Key Dates
Friday 6 December
Final Day Year 7 - 10
END OF TERM 4 2014
Tuesday 28 January
Year 12 Ball
Wednesday 29 January
Year 8 – 12 new students Welcome Day
Thursday 30 January
Year 7 Welcome Day 1
Year 7 Parents Morning Tea 8.30am
Year 11 NDU Workshop Day 1
Year 12 Classes commence
Friday 31 January
Year 7 Welcome Day 2
Year 11 NDU Workshop Day 2
Monday 3 February
All students on campus
Sunday 9 February
Year 7 Family Picnic 11am
Monday 10 February
Year 11 Parent Night 6pm
Year 12 Soiree 6pm & Parent Night 7.30pm
Tuesday 11 February
P & F AGM 6.30pm
Wednesday 12 February
MESA AGM 6.15pm
Thursday 13 February
Year 8 Parent Night 6pm
Year 9 Parent Night 7.30pm

Principal’s Report
“How everybody today seems to be in such a terrible rush, anxious for greater developments and greater riches and so on, so that children have very little time for their parents. Parents have very little time for each other, and in the home begins the disruption of peace of the world.” Mother Theresa

How quickly the end of year has come - so much to acknowledge, so much to celebrate, so much to thank God for. Words never seem to be enough to capture the year that has been nor to capture how our young women have flourished and excelled. When I interview new students I always say to them that everything is in their own control now, not their parents, not their teachers, not their peers. They have the power to determine their present and their future. Our girls can choose to either embrace all that life at Mercedes has to offer them and to give back to the College community with as much dignity, respect, compassion and enthusiasm as they can muster or choose to sit back and let all the exciting opportunities pass them by. Every day I thank God for the privilege I have of working in this College community and of journeying with the wonderful young women who have been entrusted to our care.

Recently, an incident at school gave me cause to reflect on the crucial role that we as parents play in our children’s lives. We can never underestimate the influence we have over our children and the responsibility we have to model for them what it means to live with integrity and justice in an authentic way. I admire parents who quietly support their daughter to deal with things at school themselves when things perhaps go awry. Our children learn very little about resiliency, accepting responsibility for one’s own actions and respecting the rights of others if parents jump in without a moment’s hesitation to challenge the school when their daughter convinces them that they have been treated harshly or unfairly at school. I learned the hard way with my own children, often after much embarrassment, that there are always two sides to every story and, even though we want to immediately jump to our daughter’s defence when she is upset, we need to stay rational and respond in a measured way, as hard as that might be and listen first to understand. I hope that our girls learn and grow from everything that happens in their lives, be it good or bad. As teachers we may not always get it right, however, parents need to trust that we always act with the very best intentions and for the good of the young women in our care.

Insight from Catherine McAuley:
...as a most efficacious means of securing our Blessed Lady’s protection, we are to labour in earnest to imitate her virtues – her universal charity, her untiring patience, her profound humility, her unlimited obedience, her perfect conformity.

2013 Dragon Boat Racing winners; Serisier
Mission Leader’s Musings

The Season of Advent has arrived and our College community gathered for the Advent liturgy on the last day of the school year. Joyfully celebrating the beginning of the Advent season and giving thanks for the school year.

We know that Advent is a time of waiting – the hymns and lessons are full of the language of waiting and yearning and anticipation: O Come, O Come Emmanuel – Singing Songs of Expectation – Keep your lamps trimmed and burning.

However “waiting” during Advent is different than some of the other kinds of “waiting” we do – waiting for a bus, for example. Waiting for a bus is both boring and anxiety-producing. Will it be on time? Will I make my connection? Am I waiting at the right bus stop . . . what if I looked at the schedule wrong? Where IS that bus, anyway? That’s waiting in anxiety.

Waiting in expectancy is more like being seated in the concert hall, waiting for the curtain to rise. We know something wonderful is about to happen: and everyone else is waiting with the same expectation. We may know what to expect – we’ve bought the tickets, looked over the program, checked out the performers - but the experience is yet to happen. And so we wait – we wait expectantly; we wait in the tension of both knowing and NOT knowing – open to the experience about to unfold: expectant rather than anxious.

And I believe that is exactly the kind of “Advent Attitude” God calls us to aim for: to live in both trust and tension as we prepare, once again, for the coming of the One whose birth turned the world upside down as certainly as the preparations for his birthday turn our schedules upside down every year at this time. For the righteousness Jesus offered - the love he proclaimed – was too radical, too inclusive, too dangerous to survive without creating chaos for the status quo – then or now.

Our students have been challenged to reflect on this ‘Advent Attitude’ during our Advent Appeal. Each of our students has been called upon to give generously to our Advent Appeal to support those families in our community who are facing difficult challenges this Christmas.

Let us remember that Advent is an adventure! It is not just a commute to Christmas. So as we begin this Advent adventure let us be guided by the ancient values that have guided journeys of the faithful down through the ages. The values of prophets like Micah… do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with your God; and apostles like Matthew...love God and love your neighbour as yourself.

Wishing you a blessed and an Adventurous Advent

Sr Vedette Lendich SSC

I recently read this story about how we deal with things in our lives.

Once there was a King who summoned all his advisers to meet him before he went to war. He had fought and won many battles, and wanted his advisers to give him wise advice that would encourage him when he lost, and at the same time, keep his head level when he won. The advisers came back with several ideas, but they were all rejected by the King. Fearful for their lives, the advisers climbed a very tall mountain to meet with a wise old oracle who lived there. The oracle gave them words of advice for the King. The next day, the advisers met with the King and presented him with a ring they had made. Inside the ring were four words inscribed in the gold. The four words were: “This, too, shall pass”.

Just as they did long ago for the King, these four words remind us that every moment will pass. In times of extreme happiness, we need to gently remind ourselves to keep a level head and not be too full of ourselves – for this, too, shall pass. In a moment of extreme sadness, we can remind ourselves not to stay devastated, or lie awake at night worrying, for this, too, shall pass. Much of our life is made up of moments that pass by. Worry and regret serve little purpose. Victory and triumph last only an instant. As Mother Teresa said, “Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin.”

We can say: “This school year has come to an end. Next year has not yet come. We have the holidays to look forward to. Let us enjoy the summer break and refresh ourselves to return next year, ready to begin again.”

Beginning next year, Mercedes College will be embracing a culture of positive psychology and wellbeing across our community – parents, students and staff. Much has been written about positive education and on Tuesday 10 December at Sacred Heart College in Sorrento Associate Professor Lea Waters will be conducting a workshop for parents on the topic. In the presentation, the science behind a strength-based approach to child development will be outlined and consideration given to how this approach can be used to create young people who feel good and function well. To book tickets please visit: http://www.sacredheart.wa.edu.au/online-store/product/91-positive-psychology-parent

To everyone who makes up the Mercedes College community I wish a very blessed and joyous Christmas. May the days of Advent that still lie ahead of us be a time of rich and meaningful spiritual renewal. I hope each of our young women enjoy a restful and re-invigorating break. Most of all I hope they will take time to be with their family and to share those wonderful gifts of warmth, love, peace and giving that God has given to them. Parents let’s ensure that we know where our children are, who they are with, and if they’re in a situation that might be risky. I wish everyone a safe holiday if they are travelling and a safe return for our girls in 2014.

We bid farewell to those students and staff leaving us at the end of this year. May their future be always blessed with happiness. Each has contributed to the Mercy Story and we know they will continue to touch others with Mercy.

Peace and best wishes.

Sheena Barber, Principal

Second hand Book Sale
Saturday 7 December – Cancelled
Dear Parents

Over the past week you would have seen many media reports about the Abbott Government’s withdrawal from the previously agreed funding model known as the Better Schools Plan.

I am very pleased to advise you that on December 2, the Prime Minister reversed his stance on this issue and has now given a commitment to deliver funding certainty for Catholic schools over the next four years.

This announcement delivers certainty for our system both in terms of the total amount of Federal funds available and the manner in which it is delivered. It will ensure that all of our schools are able to plan appropriately over the short to medium term to support the current and future needs of students and staff.

I commend the Federal Government for their commitment to improving educational outcomes for all students across the country.

Yours sincerely

Dr Tim McDonald
Director Catholic Education in WA

Pastoral Care News

Year 7/8 Learning Community
Year 7 - Miss Danae Murphy

Term Four feels like it only just began, but the Year 7 girls have had many things to enjoy. The girls enjoyed their Reflection Day at Maylands Bowling Club and the opportunity to try some bowling. We also had a wonderful day at Perth Zoo where the girls undertook a variety of Geography activities. Several staff commented on the fantastic behaviour of the girls. Yesterday’s Mass at the Cathedral was a very fitting way to end the year. It was so beautiful to see how many family members were able to join us. I know that the girls appreciated your presence on the day.

I am pleased to announce our final group of House Heroes for this term. They are Maraleen Slabber (McAuley), Christina Mathew (Wright), Kimberley Farr (McDonald), Gabrielle Rutter (Sersier), Kate Reid (Cooper) and Mikaela Da Rui (Frayne). At our final Year 7 assembly we watched a PowerPoint presentation with photos of events throughout the school year. As we looked at those first Orientation Days, it was hard to believe that those were the same girls that are now almost ready to start Year 8. For some, it has been a year filled with challenges but it has been so encouraging to see the girls rise to the occasion and mature throughout the year. I consider it a real privilege to have been able to journey with you and your daughters this year through their first year of high school and I look forward to continuing that journey in Year 8 next year. Best wishes for a safe and enjoyable Christmas and holiday.
Year 9/10 Learning Community
Year 9 - Miss Callie Steven

So another year has drawn to a close and Christmas is almost around the corner. I have to say that it has been a busy term for me taking over as the temporary Year 9 Coordinator, but an enjoyable one overall. I feel that I have been particularly lucky to have met many of your daughters that I would not otherwise have done. It has also been quite joyful to see how some of those I taught in Years 7 and 8 have matured into responsible young women.

Still there are those who have yet to grow in this way, and I have spent some time with students who have had issues of varying kinds. Exams are also now over, and I hope that everyone achieved to their full potential. If they did not, then I hope that they can learn from this and make sure they alter their study preparation so that they will improve next year.

Despite minor setbacks, what has struck me more than anything is the integrity, honesty and kindness of the Year 9 cohort in general. This is possibly why they seem happy most of the time: as Mahatma Gandhi said “Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony”. It heartens me to see so many young women take on the Mercy values that the College tries to instil in them.

I would like to thank everyone for your support this term, and wish you all a safe and happy Christmas.

Year 10 - Mr Liam Smith

The girls returned from study leave last week to meet with their subject teachers and receive feedback regarding examination performance and academic achievement. This has been an eventful year for the girls and we have had many outstanding achievements to celebrate as a year group. I would like to thank the Year 11 Pastoral Care team for their work throughout the year to care for the girls academic and pastoral needs. We wish the girls and their families a Merry Christmas and relaxing summer holiday.

Information regarding the College Ball has been distributed and the girls need to be mindful of the submission dates which occur during the holidays. The final date for the payment and submission of the required forms is Monday 6 January, 2014 although I would appreciate it if I could receive them before the office closes for Christmas on 20 December, 2013. A letter regarding the commencement of next year and details of the booklist will be forwarded to parents with the reports.
Curriculum News

Academic Services - Mrs Liana Strutt, Deputy Principal - Academic Services
Mercedes College Reports
Reports for Year 7 – 11 will be sent home at the end of Week 9 (Friday 13 December) and should be received by Wednesday 18 December. These reports will reflect the achievements of your daughter in Semester Two. If there are any queries regarding your daughter’s report, please forward these in writing to the Deputy Principal – Academic Services, Mrs Liana Strutt at lstutt@mercedes.wa.edu.au. Any queries will be followed up before the commencement of the new academic year in 2014.

Year 12 WACE Results Online
All 2013 WACE students with at least one scaled score, will be able to access their TISC Universities Admission Advice Letter information (including scaled scores and ATAR) via the TISC website at www.tisc.edu.au. Results will be available from Monday 30 December 2013.

Year 11 and 12 Textbooks available to buy and sell
While the Second Hand Book Sale set to occur on Saturday 7 December has been cancelled, those students who have left Year 12 may want to sell their Maths, Science or English texts (or any others they may have) to incoming Year 12 students for 2014. On Wednesday 11 December between 1.00 pm and 3.00 pm in Catherine’s Garden, you can come and buy and sell texts that are not otherwise available as digital texts on iPads. For further information, please contact Mrs Liana Strutt on 9323 1379.

General News

Habits of Mind Quote
“If you are patient in one moment of anger, you will avoid one hundred days of sorrow.” (Chinese Proverb)

Chess Club
Farewell Mr Andrew Grigg - Anna Duong, Chess Captain
After 17 years teaching at Mercedes College including the involvement with the Mercedes College Chess Club since 2002, we say a sad goodbye to Mr Grigg. The Mercedes College Chess Club held a farewell party for our Chess Club Mentor. One last game between Mr Grigg and Anna Duong to see who would win this time. There was also a Chess quiz between the students with the winner being Anson Mahindra. There was also a final presentation to Mr Grigg which included a gift and card signed by the current chess club members. Letters from some ex-students who were members of the Chess Club were also presented to Mr Grigg.

Languages - Mrs Angela Velletri, HOLA Languages
Language Exchange
Congratulazioni to one of our Year 10 students of Italian, Ellie Narducci, who has been a successful applicant in the WAATI / INTERCULTURA EXCHANGE to Italy. Ellie will be spending eight glorious weeks in the north of Italy fully immersed in the Italian culture and language. Hopefully it will not be too cold for Ellie! We wish her a rewarding and safe trip. Buon viaggio!

Arrivederci e au revoir to our French and Italian Language Assistants
We have been so lucky to have such wonderful assistants working with our students in the Languages learning area. Sharing their culture and knowledge of their language with us has truly added an extra dimension to all our language classes.

Unfortunately it is time to say goodbye to Nalini Demma and Lucile Fontaine who will leave us at the end of this term. We thank them and wish them both all the best.

Yanjie Guo, our Chinese Assistant will return in 2014 to continue her great work in the Chinese area.
Year 10 Italian Students Welcome Senior Citizens

Recently, an amazing opportunity arose for our Year 10 students to spend some time in assisting senior citizens from Italian Aged Care Inc, on an organised tour of the Cathedral. Our students helped the senior citizens as they admired the Cathedral. It was lovely to see the girls chatting with the senior citizens and making them feel welcome.

Mercy Schools Connecting Via Email!

Year 10 Students of Italian from Mercedes College, Perth and from the Academy of Mary Immaculate, Fitzroy in Melbourne have started a special friendship.

As part of an initiative of our Languages Centre for Excellence grant our Year 10 students have been sending emails to students from another Mercy school in Victoria discussing weekend activities and favourite pastimes. The girls have been excited to receive the replies and hopefully they will continue corresponding in the near future.

Clockwise L to R: Language Assistants: Yanjie Guo, Lucille Fontaine and Nalini Demma; Year 10 students with Senior Citizens from Italian Aged Care Inc at their recent tour of the Cathedral; Year 7 Italian students and Culture in the City members enjoyed a some refreshing Gelato at last week’s incursion.

Making Mercedes Greener (MMG) - Mrs Marg Ryan, MMG Coordinator

Election of Environmental Stewards

Making Mercedes Greener consists of the Coordinator and 8 other teachers: Mrs Ryan, Miss Eaton, Ms Harrington, Mrs Roberts, Mrs McAluliffe, Ms Jordan, Mr Poga, Mrs McPherson and Mrs Lloyd. Representatives from each Homeroom, including a representative leader from each year and the elected Year 11 Senior Steward are responsible for developing new initiatives to improve the sustainability of Mercedes College and to promote and continue with the MMG projects that are already in place.

A big thank you to Mr Swindail for assisting with MMG, we wish him all the best for his retirement.

Making Mercedes Greener meets once a month to plan and devise other activities. Any office holder who misses or fails to attend three (3) meetings or other commitments shall forfeit their right to hold office and shall return their badge and any other property of Making Mercedes Greener. Students must contact the Coordinator of MMG if they are unable to attend any activity. The results for the election for 2014 environmental stewards are:

**Year 8**
Alysha D’Souza, Chiara Iacopetta, Georgia O’Driscoll, Hannah O’Toole, Georgia Readings and Ariana Pesce.

**Year 9**
Renata Yap, Cassandra Cheng, Karis Daniele, Madeleine Grech and Nina O’Rourke.

**Year 10**
Isabella Rossaro, Jaia Bourgeois-Brookes, Monica Buckley, Isabelle Gurbiel and Elisabeth Shaw.

**Year 11**
Nisha Hussain, Courtney Hall, Sofia Locantro, Paris Fabriziani, Kimberley Morrissey, Bailey Taylor and Perri Thompson. (A Senior Steward and Deputy Steward will be elected in 2014)

**Year 12**
Himanshi Satnani, Tayla Keillor, Nicole Passos, Lauren Dunn, Courtney Vale, Katie Grubisa and Julia Newsome.
Music - Ms Claire Gamlin, Music Coordinator

I would like to say a huge thank you to all of the girls who have participated in the various music events throughout the year. Whether it has been background music for a Soiree, the informal end of year performances held a fortnight ago, music for House Liturgies, College Masses, the performing Arts Festival, Trinity Music Nights, our major department events of Choral Night and Music Showcase or the Jazz night at the Ellington Jazz Club, performing for local events, primary students, Christmas functions, lunchtime concerts, the Fete, representing the school overseas on tour (to name a few!) There have been so many wonderful events and it has been a hugely successful year. The girls have embraced every opportunity with the highest level of professionalism and I know they have gained a lot from these experiences. It is sad to farewell an exceptional bunch of Year 12 musicians, however I know we will see their faces at various events in the future and I hope they continue their music making in some capacity after Year 12. Thank you for your leadership and I know you have all been great role models for the younger girls!

The department would not run so well without the support of the girls and their parents, and I know Mr Paul Waterhouse, Mrs Sharon Beros and I appreciate the energy and support required to help us be so successful. Thank you also to the instrumental teachers who guide the girls so well in their lessons each week. Your expertise is invaluable!

We have just finished our final performances for the year! The Instrumental and Vocal students had three performances; piano, brass, woodwind, percussion, guitar and voice students performed on Sunday 24 November, and the strings and String ensemble performed on Monday 2 December. It was a great experience for the girls (and some boys!) to perform for their parents and show what they have been working on all year in their lessons. All of the performances were thoroughly enjoyable and I commend the girls for having the courage to volunteer. We look forward to hosting two of these in 2014, one in each Semester.

The Year 8 & 10 Select Choir girls once again entertained the Mercy Hospital volunteers at their annual Christmas lunch on Thursday. This is a lovely way to end the year and the audience is always very appreciative of the talent of our younger students.

**Jazz Band and Jazz Quartet – Ellington Jazz Club Monday 2 December**

On Monday evening, we held our first Jazz concert at the Ellington Jazz Club in Northbridge. It was such an enjoyable evening and the performance sold out – so we hope to hold another next year! The audience was entertained by an hour of jazz from our Mercedes girls – which is an incredible effort to perform such a large quantity of polished music, followed by an hour of music featuring some exceptional Perth musicians. Mr Paul Waterhouse was joined by Leigh Miller on bass, Cam van Reyk on saxophone, Chris Foster on piano and two ex-students, Daniella Sicari (class of 2010) and Bridget Cleary (class of 2011) featured as soloists. Huge congratulations to all of the girls in the Jazz Band and Jazz Ensemble. It was a fantastic way to end a very successful year of music making, and thank you to Mr Waterhouse for this wonderful new concert initiative!

Parents and Friends Association

**Behaviour Tonics Workshop - “Engaging Adolescents”**

A course designed to provide parents with skills for resolving teenage behaviour problems. The workshops will be held over 3 nights; Tuesday 25 March, 1 and 3 April 2014 at Mercedes College. Places are limited and attendance at all 3 workshops is recommended. To download a Registration Form, please click [HERE](#).

Student News

**Mercedes Netball Club**

Netball registration forms for next year will be available on the College website in early 2014.
Thank You to Parents

Street Soccer
Sue Martin & her mum Kay, Bradley Barbuto and Nick Rosato.

Year 7 Grandparents Mass Morning Tea
Thank you to Joanna Creighton and Marie Nicholls for helping host the Grandparents Morning Tea on Wednesday. Your assistance made this a wonderful and enjoyable event for the Grandparents and parents who attended.

Advent Liturgy Baskets
Thank you to the parents who offered their time and vehicles to help deliver baskets full of wonderful goodies for families less fortunate than others, to enjoy over Christmas. Appreciation goes to Lynne Smith-Cameron, David Ikin, Catriona Harrison, Marie McKenna, Janine Wilson, Mira Andric, Julie Fazey, Maggie Baxtrem.

Noticeboard

Academic Task Force - January Head Start Program / 16 - 29 January 2014 / Churchlands SHS and Rossmoyne SHS / WACE Head start (Years 11 - 12) and Middle School Head Start (Years 7 - 10) - Courses run over 2days / 3 hours per day. Enrol online at www.academictaskforce.com.au or contact learn@academictaskforce.com.au or 9314 9500.