

# ST CHARBEL'S COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



Issue 1

Term 1, February 2018

## Principal's Message - Rev Fr Maroun Youssef

We have had a very positive start to the year. We formally welcomed our students and staff with an Opening College Mass on Ash Monday with the blessed visitation of the relics of St Maroun. This was a joyous occasion for the College which was celebrated by our K-12 students and staff in attendance with His Excellency Bishop Antoine Tarabay and His Excellency Bishop Mounir Khairallah.

Every New Year brings hope with new possibilities. We all expect great things from our students and our teachers. My hope this year is through the intercession of St Maroun & St Charbel that students and teachers think of school as a place where communities of learners gather to do interesting work that matters.

This year we anticipate to recognise and instil the true identity of being a Maronite with each of our students. This is even more so encouraged with you as parents to emphasise values of our Lebanese heritage in your daily interaction with your children. It is very important for us to share our roots with the next generation and emphasise our belonging and what it means to be a Maronite. Throughout the year, with the assistance of our new College Chaplain Fr Tony Moussa, our children will be encouraged to participate and learn our valued history. This is something that each and every generation should be proud of as we stand tall like the Cedars of Lebanon.



In saying this I am aware that many of our families on a regular basis travel to our homeland Lebanon during the summer months. As much as we encourage your return to Lebanon for your children to experience the culture and lifestyle of Lebanon, we must remember that your child's teaching and learning is paramount to myself and the staff of St Charbel's College. For this reason I would like to remind each and every one of you that when travelling to Lebanon or other, that you take consideration of the advice of your child's teacher. Please **do not** make travel arrangements prior to confirming with Director of Primary and/or Director of Pastoral Care 7-12 if leave at that time is suitable as there will be restrictions for students who take more than 10 days leave of absence from their schooling. This may incur failure of assessments or conditions of enrolment which will be the responsibility of you as a parent.

Again your child's learning is paramount to the College.



This month we instilled our new College Board members whom we are very grateful to have as advisors for the College. Their support and dedication to the College is paramount to the success and moving forward of our College into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century to accommodate all NESAs requirements. Our College Board Members consist of the following: Rev Fr Louis Ferkh – Chairperson; Rev Fr Maroun Youssef – College Principal; Mr Stephen Stanton – Legal Advisor; Mr Joe El Khoury – Primary Education & University Advisor; Mrs Vivian Awad – Secondary Education Advisor; Mrs Jennifer Payne – Primary Education & University Advisor; Mr Tony Ishak – Media; Mr Michael Hedwan – Architect & Parent Representative and Mr John Challita – Accountant.

Furthermore, for all matters in relation to outstanding school fees or request for fee assistance please make arrangements to meet with Mr Peter Collins, St Charbel's College Business Manager.

May this Lenten season bring renewed hope and faith in each of your families.

*"Lent is a good time for sacrificing. Let us deny ourselves of something every day to help others."* Pope Francis



Welcome all to the 2018 academic year. I hope you all had a blessed and restful break with your families. This year, our focus is to continue to implement informed, research based educational practices that improve student performance. Best practice research centres on what educational leaders and teachers do that has the most positive effect on student learning and achievement. As teachers, we will consolidate our knowledge, understanding and application of the explicit teaching model in order to engage students in their learning and enhance educational outcomes, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy.

### Playground Enhancements

Providing our students with enhanced learning opportunities is not limited to the classroom. Learning is best served when considered in every aspect of their schooling life. It has been wonderful to see the students experiencing different types of play at school. The new playground space has been specifically designed to stimulate student learning through sensory play.

*Sensory play* includes any activity that stimulates a child's senses: touch, smell, taste, movement, balance, sight and hearing.

Sensory activities facilitate exploration and naturally encourage children to use scientific processes while they *play*, create, investigate and explore. The sensory activities allow children to refine their thresholds for different sensory information helping their brain to create stronger connections to process and respond to sensory information.

### The Benefits of Sensory Play

Sensory play can improve language skills – playing with different types of textures and objects helps children build new ways of talking about the world

Sensory play helps fine motor skills – this type of play assists a child to coordinate small muscle groups

Sensory play is calming – Sensory play helps students regulate internal discomfort, whether that discomfort is boredom, restlessness or some other type of agitation

As you can appreciate, this type of enhancement was very costly. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the P&F committee, who utilised the money raised at the school fete to help fund the project. There is nothing more satisfying as an educator than to see students with a renewed sense of pride in their school environment. It opens their eyes to the wonder of creativity and possibility that they can apply to their own learning journey.



Welcome to the 2018 academic year!

On Monday 12 February, our College was blessed to partake in a three-fold celebration: Opening school Mass; Ash Monday; and the visit of the relics of St Maroun.

The relics were warmly greeted by our students who formed a guard of honour, and carried with strength by our senior students as they processed to the hall.

The Mass was reverently led by His Excellency Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay, Bishop Mounir Khairallah, and the monks of the Lebanese Maronite Order. The rich liturgy and the words of encouragement from his Excellency was a great way for our students to be immersed in their cultural and religious identity.

May the Great Season of Lent encourage you to become the person God has called you to be!

God bless.



St Charbel's students and staff have commenced the year with energy and we are all ready to continue our **learning journey**.

This year we are called to live the message of *JOY*.

*JOY* stands for:

*JESUS* – He is the centre of our lives; we are disciples of Christ. We encounter Christ in all those we interact with and offer our joys and sufferings to Him.

*OTHERS* – “Find happiness in making others happy” is the way St Mary of the Cross lived her life, showing compassion, love, forgiveness and service - faith in action.

*YOU* – Living out the above, we become more grateful, patient and selfless, and true followers of Jesus Christ.

Examples of *JOY* already spread:

- **Year 7** were welcomed to High school in a warm and organised manner, through the guidance of Mrs Massoud (Year 7 Pastoral Care Coordinator), their teachers and their **Year 10 peers**. Thanks to Miss Michael (Year 10 Pastoral Care Coordinator) for organising the Year 10 student helpers.
- **Goal setting** and **organisation skills** in Home room and Pastoral Care sessions. **Senior students** received a **study desk calendar** to help them prioritise. Thanks to Mrs Zidros (Year 11 Pastoral Care Coordinator) for organising this thoughtful gift.
- **Rebecca Moubarak** (Captain of Communication) delivered an inspirational speech where she shared her own experiences of being a **Student Leader**. She also provided tips on how to deliver an effective SRC speech. From there, the **Year 7-11 SRC candidates** presented speeches that displayed a desire to **make a difference in our community**.
- **Year 12 SRC**, led by **Maram Kanaan** and **Matilda Chami**, greeted parents with a special gift in wishing a “**Happy St Valentine’s Day**” during Kiss and Go.
- **Year 8 students** and Mrs Panteli (Year 8 Pastoral Care Coordinator) **finalised the “Recycle for sight” initiative** where our community donated **184 pair of glasses!** They will be sent to those in need, e.g. Aboriginal communities and the Phillipines.
- **Year 9 students** and Mrs Kalpakoulas (Year 9 Pastoral Care Coordinator) presented a thoughtful PowerPoint in assembly to promote **Project Compassion** for Lent.
- **Year 12 SRC**, led by **Vanessa Tamer**, **Celine Saidi** and Mrs Hitti (Year 12 Pastoral Care Coordinator), displayed **stewardship** in promoting recycling of bottles (10c a bottle). Already 292 bottles have been collected! Proceeds go to Project Compassion.

Wishing all members of the St Charbel's community a *JOYful* year!



**Australian Catholic Youth Festival** December 8, 2017.

“It is good to know that there are thousands of young like minded individuals who like me, incorporate their faith into their daily lives. Overall the day will definitely be one of the highlights of my schooling life.” (Jordan Saade, Year 12)

“I loved the concert-like celebration we shared; with everyone singing and laughing. I loved that everyone was happy and free, entirely focused on the one and true God.” (Brooke Demian, Year 12)

“The Maronite Mass was a standout for me, seeing people from non-Maronite descent be so intrigued to know more about our culture and heritage, which was sketched to them by Sub-Deacon Danny in his talk about our iconography.” (Antonio El Kazi, Year 12)

“ACYF was a reinforcement of how beautiful and awe-inspiring my Catholic faith is. I just love being Catholic! The highlight of ACYF for me was the Maronite Mass and Adoration. It was so special that I wished that Mass went on for another hour! Similarly, at Adoration I found myself gazing in the eyes of Jesus. I offered all my hopes, dreams and worries of the future and placed it in his hands.

Another highlight for me was seeing student's initial attitude of reluctance and feeling bothered change to realising that attending the festival was one of the best decision they have ever made in their life (I secretly knew that they would be surprised!). The pure joy that radiated from the students was their personal encounter with Jesus.

I am very grateful that I went on this journey with committed, sincere and practicing teachers who all share the mission and vision of deepening student's relationship with Christ and inspiring students to become saints of the new millennium - teachers like this remind me of my vocation as a RE teacher.” Miss H. Nguyen

“Listening to Simon Carrington's talk about the value of marriage and the preparation towards true love has deeply changed my perspective of love and marriage.

The Plenary gatherings were also the most joyful experiences as the thought of so many Catholics uniting in effective discussions was mind blowing.” (Padova Saouma, Year 11)



**Colossians 3:23 teaches us – Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord.**

Year 12 students, let this message resonate with you today. This year will be tough and at times you may feel like giving up, but it is important to remember why we work so hard. Each one of us strives to achieve our dreams. Success does not come aimlessly. Those who long for success must endure hard work, tribulations and make sacrifices. Year 12 can certainly be overwhelming with studying, social commitments and extracurricular activities filling your schedules. Therefore, maintaining a work/life balance is an essential approach to take in your final year at school. To achieve this, one must be well organised and consistently planning ahead. Keep a schedule and adhere yourself to certain guidelines. Always remember to reward yourself for hard work and not to burn yourself out in the early stages of the year. Such a balance will assist you in maintaining a positive mindset throughout your studies while also meeting other obligations.

When it comes to exam day, there is no perfect key to success. Each one of us studies differently. However, there are tried and tested measures that you can take to ensure you get the most out of your HSC year. Always keep a neat and tidy workspace that is strenuously organised. Not only will this assist with time management, it will also prevent you from becoming overwhelmed with the amount of work required of you. Another essential method of achieving on exam day is maintaining a positive mindset. Never compare your study habits to those around you. Again, everybody studies differently and what others are doing may lead you to question your own abilities and commitment to your studies. Trust in yourself and instead of comparing with those around you, work as a team and assist each other throughout the year. Practice is key in year 12. Of course, you must first understand and learn your syllabus. However, merely understanding content will not get you very far. You must be able to apply your knowledge to HSC questions. Thus, complete past papers on a regular basis and get them marked by your teachers. Also remember to pay significant attention to your teacher's comments and aim to improve upon what they've instructed you. There is truly no better way to succeed. My final recommendation is to start early. I understand the temptation of leaving assignments and exam study until the last minute but I implore you to push yourself to eliminate this habit. Starting early will ensure you have sufficient time to truly understand the concepts you are studying, allow you to ask more questions to your teachers and reduce any added pressure that comes with cramming.

One of the best things about attending St Charbel's College is the pleasure of joining a truly supportive community. A key tenant of achieving in year 12 is embracing the support of those around you. This year is a collaborative experience. Without the support of teachers, family and friends, success is hard to come by in the HSC. At times, you will doubt your abilities and adopt a negative attitude. Therefore, it is essential to surround yourselves with positively minded people who understand your strengths and continually believe in you. A few words of encouragement can go a long way in times of worry. Maintaining a positive mindset will assist greatly in conquering the HSC so never be afraid to seek support from this wonderful community. Our college community gave me all the support I needed during the HSC. I chose to not use a tutor at home and instead decided to maximise the services of the passionate and helpful teachers at St Charbel's College. I think this confirms that you do not need to rely on tutors to perform well. Your best tutors are your teachers!

Deciding what you want to pursue after year 12 is one of the most difficult choices to make. When researching career options, consider your talents and interests rather than societal expectations. A staple of success is doing what you love, so look back on your life at school and consider what you excelled in and derived pleasure from. Utilise the career advisors within the college and be proactive when considering life after school. Strenuously consider what will allow you to grow as a person and pursue your true passions in life.

Finally, no matter what study strategy you utilise this year, never forget a vital aspect of succeeding in the HSC - faith. Your faith in God will ensure you never lose hope in times of stress and worry. The importance of a prayerful life (that thanks God for the talents he has bestowed upon you and asks for strength in the face of adversity) cannot be overstated. Faith in a loving God will assist in eliminating your doubts and fears, and will provide a positive framework from which you approach your studies and daily lives. You are blessed to be part of a community that emphasises the faith through regular Mass, Pastoral Care and Catholic Studies.

I thank the College for the opportunity to address you and wish you the best of luck in the coming year.



### Celebrating Success

On Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February the College was proud to host the High Achievers of the 2017 Higher School Certificate. The ceremony was a celebration of the successes of both the students and their teachers and was testament to their hard work and dedication.

One particularly pleasing aspect of these HSC results is the rapid improvement in HSC rankings. This year the College was ranked 162 in the Daily Telegraph Top 200 – up 54 places from the previous year. But success of this kind is not the result of just one year – it is the result of many years of quality teaching and learning, and the College is committed to continuing to improve the outcomes of all students.

In the 2017 Higher School Certificate, the College attained:

- 49 Band 6's across 19 subjects
- 27 subjects above state average
- 13 students with ATARs above 90

Of particular note are the three highest achievers of the 2017 Higher School Certificate:

George Mina 3<sup>rd</sup> Place – with an ATAR of 97 and Band 6 in Business Studies, Economics, Advanced English, Mathematics General 2 and Studies of Religion II



Jamie Rahme 2<sup>nd</sup> place - with an ATAR of 97.3 and Band 6 in Mathematics Extension 1 and Mathematics Extension 2 and Visual Arts



Thomas Bassil 1<sup>st</sup> place and **2017 DUX**, with an ATAR of 98.4 and Band 6's in Ancient History, Business Studies, English Advanced, Legal Studies and Mathematics General 2



The College also wishes to acknowledge many pleasing individual results and congratulates all students from 2017 for their commitment.



The Primary School got off to a great start this year. The students arrived refreshed and energised after the holidays. The academic year is now underway in earnest, so please support the staff by having your children arrive on time each morning and not removing them from class (for appointments or leave) unless absolutely necessary. Your children are always learning new work, so even a few days missed can make a difference to their learning.

I'd like to thank all the parents who supported the Meet and Greet evening on 13<sup>th</sup> February. The importance of your children reading was discussed, with parents asked to encourage your children to read every day. Make it fun by reading to your child, or with them, and talk about the story with them to get them thinking about what they have read. This will help with their comprehension skills.



## Stage 2 Coordinator - Ms Maxine Bell

Welcome back to the new school year. It is wonderful to see the happy faces of our students as they reconnect with their friends after the long break.

St Maroun's Mass on the 12<sup>th</sup> February will be long remembered by Stage 2 students. They were blessed with the presence of the relics of St Maroun. Students also entered Lent with the signing of the Ashes during our 2018 opening mass.

The first weeks have been very busy and productive. Year 3 and 4 classes have settled in well, with most students busily showing their new teachers good work habits. A minority of students however, are still struggling to settle into the new school year.

Homework is a collaborative effort between the classroom teacher and parents. Please work with the class teacher and ensure that your child completes homework and has the necessary materials for classwork. Show an interest in his/her schoolwork and praise and encourage efforts.

The term so far has shown a disappointing behaviour pattern in Year 3 and it is hoped that 1, 2, 3 Magic, Behaviour Management plans and the Classroom Standards will be adhered to.

I welcome back all teachers, students and parents who have been a part of St Charbel's progress in years gone by and I offer a warm welcome to our new families who have become a part of our school community. Welcome also to Miss Emma Partridge and Mrs Diane Sammour who have joined the Year 3 team and Miss Deahne Pinto who has joined the Year 4 team.



Welcome to Stage 3.

We are pleased to welcome the Year 5 students into the senior classes of our school. We also welcome our Student Representative Council and for the first time at St Charbel's College, our Primary Colour House Captains. We have a very keen team of student leaders who have some wonderful ideas and initiatives in store for 2018.

Our focus for Stage 3 this year is to develop independent, responsible and organised learners. These are skills which will serve our students well in Secondary School.

Year 5 will sit their NAPLAN test at the start of Term 2 from 15 - 17 May 2018. We will be working to prepare our students for these tests.

Year 6 will soon be undertaking an overnight educational tour of our national capital. Students will be given the opportunity to participate in a variety of educational programs with a focus on Australia's history, culture, heritage and democracy. This will support our History Unit, Australia as a Nation.

The Australian Government recognises the importance of all young Australians being able to visit the national capital as part of their Civics and Citizenship education. To assist families in meeting the cost of the excursion the Australian Government is contributing funding of \$20 per student under the Parliament and Civics Education Rebate program towards those costs. The rebate is paid directly to the school upon completion of the excursion.

We are very pleased to welcome our Stage 3 team of dedicated and inspiring teachers, some of whom are new to our school. In Year 5 we have Miss Jackson, Miss Kokla, Miss Arraj and Mrs Wells with Mrs Del Favero. In Year 6 we have Miss Stafford, Miss Dunne, Mr Vassallo and Mrs Leas with Mrs Adou-Raad.

We encourage you all to make a suitable time to meet your child's teacher. We are here to work with you as a team for the best interest of your children so please feel free to discuss with us any concerns you may have.

Chess classes for students from Years 1-6 were a huge success last year. Sydney Chess Academy has been running chess classes at our school every Friday at lunch times. The students have loved learning strategies and challenging themselves. During each class there is a tuition session followed by practical application of skills through playing with an opponent. We have quite a few budding young chess experts! If you are interested in enrolling your child, speak to the office or ask your child to come and see me for more information.

Wishing you all a happy and productive term. God bless.



### قد قيل إرادة النجاح مهمة، لكن الأهم منها إرادة التحضير للنجاح

من معلمات اللغة العربية للقسم الابتدائي، أهلا بكم جميعا في بداية السنة الدراسية للعام ٢٠١٨ آمليين أن تكونوا قد أمضيتهم فرصة سالمة و مريحة.

اندمج طلاب الروضة في برنامج المدرسة بعد اسابيع قليلة . بدأنا نسمع أصوات التلاميذ وهم يغنون أغان لبنانية. ونصيححتنا لكم أنه عندما يعود ولدكم إلى البيت، أقضوا معه أكبر وقت ممكن لأنه مشتاق إليكم، أسألوه عن الوقت الذي قضاه في الصف، عن النشاطات و الألعاب وعن ما تعلم في الصف خلال اللغة العربية. هذا يجعل التلميذ يشعر بحبكم له وباهتمامكم بدرسه، وهذا ما يساعده على التركيز وحفظ ما تعلم في المدرسة. وليحصل ولدك على نتيجة جيدة، من المستحسن أن تكون على تواصل دائم ومستمر مع المدرسة ومعلمات ولدك بالأخص.

معلمات اللغة العربية لهذه السنة الدراسية هم: السيدة ماري سندروسي، السيدة نوال قزي، السيدة بارتا يمين، السيدة ندى القزي، والسيدة ريتا بطرس.



### Library (K-12): Mrs Christine Golz/Mrs Simone Cullinan

We would like to welcome everyone back to the college for 2018 and especially to the library! February is a wonderful month to fall in love with books! We have been asking our students and teachers to tell us what they love about reading. Here are some examples of what our students said about reading:

"It allows people of all ages to learn new vocabulary, and relaxes the mind." Year 9

"You learn so many new things, you meet new characters and new places." Year 5

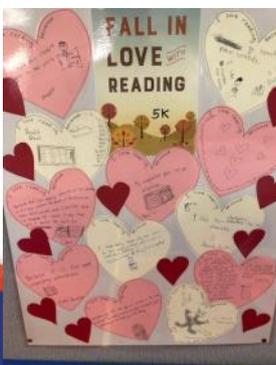
"It gives me the opportunity to have time to myself." Year 11

The dozens of enthusiastic responses confirm what we have known for a long time here in the library, the students of St Charbel's College love a good book!

The new Australian Children's Laureate for 2018 is much loved author Morris Gleitzman, who has written over 40 books. Many of these books are much loved by our students. Gleitzman says his role is to remind adults "whose lives are largely about getting through the day" to encourage and enable young people to "have as many reading experiences as possible", especially during the formative years between childhood and adolescence. You can read more about Morris Gleitzman as Children's laureate here:

<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/books/australias-new-childrens-laureate-morris-gleitzman-hopes-to-inspire-children-in-dark-uncertain-world-20180207-h0vr05.html>

Let's work in partnership this year to ensure that reading becomes a central part of the daily lives of our children at St Charbel's College.



The following students participated in the NSW OzTag State Championship held in Coffs Harbour on 9-11<sup>th</sup> February: Matthew Mourad, Sarah El-Zakhem, Annabelle Ghajar, Daniel Ghajar, Rochelle Ghajar and Ajay Chidiac.

It's a pleasure to have such talented and passionate students and athletes at St Charbel's College!



*All parents are invited to send any details or pictures of their children's exceptional honours in activities like: arts, music, sports, and so on!*

## Morning Supervision

Access to the College grounds will be centralised through the 'Kiss and Go' and Monastery gate from 8am only.

There will be no access to the College grounds or supervision for any students prior to 8am, for their own safety and wellbeing.

## Coles Sports for Schools

Please send all of your Coles Sports for Schools to the front office for collection. Your assistance with this is much appreciated. Thank you!

## Ethnic School Classes

Ethnic School Classes are available for students and adults.

Classes are held every Friday 4.30 – 6.30 pm and enrolments are now open!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### February

Mon 26 SCC Swimming Carnival

### March

Fri 9 Yr 9 Spirituality Day  
 Mon 12 Photo Catch Up Day  
 Fri 16 P&F Spirituality Day  
 Mon 19 St Joseph's Feast Day  
 Yr 7 Immunisation  
 Thurs 22-23 Yr 6 Camp Canberra  
 Fri 23 St Rafqa's Feast Day  
 Sun 25 Palm Sunday  
 Thurs 29 Holy Thursday  
 Staff Spirituality Day  
 Fri 30 Good Friday

The instalment for school fees is due on 23-Feb-2018.

Payments may be paid in cash, cheque, EFTPOS, credit card or directly into our bank account.

For all parents who are using the direct payment method into the school bank account to pay their school fees and charges, please ensure in completing your online payment, that the recipient field description is filled with your Family code in order to allocate these payments to the correct families. Arrangements may also be made via Centrelink



Kids@Weldon



Kids@Weldon



Kids@Weldon

Weldon Children's Services is offering a before and after school care program at St Charbel's College which commenced. Weldon has been operating before and after school programs and vacation care programs for families for more than 30 years. The St Charbel's program is running on-site from the Multi-Purpose Hall.

Information about our onsite program can be provided by contacting the Weldon Head Office at:

Telephone: 8741-0500

Email: [kids@weldon.com.au](mailto:kids@weldon.com.au)

- The hours of operation will be as follows:
- Before School Care: 6:30am until 8:20am
- After School Care: 3pm until 6:30pm
- Vacation Care: 6:30am until 6:30pm

Our programs offer a range of activities suitable for school aged children. We provide breakfast in the mornings and light nutritious snacks in the afternoons.

The school office have enrolment packages and information about our programs.

[Kids @ Weldon:](#)



Before & After School Care Contact Details:

**Centre co-ordinator:** Souraya Maatouk

**Centre Number:** 0418 735 976

**Email:** [stcmcs@weldon.com.au](mailto:stcmcs@weldon.com.au)