2016 has started particularly well at Simonds Catholic College, and I extend a very warm welcome to all families as we begin a new year, refreshed and prepared to take on the challenges of what lays ahead both in the classroom and in the many co-curricular activities on offer. On 29 January at St Brigid’s Hall where we welcomed our ninety new students and seven new staff to Simonds Catholic College. Our new staff for 2016 include:

- Chloe Barbopoulos | English, Humanities & Literacy Support
- Theo Byard | English, Religious Education & Literacy Support
- Alistair Forge | Special Needs Coordinator, English & Literacy Support
- Angela Pradel | Maths Faculty Manager
- Danny O’Malley | Business Manager
- Karen O’Toole | Year 11 Coordinator, VCE Economics & Accounting

At this Assembly we also welcomed back a large number of our high achieving students from the class of 2015. Fr Savino, the Parish Priest of St Brigid’s and College Chaplain, also took the time to bless our school community for 2016. I took the opportunity at this Assembly to encourage students to do one or two things differently than they had done in previous year, in the hope that they would produce an improved outcome in regard to one aspect of their school life.

Last Sunday a number of our staff and students represented the College, as the Parish celebrated the Feast Day of St Brigid at 11am Mass at North Fitzroy, with many parishioners also joining them for this annual event.

Our entire Year 12 cohort participated in a two day retreat at Kinglake Wilderness Centre on the 1st and 2nd of February. It was a terrific experience for our Year 12 students and staff, as they were lead through a variety of activities that helped them reflect on themselves, where they are at in their lives, their values and what is, or could be important to them in the future. It was a very rewarding experience to observe such a great energy and sense of hope amongst the students and staff over these two days.

To mark the start of our Lenten journey, Fr Anthony Bernal our Canonical Administrator joined with the whole school to celebrate Mass at St Mary Star of the Sea on Ash Wednesday. It was an excellent opportunity for all members of our community to think and reflect on the lead up to Holy Week over the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Peter Riordan
Principal | Simonds Catholic College

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**Prayer to St Brigid**

Saint Brigid, you were a woman of peace

May the mantle of your holiness cover those who are troubled and anxious,

And may peace be firmly rooted in our hearts and in our parish.

Saint Brigid, you were a woman of charity. Inspired us to act justly and to help the needy.

Saint Brigid, you were a voice for the wounded and the weary.

Strengthen what is weak within us.

Calm us into a quietness that heals and listens.

May we grow each day into greater wholeness in mind, body and spirit.

Amen.
Congratulations to the Simonds Year 12 Class of 2015 on their results. The boys should be commended on their dedication and persistence throughout the year and many can be proud of their results. Every student that completed the year, successfully attained their VCE certificate and our median VCE Study Score was 29 just missing out on the state average of 30. The Dux of the College for 2015 was Raymond Liu, with an ATAR of 97.40. He was offered a place at Melbourne University studying Commerce.

Six of our students attained ATARs in the 90’s and a further thirteen attained ATARs in the eighties meaning that a quarter of our students were in the top 20% of the state, allowing them to access the highest demand University courses. With another 14 per cent in the seventies, Simonds had over 40% of its Year 12 cohort with an ATAR over 70 (top 30% of the state). In fact over 75% of our students were placed in the top half of the state, allowing them to access University courses in 2016 and that is a cause for great celebration!

This year, 75 Simonds students applied for tertiary places and seventy students received a First Round Tertiary Offer. 89% were offered University (Degree) places and 11% were offered TAFE (Diploma or Certificate) places. RMIT continues to be the main institute of choice, with 45% of students being offered a place there. A number of these students had already negotiated a place through our SNAP program.

Business Pathways continue to be a popular choice for our cohort with 27% of the boys choosing to pursue Management and Commerce courses. The next most popular areas of study were Natural & Physical Sciences (25%) and the Society & Culture (17%).
I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank everyone who worked with and supported the boys throughout their secondary education. These achievements would not be possible without the continual hard work and tireless dedication of all the staff and the support of the parents. We are dedicated to improving student outcomes and continue to strive to provide the best possible education to our boys so as to provide them with every opportunity to pursue excellence and success.

Mr R Anastasio  
Deputy Principal | Head of St Brigid’s VCE Campus

On Monday 1 February, the Year 12 cohort ventured to Kinglake Ranges Wilderness Camp to experience the ‘Survivor’ themed Year 12 overnight Retreat. The focus of the Retreat was on developing well-being and resilience in each student, as well as identifying individual character strengths. Students were separated into 4 tribes and each tribe partook in a number of challenges including navigating a water course and balancing on a giant see-saw. The successful completion of each challenge depended on the students utilising their strengths and collaborating with their team members to achieve victory. A thanksgiving bonfire was held in the evening to recognise the development and growth shown by students throughout the day’s activities. The evening concluded with an acoustic guitar performance by Jacky Chen.

The following day, students partook in a number of missions in which they displayed their impressive ballet and dancing skills. Congratulations to the tribe “Gurnmil” who were crowned the ultimate survivors. I would like to commend the Yr 12 cohort on the way they approached and embraced the activities throughout the Retreat. This experience has strengthened relationships and has set the tone for a positive and fulfilling 2016.

Mrs Salvina Noonan | Year 12 Coordinator
UNIFORM

The correct wearing of uniform reflects our students' pride in the school and is an area the boys are to be commended on this early stage of the year. Staff members have been asked to be vigilant and pay close attention to boys' attire and to not allow anyone into class who is not wearing the uniform correctly. If your son comes to school without a part of their uniform they are to report to their Year Level Coordinator before 8.45am for a Uniform Pass.

The school uniform must be worn, correctly, be clean and in good repair. This applies from leaving home in the morning to returning in the afternoon. This helps the College set and maintain high standards and engenders pride in appearance. Each student’s appearance indicates his attitude to Simonds Catholic College. Members of the community will form opinions about the College on this basis.

- Simonds short sleeved shirt, or plain long sleeved white shirt and school tie.
- Grey pants or grey shorts
- Shoes: black leather lace-up, black or grey socks with pants; grey socks with shorts
- Simonds blazer
- Simonds pullover (optional).

Please note:

1. No part of the sport uniform may be worn with the school uniform. ie, mix and match is not permitted.
2. Students may wear the short sleeved school shirt during Terms 1 and 4, which is designed to be worn without a tie. If a student wears the long sleeved shirt it must be worn with the school tie.

LOCKERS

All boys have been assigned a locker. Year 7 students are required to purchase the lock directly from the school ($12 to be paid to Mr Roland). All other students must provide their own suitable padlock. iPads are to be stored in locked lockers when not in use and during recess and lunchtime. Phones must be turned off and stored in lockers during the school day.

eBooks & iPads

It is expected that students have all items listed on the 2016 booklists. The Digital Bundle required by Year 8-10 students includes three eBooks with the print copies supplied as a bonus. Students are reminded that the print copies of all eBooks must remain at home. Students who have not yet purchased the eBooks must do so online at www.campion.com.au using “ZPKA” as the code. The Digital bundle is a special deal negotiated between the school and the publisher and is not available through any other supplier at this price.

Students new to Simonds will receive their iPad by the end of February. An ICT Device Agreement and an Acceptable Use Policy will be sent home in the next few days to families. These need to be signed by parents and returned to school. iPads will be distributed on a first come first served basis once students have returned the contracts, purchased the eBooks and have a suitable lock on their locker.
BELL TIMES AND PUNCTUALITY

Bell Times are published in the student diary. Please note that students are dismissed at 2.45pm on Wednesdays. Students are advised to arrive at school by 8.35am. A warning bell will sound at 8.40am, and boys will need to be in class with their books for Periods 1 and 2 when the second bell rings at 8.45am. Any student not in Homeroom at this time is to collect a Late Pass from the office. Students who arrive late at the beginning of the day are to report to their Year Level Coordinator at the end of that day; these students may be detained up to 4.00pm if they arrived after the commencement of Period 1 and without a note from parents. It is pleasing to see the majority of our students making the effort to be at school on time each day, and I thank parents for your continued support in this important matter.

Mrs H Koutoulogenis
Deputy Principal (Learning & Teaching) | Head of St Mary's 7-10 Campus

In preparation for the main Term 1 Assessment Task on Masks, the Year 8s have started to investigate the human form through drawing. They completed a series of drawings using charcoal to explore the three dimensional features of the face in order to better understand both, the anatomy and the aesthetic elements.

I congratulate all our young Year 8 artists. In particular, I commend the boys whose work appears in this newsletter – their work is truly exceptional. In sharing their achievement with our community, I am certain that you will all applaud the high standards achieved by our students. I look forward to more wonderful work as the semester progresses.

Mr B Sanciolo | Art Teacher
There is a $225 State Government Financial assistance available for eligible students aimed at ensuring all students can take part in school trips and sporting activities. Families holding a valid Concession card are eligible to apply. A special consideration category also exists. Parents or legal guardians are required to submit a new CSEF application form each year. Application forms are available at both campuses or online at: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/Pages/csef.aspx?Redirect=1. When the $225 is received from the Victorian Government it will be credited against your School Fees. If you have any queries, require an application form or assistance in completing the application please contact Cindy Tran on 9321 9200.

School Fees 2016:
We anticipate issuing tax invoices for school fees early to mid March. In the interim, should you wish to make part or full payment for your son’s tuition please contact the Business Manager, Mr Danny O’Malley on 9321 9202.

Mr D O’Malley | Business Manager

The Mad Scientists are back

We would like to welcome all science enthusiasts into the labs every Wednesday lunchtime to take part in a menagerie of science related fun! Experiments, competitions, documentaries, Science YouTube Channel surfing and science news discussions are all on the menu for this year!! This is a great place to meet new people from both your own and other year levels and to potentially learn, or do something new each and every time you turn up!

Looking forward to seeing you there!

Miss L Fisher | Science Faculty Manager

W@SP News (Wellbeing @Simonds Program)

Thursday afternoons for parents:
Each Thursday from 2.30pm-4pm, parents are invited to come into the St. Mary’s Campus staffroom for a tea or coffee to meet other parents and to have a seat/chat. There is signage in the staffroom headed “Parents’ Corner” where there is info relevant for parents - you may like to take a look. The staffroom is on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area.

Parent evening:
On TUESDAY 8th March 7pm-8.30pm, parents are invited to an evening to hear 3 students and 3 parents from our college talk about WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOESN’T IN COMMUNICATING WITH MY SON/PARENT. This is an initiative of the parent wellbeing team and promises to be an informative, practical and engaging evening. It will be held in the general purpose room at St. Mary’s. We would ask ALL parents to respond to the invitation via the attached letter. You have the option of responding online or via the tear-off slip which is filled in and handed to your son and then given by him to his pastoral care teacher.
Parent evening, 8th March “Communicating with my son”

What works and what doesn’t when communicating with your son? Sometimes communication is difficult – at other times, easy. How can communication between my son and I be strengthened?

PARENTS ARE INVITED TO AN EVENING WHERE THEY WILL HEAR A PANEL OF 3 PARENTS AND 3 BOYS (from different year levels/ages) TALK ABOUT WHAT WORKS FOR THEM ... AND WHAT DOESN’T ... IN COMMUNICATING

IT WILL BE A LIVELY, ENTERTAINING AND INFORMATIVE EVENING.

There will be a presentation (and handout) with time for questions.

DATE: Tuesday 8th MARCH
TIME: 7.00PM-8.30PM
VENUE: ST. MARY’S GENERAL PURPOSE ROOM

Please indicate your attendance or non-attendance on the tear-off slip below. Hand the slip to your son who will then bring it to school and hand to his pastoral care teacher.

PARENT NAME: ____________________________________________________________

SON’S NAME: _____________________________ SON’S YEAR LEVEL: _______

I WILL / WILL NOT be attending the parent evening on Tuesday 8th March at 7pm.

SIGNED: ________________________________ (parent / guardian)

Mr P Rohan | Coordinator of Student Wellbeing / Counsellor
Global Homework Program

To register your interest to ghp@centre.org.au or call us on 9028 2447.

Cost: $35 per school term ($25 concession)

Sessions run on Tuesday 330pm – 5.30pm

North Melbourne Library, Hotham Room (Level 1)

The Huddle works with young people to enhance social cohesion.

Programs are developed and delivered by our staff and volunteers, in conjunction with the North Melbourne playing group and young people from the local community. Technology, sport, positive education, team building, mentoring and role models are used to challenge and engage, to create active community participants and to develop young people into leaders.

For more information on The Huddle or for any enquiries, call (03) 9320 2400 or email huddle@nmfc.com.au - See more at: http://www.nmfc.com.au/huddle/about-the-huddle#sthash.2oKMcky7.dpuf

About the Homework Club

The Homework Club provides a friendly and welcoming environment where secondary students can receive help from volunteer tutors with their homework and educational needs. The program focuses on support for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and aims to provide a holistic education service to students.

The Homework Club offers:

- volunteer specialist tutors in a range of subject areas, including maths, English and science
- study skills including research, essay writing and time management
- help with planning tertiary education and career pathways and job application skills
- specific support for students with English as an additional language
- informal mentoring from volunteer tutors
- multiple study areas including a computer room with printing facilities and a quiet area
- access to library and VCE resources.

Who is eligible?

All secondary school students from Year 7 to 12 (including VCE and VCEAL) and English Language students up to the age of 25.

When?

Monday to Friday during school terms from 4pm-6pm and school holiday sessions.

Where?

Fitzroy Library, 128 Moor Street, Fitzroy.

For more information

For more information and to enrol please contact:
Madeleine Calieja
Homework Club Coordinator
Connie Benn Centre
Ph: (03) 9426 1581 Mobile: 0408 344 413
Email: mcalieja@bsl.org.au
www.bsl.org.au/

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