled Enhancing Catholic School Identity Project (ECSIP). This is a joint partnership between the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and Catholic University Leuven and is now being taken up by education systems internationally. Our students, staff and some families contributed to this research through a survey earlier in the year. Thank you to those who contributed.

It was a privilege to be amongst other school leaders and talking about the changing nature of our schools as well as having the opportunity to share the terrific story of our very own Mother of God community. This is something I already knew, that ours is a great school. The respect and relationships that are so evident everyday, (kids to kids, kids to teachers, teachers to kids and partnering with families) all contribute to a great school community. One in our situation, that operates with the catholic tradition.

Through a series of school visits in Leuven, Brussels and Paris, I had the opportunity to meet with fellow teachers and school leaders. More importantly, I met with students and talked about many things including what it was like growing up in uncertain times in Europe as well as them learning about our schools here in Melbourne.

I have come back with new learnings and a new energy for the things that are important for us here at Mother of God. I look forward to using those new learnings as we move into 2017 and a new cycle of school improvement through the school review process we are undertaking next year.

It is good to be back and it is even better to be back in such a great school community.
Congratulations to Alexis, Isabela R, Shalom, Isabella B, Nybol, Samuel and Simon from SLC for their amazing contribution to the Kids teaching Kids conference at Melbourne University last Monday. They joined over 400 other student leaders from across Victoria and interstate to learn from young people about how we should all be caring for our environment. We are grateful to Environment Victoria for sponsoring MOGS to be part of the conference.

Kids, you worked solidly with Carol and Michelle over the last few months to develop your workshop focus and your ability to teach others. We are so proud of you. It was wonderful to see you feel so comfortable in the surrounds at Melbourne University and maybe one day, in seven years time when some of you walk through the university as an under-graduate you can look back on the conference as your first taste of university life.

From Isabela R:

On Monday a few Yr 5/6s went to Melbourne University to teach about the grasslands and about before White settlement. The Maxi Taxi arrived & we left the school and were on our way. We arrived and there was a morning tea but first there were speeches. Samuel, “When will it end?!?”

When the speeches terminated we ate morning tea, the food flew, there was barely anything left but at least I got my yogurt.

We taught the first class. We were nervous but quite confident because we had worked really hard. The first class wasn’t hard, our confidence got boosted, but “No no I forgot what to say!!”, luckily it came back to me.

We had lunch it was sandwiches with egg “I don’t like egg”

Finally no more teaching. No it was time to relax and learn, we learnt about the great barrier reef, I learnt that you could see it from outer space. We also learnt about Microplastics.
Day 2
Same morning same routine, when everyone finally arrived we left and headed off to the farm, there was lots of traffic. We arrived and gladly there was only one or two speeches, we ate snack and learnt about the Yarra River and did some work on the garden after that we had lunch HOT DOGS!!! But there was a huge line. Shalom ate 5 hotdogs! After that, back to the tent, all the schools went to the stage and said what they had learnt and a thank you. That was the end of the two great days.

From Samual:
As we left school at 7.45 I felt excited and ready to teach and learn. When we arrived we got our shirts and drink bottles we went to our rooms and set up our workshop and then we went to the opening ceremony it took ages!! (I felt bored) Then we did our presentation. I felt a bit nervous and excited, we started our presentation and introduced ourselves and the grasslands, we did our game and we successfully ended our presentation. We had a 5 min break to set up again and start our 2nd presentation.

After our presentation we had lunch and then went off to learn. My group learned about corals and the Yarra River, then we went to the hall again and broke up for 2 hours of free time. We met up with Mr G (Ms Michelle had to go) Mr G just came for the food! so Mr G got us some ice cream and we went back to the hall for dinner.

SO dinner was really good and the entertainment was a magicent and was hilarious.

Day 2, we went to Collingwood Childrens Farm and we saw a lot of cool animals like sheep, goats and much more. So we went off to some workshops. My group was Simon and Carol so then we did some cool workshops and my favorite was building a nest for ringtail possum.

We gathered back at the tent to officially end the KTK conference and then some of our students got to tell everyone about their favorite part of the conference. We went off back to school and we had a great time.

(Thank you for choosing me!!)
One of the joys for me coming back from overseas was walking in to my Red White and Blue office and the amazing Bulldogs Wall next to the oval. It has been the topic of much discussion amongst other schools and principals!! (Fr Barry thinks it’s just in readiness for new premiers in 2017. He has a can of blue paint all ready to go over the red!)

It was also a great day last week when the premiership cup came out to school. It was great to see so many people excited to have their photos taken with the cup including grandchildren, granparents and past families. We are thankful to the Western Bulldogs Football Club for this opportunity and for their community work over many years. We have been part of the Bulldog Friendly schools program for many years and look forward to welcoming some premiership players out to school in 2017.
**Important School News**

**SCHOOL FEES**

I am sure you will all understand the importance of families paying their school fees and levies. Currently we have over $20,000 in outstanding fees. I would ask those families who have outstanding amounts to make a concerted effort to clear the debt. As a school and parish community, we are committed to keeping our school fees some of the lowest across Melbourne Catholic schools. I would ask those families concerned to make contact with the office. If we there is no communication, then we will be making contact within the next two weeks.

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**DEAR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS,**

**DID YOU HEAR? OUR MOGS SPORTS NIGHT IS NEXT WEDNESDAY!**

**COME DOWN FOR A FUN FILLED NIGHT, A SHARED MEAL AT 5PM AND GAMES OF BASKETBALL, CRICKET AND NEWCOMBE TO FOLLOW.**

**JOIN IN THE FUN!**

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**MOGS SPORTS NIGHT: WEDNESDAY 2ND NOVEMBER 5PM UNTIL 8PM**

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**Twilight Working Bee**

**Thursday November 10**

3.15pm – 7.15pm

Please join us

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Our Trivia Night on Nov 5 has been postponed till next year