Dear Parents, Friends and Carers,

The Jacaranda’s are in full bloom and this means that summer is almost here and that Year 12 are almost finished. This is certainly the “silly” and busy season. St. John’s is always a busy place and Term 4 is usually twice and three times as busy as the rest of the year.

In the last few weeks we have had the Art Show, Friends of Room 12, Awards Night, the welcome and familiarisation afternoon for Year 8, 2015, the final P&F meeting of the year, Year 11 Leadership interviews and new staff interviews. The Year 12 students will begin their final exams next week and in a fortnight we have the End of Year Mass, Graduation Assembly and Graduation Formal. During this busy time it is always good, as suggested by Rudyard Kipling in his poem “If”,....

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too:
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream---and not make dreams your master;
If you can think---and not make thoughts your aim,
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same:
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build'em up with worn-out tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings,
And never breathe a word about your loss:
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And stoop and build'em up with worn-out tools;

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings---nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much:
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And---which is more---you'll be a Man, my son!

Rudyard Kipling

Chris Gold
Principal
This morning was quite hectic as we arrived to school to the scene of the outside broadcast of Hot 91. They were here because Tigi Johnson was awarded the Schultz Toomey O’Brien Lawyers, Young Achiever Award for October. Tigi received a cheque for $1000 and the school also received $1000. We will consult with Tigi as to what we will do with it but we are pretty sure that we will donate this money to some charities.

Today was also the last “ordinary” assembly for our Year 12 students. Every year this assembly is recognition by the Year 12 cohort of their teachers. This is a great tradition, one full of dignity and respect. These are the types of traditions that we need to foster and grow. Well done again Johnnies!

My most important duty today will be to inform our student leader applicants of whether they have been successful. This is always a tough day as some students will be disappointed at not gaining leadership. We will do it in as dignified a manner as we can and I take this opportunity to give my heartfelt thanks to the thirty-six young people who have taken the risk of disappointment by putting their names forward.

I wish that all who apply could be leaders but we cannot ignore the process and the strict parameters surrounding the process. I would also pass on my sincere thanks to Chris Brown for his countless agonising hours of preparation, interviewing and discernment. I shall formally announce the leaders next week once all families have been notified.

Last Wednesday we held the Year 8 Welcome and familiarisation afternoon. It was a great success mainly due to the excellent welcome by our Year 11 students who will be their buddies next year. A quick tour of the school campus, a short afternoon tea and some essential information for week one of the school year and the afternoon was over before you knew it. There was once again some great feedback from our new parents and it was exciting to see the sparkle in the eyes of the new students, keen to start sooner rather than later. 2015 is shaping up as another hugely rewarding year.

Next Wednesday we have our final Board meeting of the year and dinner and I take this opportunity to thank the Board for their commitment and fine work during the year.

God bless to all and

I am sure you heard of the plight of Jordan Darney, past student from 2010. He is in hospital in Prague with an $80k medical bill after an accident that was not covered by insurance. The following site covers the story and provides you with an opportunity to Donate to #bringjordanhome ozcrowd.com/campaigns/bring... Please feel free to help out the Darney family with your donation.

Chris Gold
Principal

St John’s College, Nambour

Year 5s, 2014, from Stella Maris and St Joseph’s will visit St John’s College to experience a day at our secondary school. Stella Maris visit on Monday 1 December and St Joseph’s on Tuesday 2 December. This cohort will be starting Year 7 in 2016.

Year 5s will arrive by bus with their teachers at approximately 9.30am and will be at St John’s till 1.00pm. Students are asked to bring their morning tea or they can make a purchase from our new tuckshop. A lunch of sausage on bread and a juice will be provided for them.

St John’s College is a Catholic secondary learning community established by the Good Samaritan Sisters in 1940. St John’s is well known for excellence in academic pursuits, dramatic and musical presentations, sporting success in rugby, netball, cross country and athletics and community service programs. Some unique features of the school are its pastoral care program, inclusiveness of students with disabilities, staff - student relationships, energetic Parents & Friends Association and community links.
Greetings from a stormy and wet Brisbane!

As I write this I am attending The National Learning and Teaching Conference with around 400 other educators from across Australia, New Zealand and two from Spain! For three days we are attending keynote presentations and workshops by a host of experts in a wide variety of fields. For those with Twitter, much of the information is being posted under the hashtag of #LTCON2014 …. Certainly worth a look!

The speakers include many well-known experts in various educational processes – people such as Professor Stephen Heppell, Michael Fullan, Hamish Curry and Oliver Phommavanh can all be googled to read about their interesting ideas on enhancing learning.

Such activities as these are important not only for the professional development of those staff who attend them, but also for the College as a whole. They are a good chance for us to see what others do, as well as seeing what we can do to improve the ways we do things at St John’s. I have been sending through reflections to our staff of things that have been picked up for them to also consider, and much of what is seen and heard will be part of our on-going efforts at St John’s.

There are also some interesting insights which are worth passing on to parents and carers … although it should be clearly noted that these are provided simply as “food for thought” – not necessarily endorsed by St John’s or going to be forming all of our future policy and / or practice:

- One challenge that was posed to us – “If our school is going to be the best school on the planet, what are you going to do about that today?” … this can apply to everyone in the learning partnership – students, staff and parents / carers.

- When was the last time that you went to a dentist or a doctor who advertised their services on a sign saying “Delivering exactly the same services in exactly the same ways that we did back in 1990?”

- Every profession embraces change at some point – but that does not mean it won’t be painful … having a tooth extracted still hurts! (This one is particularly relevant for us as we welcome our new Year 7s in 2015 – things will never be the same again!)

- As far as technology is concerned, a fool with a tool is still a fool – just more dangerous!

- Why can’t we give books from birth; tablets at 2 years and phones at 4 years? It is not about eyes and screens, it is what you do with them that is most important!

- If your school has lots of happy, smiling and laughing students in the playground, but not a smile to be seen once they enter a classroom, there is a probably a problem to address here!

I found myself discussing the last point with others at the conference over lunch – we are very fortunate at St John’s that, for the vast majority of our students at most times, we probably do have plenty of ‘happy’ students in our classes. We may not always be perfect, but I am pretty confident that we undertake our learning processes in a more conducive atmosphere than many other schools!

Senior Alternative Program Weeks.

As we move towards the end of the year, we do need to continue to express the expectation that all students should be attending school up until their designated final day. Full details of some additional important dates relating to various year levels appeared in last week’s newsletter.

Timetables for Senior Alternative Program Weeks are located at:

Please ensure that your children know what is expected of them and we appreciate your support in helping them meet these expectations.

Clean up time!

As we move towards the end of the year, now is the time to start having a “spring clean” of desks, lockers, bedrooms etc to see if there are any textbooks, library books and other resources which need to be returned to the College before students depart at the end of the year. It is often amazing what we find in supposedly “empty lockers” on the last few days of each year as we undertake our cleaning in preparation for new students!

All students do need to ensure that lockers are cleaned out, locks returned to Year Level Coordinators and all College resources are returned as required before their final day. Parent / Carer assistance and support in this process would be greatly appreciated.
From the Assistant Principal

The importance of Feedback

I have written several times over the last two years in newsletters about how wonderful the “Thank You” culture is amongst students at St John’s. It still amazes me how many say a simple “thanks” to their teachers as they leave every class – and this is certainly appreciated and encouraged.

We have also been encouraging our staff to enhance their feedback to students and parents, and will continue our work in these areas. Constructive and useful feedback delivered in a non-threatening manner is something that we all try to embrace.

Likewise, we would encourage parents, carers and students to provide feedback to our staff about their efforts. Many staff will undertake a variety of processes relating to self-reflection of their efforts as we move towards the end of the year. This could also include giving students the opportunity to provide formal feedback in their classes.

If there is something that you feel may be beneficial for the staff to know as part of their reflective teaching practices, you are very welcome to send this through to our staff for their consideration. This certainly is not limited constructive criticism … the staff also love to hear about things that you and the students enjoy or appreciate.

Effective feedback is yet another hallmark of that very powerful partnership in our learning activities that we take pride in at St John’s. Now is a great time to consider what each of us has to contribute to that again at the moment.

Mark O’Connor – Assistant Principal

BRAINWAYS TEAM CHALLENGE

Congratulations to Braden Fritz, Jonathon Haley and Bailey Gray who competed in a two-day team challenge this week. Whilst the boys were unsuccessful in making it through to the state finals, they represented St John's College admirably and deserve to be very proud of their efforts.

The challenge covered the areas of Humanities, Mathematics and Science and students competed against other schools in the Sunshine Coast region, including Grammar and Suncoast Christian College.

Well done to all three boys!
St John’s Surfing Championships

On Thursday morning at 5.30am, students arrived for the heats of our first ever school competition. The surf was small but clean and students had the opportunity to make plenty of turns.

So many of our students have shown tremendous improvement during the program, both boys and girls. The final have been decided and will be conducted next week. We will also have a small break-up at the conclusion during presentations.

Thank you to the instructors and our Dad’s that came along each week to support the program.

Final Girls
Anastasia Kriz
Brittany Stark
Molly Harvey
Jya Epstein

Boys Semi Final One
Tom Berryman
Tomas Kriz
Winton Brook
Jesse Toorok-Williams

Boys Semi Final Two
Jake Murphy
Jonah Visser
Zac Epstein
Aidan Pfeiffer

Good luck to all competitors.
IMPACT YOUTH

FUNDRAISING BREAKFAST

When: SUNDAY 16th November
WHERE: St Joseph’s Community Centre
Time: after 7am & 9am Mass
Sausage on bread      Bacon & egg roll
Hamburgers

Support our local youth team
St John’s College

End of Year Mass

Thursday
20th November

6.30 pm in the MPC

Celebrant: Father Graham Gatehouse

Students are to wear their formal uniform to the End of Year Mass
The Good Samaritan Youth group Vinnies Christmas Gift Appeal

How you can help those in need this year

The Good Samaritan Youth group (students St Johns College and St Joseph's Primary School) is coordinating the Nambour St Vinnies Christmas Appeal. The appeal assists people and families in need who, without our support, may not experience all that Christmas has to offer.

We have requested donations of gifts and food and we will put together especially designed hampers that will be distributed before the big day.

Last year we assisted over 90 families, couples and single people. The hampers include food, mostly Christmas fare but also gifts. Many families find that stretching the budget to include gifts even for children is impossible. Sadly, many single people who live far from family, or are estranged from them, face a Christmas season alone. A hamper helps bring joy into the lives of those we assist.

This year we will be trialling different approach - Adopt-a-family.

Each PC will be given a family to buy for with suggestions for presents for children, teenagers and food items. We gratefully accept donations to buy items for the Hampers. Vinnies can provide a receipt for tax purpose if required.

Collection

Please bring the items to school. We will be packing the hampers at St Joseph’s Primary school Hall, Reilly Road Nambour on Monday December 15th commencing at 9 am. We need assistance the hampers together. Hampers will be distributes on the 18th December. Any donations can also be brought to the Hall on that day or alternatively you can contact Tracey Langford 0417071168 for collection.

Thank you for your support

Tegan Duggin (President) Tracey Langford, Sharon Punter and Penny Horton Stephens

Coordinators St John’s Vinnies Christmas Appeal

National Computer Science School (NCSS)
4-13 January 2015
University of Sydney

This is a program for students of computer studies, science and mathematics and is about challenging participants to think like computer scientists. Students will be introduced to Python, an object oriented scripting language, as well as robotics and professional web design. Students will also have the opportunity to engage with academics, industry professionals and other like-minded young people in a stimulating and social environment.

Who should apply? Talented computer studies, science and mathematics students in Year 11 2014. Prior knowledge of computing is not assumed – you do not have to be studying computer studies to apply for this program!

Cost? Full-board accommodation is included as part of the cost, provided at The Women’s College, at the University of Sydney. Cost has been heavily subsidised by sponsors, to just $400 each.

How to register? Apply online at www.ncss.edu.au/summer_school with applications closing on 14 November 2014 (next week).
Amid the last-term rush and fatigue, it is important, albeit inadequate, to congratulate the performers (and composers) who made possible this year’s Friends of Room 12 concert at the Nambour Civic Centre. A combination of outstanding talent, creativity, professionalism made the most of the advantages that come with a comfortable venue and a professional tech team.

While the hard work and commitment shown all year by some of our impressive musicians led to some prolific levels of participation, most notably from year 11 student Harley Heppell, the earnest participation of some newcomers was also worthy of note. It has always been difficult for year 8 students to get involved in a long-term project of this nature; and our current practice of providing classroom music as a rotational subject throughout the year doesn’t make it any easier. Nevertheless, significant contributions from Claudia Kos, Tom Mc Donald, Catherine Quinn, Daniel Snels, Roxenne Young and especially Kiara Harvey provided a personal highlight.

Many thanks go to our orchestra members who, despite falling short of this year’s ambitious plans regarding repertoire (watch out for them next year), executed one of the best-received renditions of the evening. Thanks are extended also to those already overtaxed musicians who shrugged off assessment pressures and stress to assist in numerous other performances to allow their fellow students to shine.

Finally, it is appropriate to acknowledge the brilliance of our current crop of composers. From the song-writing talents of Harley Heppell, Brianna Green and the McKinneys to the instrumental sophistication of Luke McKinney and Lauren Hodges, and the electronic genius of Chakra Efendi, the concert revealed the creative spirit that underlines all the musical endeavours on display at an event such as this.

Congratulations to all who took part. Your success was richly deserved.
FRIENDS OF ROOM 12
SNAPSHOT #2
UNIFORM SHOP
and
TEXT HIRE

PLEASE NOTE NEW OPENING HOURS

WEDNESDAY 8.00am - 3.45pm
and
THURSDAY 8.00am - 3.45pm

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http://on.fb.me/12GGNI0

Student Absentee Line: 5444 9299