Dear Parents, Students, Staff and Friends,

Last time I wrote this column it was about government funding. “Interesting, and even critical,” remarked one parent, but nowhere near as interesting as the other topics that usually feature. I agree, and I can assure you that they’re no fun to write either but I address the matter yet again because the issue is not resolved and it remains the greatest threat to the future of Catholic education that I have experienced in thirty years. I’m not exaggerating; the Chairman of the Catholic Education Commission (NSW), Bishop Anthony Fisher, titled his press release today – Catholic schools fear ‘death by a thousand cuts.’ Most of us have understandably drifted into the mindset that Catholic education funding has been there forever, and always will be. It hasn’t, and it won’t. Not unless we challenge the decisions like the ones made by the current State government.

What’s happened since I last wrote about this topic?

Initially, we were under the impression that the cuts to educational funding had targeted Catholic and independent schools and that government schools and TAFEs had been left unscathed. Not so. Planned cuts are across the board. Does that mean that Catholic school principals and parents should retire in their protest under the rhetoric promoted by the Premier that we all have to tighten our belts? It’s not that simple.

The bulk of Catholic school funding comes from the Federal, not the State government, but the Federal formula is tied to the level of State Funding; as far as we can work out Federal funding will decrease if State funding is reduced. Don’t be lured into the comfort of thinking that because we are more heavily funded by the ‘Feds’ that a decrease in State funding will make much difference. Even without the likely reduction in Federal funding on the back of the State reductions we will probably be down about 3-4% in income if the proposed State cuts are put into effect. Catholic schools already operate on 10% lower income than State schools and so a 3-4% loss of income is significant. It will mean one of two things – either an increase in school fees or a reduction in staff levels.

“Why,” some may ask, when the Minister has indicated that no State school will lose a single teacher under the proposed funding cuts. The ‘slashing’ he has announced for State schools is primarily in jobs in the educational bureaucracy; the Department that supervises and supports schools. So why doesn’t the Catholic school sector do the same; reduce staffing at the bureaucracy level and leave school fees and school staffing alone? Once again, it’s not that simple. It is a well established fact that the Catholic school bureaucracy costs less than the State school bureaucracy and so there is less opportunity to trim jobs at the bureaucracy level. We have a history of a lean bureaucracy because we have always had to operate on less money than a State school. Yes, even though we charge higher fees than a State school we still don’t have the same amount of money allocated by governments for the education of a child in a State school.

My point is simple. And my apologies for restating what might seem obvious but I think statements by the Minister and the Premier have lured the Catholic community into a false sense of security.

Under the proposed cuts in State funding, Catholic schools stand to lose more than State schools and it is likely to result in increased fees and/or staffing cuts at the school level.

It is imperative that parents continue to petition their local members of parliament so as to ensure equity for the Catholic sector.

Finally, we remain bewildered as to why the State government has targeted education so heavily when seeking to reduce total State government expenditure. The timing is incomprehensible. Only recently the Federal government released the findings of the Gonski Report – a comprehensive national analysis focused on the future of schooling with a view to improving educational standards – that confirmed the experience and intuitions of the education and business sectors that funds for education need to be increased, not decreased. The proposed cuts by the State government are short-sighted and potentially damaging to a sector that needs more, not less funds, and particularly to a group of schools (Catholic) which could hardly be accused of being wasteful mis-managers, as the Government has intimated.

I have been in contact with our own local State member (Coogee) and am yet to be convinced that the State government is committed to a more equitable and sustainable outcome for Catholic schools. He assures me that he will take this agenda to the Minister and the Premier and I await the outcome of this representation. I urge you to contact your local member and petition them vigorously about this matter.

Yours sincerely,

BR DAVID HALL FMS
Headmaster

SIGN THE PETITION at www.ceosyd.catholic.edu.au
MUSIC SHOWCASE
On Tuesday 4th September Marcellin College had its much anticipated Music showcase highlighting the wonderful talents of the students within the Music program. Students from all years performed a wonderful range of solo and ensemble pieces. One of the highlights of the evening was the solo performances of the Year 12 Music Elective class. The Year 12 students performed works from their HSC repertoire as well as a memorable class arrangement of ‘When You Were Young’. Other standout performances were heard from the College Ensembles. These included the Guitar, Strings, Brass, Percussion, Stage Band and class performances from a range of Junior and Senior Music Elective classes.

Mr Bill Kostovski, Music Teacher

SCHOOL GROUP PHOTOS
Group photos (such as Debating, Concert Band, Guitar Ensemble, etc) which were taken on school photo day are now available to purchase. For boys who are interested in purchasing a photo of their group please come to reception.

INDIGENOUS LITERACY WEEK
Year 10 were very fortunate to have Mr Michael O’Loughlin, the now retired Sydney Swans premiership winning star, visit the College to address the boys in conjunction with Indigenous Literacy Week. Born in South Australia, Michael is one of the most decorated indigenous players in AFL history. He played all his 300 games with the Sydney Swans and twice achieved All Australian selection.

Michael spoke of his upbringing but his real focus was the crisis that continues to plague indigenous communities in terms of literacy levels. It was sobering to learn of the vast difference between mainstream and Indigenous Australia. Matthew Waller, a Year 11 student, who along with three of his classmates spent a week at St Mary’s Bowraville earlier this term, described the challenges at the local level in addressing the issue. Michael’s visit was followed by a book swap among the Year 10 students and as a result $500 was raised which will be forwarded to the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. All the boys are to be congratulated on their excellent contribution to the day.

Mr Paul Leary, Transition Coordinator
NOTICES AND NEWS

TERM 3 CALENDAR EVENTS
Thursday 20th September • Year 12 Graduation Day. Final Day of Lessons for Term 3.

TERM 4 CALENDAR EVENTS
Below is a list of significant events that will occur in the final term of school for 2012. I trust this will assist families with forward planning, especially in regards to planning and booking trips. I take this opportunity to ask for your commitment to ensuring that priority is given to school attendance. Your support of this aspect of College life will ensure that we maintain a settled environment at school and high academic standards.

Monday 8th October - Term 4 Commences.
Monday 15th October - HSC Commences. Concludes Friday 9th November.
Friday 19th October - Headmaster’s Assembly - Ministry and Service.
Wednesday 24th October - Year 11 Preliminary Prizegiving.
Friday 26th October - Walkathon. See note below.
Wednesday 7th November - Parents In Touch.
Friday 16th November - Headmaster’s Assembly - Induction of 2013 Leaders.
Monday 19th-Thursday 22nd November - Years 7,8, 9 and 10 Exams.
Monday 26th November - Wednesday 5th December - Year 10 Work Experience.
Monday 3rd December - Wednesday 5th December - Music Camp.
Thursday 6th December - Year 10 Semi Formal.
Friday 7th December - Final Day of Classes for Year 11.
Monday 10th December - Year 10 Prizegiving and Last Day of School for Year 10.
Tuesday 18th December - Picnic Day - School Concludes for Years 7,8 and 9.

Br David Hall, Headmaster

TRIVIA NIGHT
We held our second successful Trivia Night for the benefit of the John Hennessy Financial Hardship Bursary on Friday 31st August at South Juniors. We were lucky enough to hold it in the auditorium with a good crowd of 360 people attending. Tickets sold out well in advance of the night and included a variety of finger food and cakes. The night was thoroughly enjoyed by all, with five rounds of trivia, a chocolate wheel, lots of great silent auction items, live auctions, major raffles and various games.

I would like to thank the P&F committee for their hard work to make the night run smoothly and be such a great success. A big thank you to all who attended and for their generosity. A BIG thank you to the many shops, restaurants, businesses and Marcellin families that donated so many fantastic prizes for the night, without their overwhelming generosity the night would not have been possible.

Mrs Marion Romeo, P&F Vice President

The annual Marist Oratory competition was held at St Gregory’s College, Campbelltown on Wednesday 5th September. The competition was divided into six categories: a division for Years 7-10, Senior and a Senior impromptu. The students involved from Marcellin College performed extremely well on the night, speaking with fluidity and vigour. Special mention to Alex Krikorian who won the Year 7 title. Luke Dooner and Thomas Pantle also achieved remarkable results, with second place in the impromptu performance and third place in the Senior division respectively. It was a great night for all involved with all students proving to be articulate beyond their years.

Mr Stephen Davidson, Oratory Coordinator

ORATORY COMPETITION

WALKATHON

One of the great traditions and community days at Marcellin College and one of the boys’ personal favourites is the Walkathon. This event will take place on Friday 26th October and is our major fundraiser for the year. Previous years’ fundraising efforts have been impressive because of the generous support of the Marcellin community and contributed funds have gone towards great initiatives at the College. Boys have received their sponsorship cards and I would encourage a big effort over the holidays to gain sponsors. Each boy is expected to raise a minimum of $60 each as our aim this year is to raise $55,000. Funds raised this year will go towards repaving the courtyard. We are currently looking for volunteers to help at checkpoints and the BBQ at Burrows Park. If you are able to help please contact Mrs Mary Ivancic at ivancicm@marcellin.nsw.edu.au

Mr Paul MacGee, Walkathon Coordinator
**NSW CCC ATHLETICS**

Last Friday the NSW CCC Athletics championships were held at Sydney Olympic Park, Homebush. Fourteen Marcellin boys represented the Combined MCC team. Under perfect conditions, all boys performed well and five boys have now qualified to represent at the NSW All Schools carnival:

Joshua Dever finished first in the U15 1500 metre event and broke the record by over two seconds.
James Bassil finished 2nd in the U15 Triple Jump.
Robert Murphy finished 2nd in the U16 1500 metre Walk
Jacob Burke finished 3rd in the Opens Shot Put.

Well done to all competitors on an excellent Athletics season and we wish these five boys the best of luck in the All Schools competition in October.

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**AFL**

The Year 7/8 AFL squad has finished their competition remaining undefeated after their five games. Last Friday they were too good for St Paul's Manly winning the match 38 to 4. The boys have enjoyed themselves this year and special thanks to Mr Broe for the time he has invested into this Friday night competition. Thank you also to all the parents who have helped with travel arrangements and spectated throughout the competition.

**SPORTS**

The Summer competition trials have been in progress now for three weeks and most squads will be finalised this week. I’d like to thank every boy who has trialled for these teams and judging by the number of boys trying out, I am sure the Summer teams will be most competitive once again. The first official trial takes place on Thursday 11th October.

Training will continue on the first Tuesday back next term in preparation for the first trial. Just a reminder that training is compulsory for all squad members and if for some reason a boy cannot attend training, it is his responsibility to personally see his coach.

The free choice program will be opened up to all boys not involved in representative sports. I have been to all year groups and given information on the types of sports on offer for all boys in Years 7 to 11 as well as travel arrangements and equipment needed. Every boy will choose two sports from the appropriate choices and lists of every sport will be posted on the Sports noticeboard in the first week of Term 4. My hope is that most boys will get their first choice, however if this is not possible, their second choice will be given. If you have any questions regarding sport in Term 4, please contact me at school.

That brings to a close the sporting season of 2012. We must be proud of our achievements this year, even though premierships were much harder to come by. We have a wealth of talented sportsmen at the College and we have performed well across the range of sports. Thank you to all boys involved in our sporting program and to the coaches who have been so generous with their time. I wish everyone a fun and safe holiday and look forward to the start of the Summer sporting season next term.

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**COMMUNITY NEWS**

**MCR Class of 1962 Reunion:** The 50 Year Reunion will be held at the Tattersalls Club on 25th October 2012 at 7pm. Cost is $125. Contact Mr John Jessup on 8901 4221 or Mr Reg Louis on 9665 5089.

**Part time work available:** The member of staff who attends the print room is on long service leave for Term 4 (8 October - 21 December). The hours of work are 7.30am-11.30am Monday to Thursday. On the job training is available. Please call Ms Margaret Thurston, the Business Manager at the College, on 9398 6355 or email thurstonm@marcellin.nsw.edu.au

**Uniform Shop:** From 2013 Senior blazers will have a braid edging. Boys with senior blazers without the edging can bring their dry cleaned and named blazers to the uniform shop in the first two weeks of Term 4 to have the edging put on them for $25 per blazer.