Welcome to our September Newsletter

**STOP PRESS**

WE HAVE JUST HEARD OF SIGNIFICANT FUNDING CUT TO NON GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS BY THE NSW STATE GOVERNMENT.

All parents should read this Statement from our Bishops and contact their State Parliamentarian as suggested.

COMING EVENTS

Tuesday 18 September
Year 12 Informal Graduation Day

Wednesday 19 September
Year 12 Formal Graduation Day

Friday 21 September
‘Brigidine’s Got Talent’
Last Day of Term 3
Our Australian Spring is here in the yard at Brigidine. From my perspective the school is a very different place as the weather warms and the oppression of the cold dissipates. We are always people of the resurrection, however Spring is certainly a time when the resurrection is, in the girls’ words, “in your face”. I hope that you enjoy these photos of some of the beauty the girls walk through at school and also this prayer from Macrina Wiederkehr.

O You who Adorn the Earth with Beauty
Clothe me with your image. Just as you robe the meadows and fields with wildflowers and grain, so too, take special care in adorning me each day.
When I awake from sleep, clothe me with the dawning light. Embellish me with patience and compassion.
Beautify me with gentleness and humility. Remind me to put on the virtues you have planted in my being.
Let these be my robes of glory as I go forth, in faith, to meet the day with a willing spirit. And over all these virtues enfold me in love. Encircle me with the spirit of all that is noble, gracious and wise.
Clothe me with your beauty!

Ms Kate Edmondson
Principal
FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
Last week Brigidine’s Art Department presented us with yet another successful and magnificent Art Show which was a real credit to our community and to all the hard work and dedication from the staff and students. A special thanks to the parents who assisted by donating raffles and working on the night.

This week our Year 11 students have begun their final exams for their Preliminary Course and the Year 12s are currently revising work in preparation for their HSC. This is a challenging time for our Year 12s as they need to remain focussed and on the upcoming HSC task yet at the same the end is so close. They really must keep applying themselves to all aspects of their studies.

SENTRAL EDUCATION
As you are all aware, this term we began using a new online roll marking system to record student attendance. Four weeks ago we proceeded to the next stage by sending parents text messages if their daughter was absent partially or completely. Whilst there have been a few glitches, which we continue to work on, the response from parents and staff has been both positive and remarkable.
The attendance of students overall has improved significantly. As problems arise we are sorting them out. We thank the parents for their support and patience with the new implementation.

GOOD NEWS STORY
There is no greater action which exemplifies our College motto “Fortiter et Suaviter”, “Strength and Gentleness”, than to hear or witness a genuine act of kindness from our students. Last week I received a called from a member of the public congratulating us and thanking the College for the daily assistance and kindness she receives from two of our students. This lady suffers from multiple sclerosis, more commonly referred to as MS. As her condition deteriorates the more assistance she requires.
This lady is still mobile and catches public transport on daily basis but needs assistance getting on and off the bus. Two of our beautiful Year 10 students do this every day without thought or question as if it is the most natural thing for them to do. I would like to publicly acknowledge this act of kindness by congratulating the young ladies, Krysta McMahon and Brenna Riley, on showing this lady genuine kindness, strength and gentleness for which she is so grateful.

**BULLYING**

Sometimes we get asked whether bullying exists at Brigidine. We would love to say that that we have no bullying what so ever but unfortunately that’s not the reality. Bullying is one of the realities of our society. How we respond to bullying as a community and as individuals is important. We certainly have zero tolerance for bullying. When issues of bullying are brought to our attention, they are dealt with immediately and effectively.

In our society there are many different ways that bullying may occur. Did you know that Cyberbullying is the fastest growing trend that many believe is more harmful than typical schoolyard bullying? It is very well known that most of us can be contacted 24/7 via the internet or our mobile phones. As a result victims can be reached anytime and anyplace. So for many children, the reality is that home is no longer a refuge from the bullies. Children may be successful in avoiding threats and abuse in the classroom, only to find text messages and emails from the same bullies when they arrive home. A good website to visit as an assistance with Cyberbullying is [www.cybersafetyforparents.mn.catholic.edu.au](http://www.cybersafetyforparents.mn.catholic.edu.au)

As parents and educators we must monitor and be aware of what our children are up to and somehow help them understand the impact of what is happening whether they are the victim or the bully.

We all naturally want to protect our children and the children in our care. Each child has the right to feel safe at school. It is sad that bullying does still exist. Possibly the main reason for this is adults are unaware of it or may feel powerless to stop what is often a secretive activity. The warning signs may be:

**Social and Psychological indicators:**

- Anxiety
- Weeping for no reason
- Being withdrawn and silent
- Sudden inexplicable mood swings
- Outbursts of anger for no apparent reason
- Reluctance to go to school
- Not wanting to walk to school with other children
- Marked deterioration in school work
- Being desperately unhappy at the end of the weekend
- Mysterious loss or theft of belongings
- Signs of physical injury such as bruising
- Feigning illness
Parents can make a major difference to the mindset of children vulnerable to bullying. Here are some suggestions:

1. Closely monitor your child’s feelings about school and other children. Look beyond the superficial responses and check signs of real contentment.

2. When the experience of bullying is detected, it is important to listen carefully and find out exactly what is happening. Remain calm but supportive, confident and protective. Children who are bullied need someone to believe their story. Sometimes the only thing the child wants is the knowledge that they have their parents’ full support.

3. Take measured action. For instance, ring and make an appointment with the appropriate person at school (Homeroom teacher, Year Coordinator, Assistant Principal). Work out a joint strategy with the school.

4. Initiate actions designed to build up your child’s confidence and self-esteem, such as: spending more time with her in favoured activities, praising her for achievements and for being ‘such a great kid’, avoiding negatives, including things you normally ‘nag’ about.

5. Teach your child how to be confident and resilient.
   - Walk tall (don’t hunch or ‘crumple’)
   - Look people in the eye (don’t stare at the floor)
   - Speak clearly and distinctly (not in a whisper)
   - Breath calmly and keep the pace normal (don’t fidget or twitch)

6. Offer advice about ways to ‘deflect’ the bullying, such as non-committal replies.

Above all remember that you and your child have the support of the staff at Brigidine College to assist but we need to be informed if there bullying occurs.

**House Keeping Reminders**

- **Next term students return in their summer uniform, so please make sure they have been checked in time.** This means that the length of the uniform should be touching the floor when kneeling.

- **Next term students return to school on Tuesday 9 October, 2012.**

- The school day commences at 8.35 am when the first bell rings. Please ensure that your daughters are at school by 8.30am. Period 1 begins at 8.40am. If students are late they are unable to go to Period 1 because this means they will be interrupting the lesson which is unfair for the teacher and the students. Some students seem to be making it a habit arriving late so that they miss this period.

- Remember if you are picking your daughter up from school in the morning or the afternoon, then this should NOT be done in Aeolia Street. As we approach the end of term, I encourage all students to remain focus and aim to achieve their personal best.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support.

**Mrs Antoinette McGahan**
YEAR 8 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEST
On Wednesday 10 October 2012, all Year 8 students in Sydney Catholic Secondary Schools (systemic) will sit for the Year 8 Religious Education Test. Students from the, Lismore, Bathurst, Wagga and Wilcannia-Forbes Dioceses will also sit for this test. The questions are designed to assess knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith as taught in Catholic Secondary schools. Questions are based on the Stage 4 (Years 7 and 8) Religious Education Curriculum. The test will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions and will be scored out of a possible 50 marks. Educational Assessment Australia (EAA) at the University of New South Wales will mark the test, analyse the results and produce the reports and certificates.

The Year 8 Religious Education Test is an assessment of and for learning, and will provide valuable information regarding your child’s understanding of the Catholic faith and their overall progress in Religious Education. Furthermore, the results of the test will enable our school to provide additional assistance to support your child in his/her learning, especially in areas of identified need.

Thank you for your support of this test and please do not hesitate to contact me or your child’s Religious Education teacher if you have any further questions.

Christina Day
Religious Education Coordinator

PUBLIC SPEAKING, DEBATING AND MOCK TRIAL HOLIDAY WORKSHOPS IN WAVERLEY
Students may be interested in the public speaking, mock trial and debating workshops that Speak Out Education are holding at Waverley in the Spring school holidays 25 September to 5 October, for students in years 7-9.

Speak Out Education was founded two years ago by Sydney University students who wanted to improve the speaking skills and confidence of school students through fun and interactive workshops. In the Winter 2012 holidays, we taught over 75 students on the North Shore and in the Eastern Suburbs. Our surveys indicate that all participants believed our programs were fun and had improved their speaking skills.

For further details about or the programs please see website www.speakouteducation.com.au
ST BRIGID’S FIRE

*St Brigid’s Fire has been quite busy this term. Here is a report on some of our recent activities.*

**St Brigid’s Fire’s trip to a talk by Cardinal Oscar Rodriquez Maradiaga, head of Caritas Internationalis**

On Friday 24 August four Brigidine students attended a talk by Cardinal Oscar Rodriquez Maradiaga, President of Caritas Internationalis, called ‘A Chance of a Lifetime’ at ACU Strathfield Campus. His Eminence discussed with students from a variety of high schools the work of Caritas and his experiences in working against poverty and other social injustices.

He spoke about how Caritas works worldwide and gives relief to countries suffering from natural disasters, such as Haiti. Caritas also works on long term projects in countries where warfare and political conflict cause ongoing structural injustices. Caritas works not only to raise funds for immediate aid but also aims to raise awareness about systemic social injustices in our world.

The Cardinal also answered questions from the audience, including one that asked him to choose the more valuable between giving and raising money or volunteering our time. His wisdom was evident in his answer, which was that both are equally important. However, he did go onto say that time is gold in itself, and so by volunteering we are giving others our gold. He also talked about how education is vital to eliminating poverty and a difficult barrier to overcome when educational facilities are very poor.

Cardinal Maradiaga made the point that the continuing interest of young people in learning about and fighting injustice was inspiring to him in his work. This is despite the many death threats he has received over the years. His Eminence wanted us to be “radioactive Christians”, meaning that our Christian values would be plainly seen and infectious to all we meet in our social justice work.

As Caritas means love, we hope to be radioactive students that spread love in the world.

**Annmary Anthony, Vivienne Deng, Chantelle Liew, and Erica Soon**
ST BRIGID’S FIRE HEALTHY TREATS PROGRAMME

On Wednesday 22 August a group of girls from Year 7, 9 and 10 assembled in D11 around the industrial ovens to cook some yummy and healthy treats for the senior students and teachers going out on night patrol to take to the homeless. We have heard that the treats were quickly snapped up and very much appreciated.

The girls made muffins and biscuits containing fruits and cereals – no chocolate or nuts allowed! Prudent taste testing evaluated the results as fantastic!

I was very impressed that the girls

- gave up 2 hours of their time to bake
- baked food that they knew they would not be eating
- brought in the ingredients for the cooking
- worked so well together as a group, helping each other out and swapping skills and strategies
- cleaned up after themselves
- were so light-hearted and happy in their work
- were thoughtful and careful in their cooking, wanting to do their best for people they would never meet
- baked for the homeless knowing that they would not be thanked by the recipients of their work.

Thank you to all the girls who made our first Healthy Treats session for 2012 so rewarding and I am really looking forward to our next session on Wednesday 19 September.
YOU CAN: MOBILE PHONE COLLECTION CAMPAIGN
Between now and the end of Term 3, St Brigid’s Fire is aiming to collect 50 unwanted mobile phones for Canteen, the Australian organisation for young people living with cancer. The phones should contain the battery. Place your unwanted phone (check with your parents first!) in the box in the front office and we will send them onto Canteen.

Here is some further information:

Supporting young people with cancer is now as easy as donating your old mobile phone. CanTeen has partnered with Sony Foundation to raise $15 million for CanTeen’s Youth Cancer Fund. The Fund will greatly improve the lives of young people with cancer, through age-appropriate centres and services throughout Australia. Sony Foundation will swap old mobile phones for cash to raise money for the development of youth cancer programs and services. Donated phones will either be refurbished and resold or broken down and recycled. Visit the website: http://www.canteen.org.au/default.asp?menuid=439

West African Appeal
Caritas Australia, Australian Catholic aid and development agency, is currently raising funds to help alleviate the food shortage crisis happening in West Africa at the moment. You may have seen their advertisements in the newspaper and their advertisements on television. Nine nations and more than 18 million people need aid as severe droughts, poor harvests, conflict and rising food prices cause the disastrous food crisis in the Sahel region of West Africa. To donate go to one of the following websites.

Ms Monica Jarman.

LATEST BRIGIDINE CAREERS BULLETIN:
Careers Bulletins No 11 and No 12 can now be accessed on the Careers Page of the College Website.
Mrs Lynne Wallace
Careers Advisor

2012 is the first year Advancedlife Photography has made a digital copy of every child’ school portrait available to all parents that purchased a portrait image as part of their pack for free. Advancedlife is currently running the Advancedlife Photography School Download Competition. For competition details go to www.advancedimage.com.au
THE ANNUAL VISUAL ARTS EXHIBITION 29 - 30 AUGUST 2012
TIME TO CELEBRATE

*Time to Celebrate* and celebrate we did the creative talents of your daughters in the Visual Arts. The exhibition commenced in Tullow with a wash of colour. Every student in Year 7 and 8 was represented and also the prize winning collaborative work from the Clancy Prize.

Outside we swooned by the *Lateens* under the baton of Mr McFadden. While the Parents and Friends topped up our glasses of champagne, beer and juice. Synan Hall had works from Years 10-12. On stage were the artworks from the Randwick City Art Prize and winners while behind the stage were our Year 10 Videos.

The main focus of this evening was the Bodies of work for Year 12. The Year 12 students explored a range of ideas about their world, using a variety of materials. They had conceptual strength and they had pushed the material practice. The year 12 students are to be congratulated. Behind every great class is a dedicated teacher and I would also like to congratulate Mrs Smyth.
Merilyn Fairskye was our special guest speaker. Merilyn is a Sydney based artist who exhibits widely both in Australia and overseas. Her artwork encompasses a broad range of media and methods from public artworks to video installations, films and photo-based works. She teaches in the Media Arts studio of Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney.

Year 7 has studied her portrait series and this was evident in the Photoshopped images eyes open and eyes closed. She also spoke with our senior students earlier in the year about artist practice. I would like to thank Merilyn Fairskye for opening the exhibition and her praise of the students work. Many students were singled out and she was impressed by the variety of work produced by our girls.

An exhibition does not happen without the support of many people. Gift Vouchers were donated from the following businesses.

- Maryann Twitchings Podiatry Rosebery
- Tradewinds Maroubra
- Hawkins Butchery Maroubra
- Humble Beginnings
- Mitre 10 Matraville
- Intercontinental Hotel Sydney
- Glamour Waxing Studio Randwick
- Willow Flowers on Avoca Street, Randwick

Special thanks are to the following:
Mrs Rossiter, Mrs Harbutt, Mrs Scivetti, Mr Keyes, Mr Megacidis, Mrs Harvey, Ms Horne, Merilyn Fairskye Mr Mc Fadden and the Lateens, Mrs Smyth and Mr Hainsworth
Parents and Friends especially the president Mrs Roberts

The P&F raffle was well supported and many people walked away with some great prizes. A Special thank you to Kristal Ariens and Monique D’Agostino for the extra support they gave (especially sourcing raffle prizes) and to the Year 12 parents who donated raffle prizes and assisted on the night.

In particular I would like to thanks Ms Edmondson and the school executive for their support of this exhibition. It was a fantastic exhibition and I look forward to seeing everyone there again next year.

Ms Deirdre Brennan
Visual Arts Coordinator
SCHOOL HOLIDAY SPORT CAMPS
Please check the brochure on the notice board outside the office for information on school holiday Sport Camps in Cricket, Netball, Soccer and Hockey.

TUESDAY TOUCH
All 19 Touch Teams have been entered in the Eastern Suburbs Touch Competition. A reminder that $70 Registration will be billed to your Term IV account. All draws, manager packages and shirts will be given out next term.

SPORT AWARDS
On Tuesday 4 September we recognised the achievements of many of our students across a wide variety of sports, and celebrated their success throughout the year. We were privileged to have Toby Kane with us on the day to help present these awards.

Toby is a Paralympian, who won a Bronze Medal in the Super G at the 2006 Winter Games in Torino. In the 2011 World Championships he won Bronze and is now preparing for the next Winter Olympics in 2014 in Russia. Toby was a great ambassador for his sport and an inspiration for the girls showing them how to overcome adversity and the success that is possible even when training as an elite athlete and attending University.
Congratulations to all the girls on their achievements in sport. Thank you to the CGSSSA Dance Teams on you outstanding performances and thank you to the House Captains for the smooth running of the Assembly.

Toby awarded the following students with their certificates:

- **AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATIVE** - Vanessa Panousis (Basketball)
- **PIERRE E COUBERTIN AWARD** - Kate Murphy
- **JUNIOR SPORT CHAMPION** - Ruby Breen and Jessica Thornton
- **SENIOR SPORT CHAMPION** - Kate Murphy
- **SPIRIT CUP 2012** - Aquinas

**CGSSA EVENTS**

Good luck to the following teams who will be representing Brigidine College in the upcoming weeks.

- Brigidine Tennis Squad, 6-7 September
- Brigidine Tap, Jazz and Creative Hip Hop Teams, 12 September
- All girls competing in the Combined Catholic Colleges Athletics at Homebush 14 September
- NSW High School Basketball Championships, 20 and 21 September.
Congratulations to Natalie Melis who competed in the Northern Region Interschool Championships and came first in the Alpine Event and third in the Ski X for her age division qualifying her for the State Championships. The State Championships were held on Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 August. Natalie came 11th in the ski X and 7th in the Alpine Event qualifying her for the National Championships in the Alpine Event as only the top 10 individual athletes progress to the next level.

Natalie racing in one of the GS races for the Australian Children’s Championships on Saturday

Mrs Kate Elder
Sports Coordinator

WOMEN’S SEVENS ‘PATHWAY TO GOLD’ TRIALS
Rugby Sevens is now recognised as an Olympic sport and will make its debut at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio, Brazil. It is with great excitement that we are holding trials to help identify athletes who display the potential to represent Australia in the Women’s Sevens team at Olympic Games. More details available on www.rugby.com.au/sevens

A rugby background is not required to attend the Sydney trials being held on Sunday 21 October. Applicants are to be aged 16-30 years from all sporting backgrounds, e.g. touch football to hockey, league to cricket. You need to be fit, coordinated and competitive, ready to take sport to the next level.

Mark Bos – Development Manager
Sydney South/East & Inner West
Australian Rugby Union Ltd.