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ST THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE

PO Box 500
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COLLEGE CHRONICLE

Tuesday 7th March 2023

Word from the Principal

Dear Parents and Carers,

*Grant me, O Lord my God,
 a mind to know you,
 a heart to seek you,
 wisdom to find you,
 conduct pleasing to you,
 faithful perseverance in waiting for you,
 and a hope of finally embracing you.*

Amen.

Today we celebrate the Feast of St Thomas Aquinas, the patron Saint of our College.

St Thomas Aquinas is known primarily as a brilliant theologian and philosopher and is the patron saint of Universities and Scholars. St Thomas Aquinas is an ambassador for education and serves as a wonderful role model for our children. He was also a man of heart and humility. He was a great servant to his community and was generous and tireless in his efforts to help others.

In a week where we celebrate such a Saint we also explore the virtue of Kindness. Kindness is a virtue which lifts the spirits and touches the hearts of the people we encounter in our lives. It is a virtue that should be felt rather than to be defined. It is better to experience it than to try to explain what it is. Moreover, its home is in the heart rather than in the intellect. The kindness we experience from others, like the life-giving air our lungs callout for, plunges, as it were, our whole being into an atmosphere of joy.

On Monday during our whole College assembly, I asked the students about who they would (metaphorically) hold the door open for this week? As hands started to raise it was wonderful to hear the students share their thoughts without concern of judgement....

"My Mum and Dad"

"My teachers"

"My friends"

Kindness is one virtue that I continually see ripple throughout our College community. I hope over the course of the week our students continue to display the kindness I have witnessed over the last two days, well beyond our College gates.

Extracurricular activities, such as excursions and sports carnivals, form a valued part of a well-rounded education. For many teachers, they also provide the opportunity to further explore their interests and apply a variety of learning methods outside of the classroom. It has been wonderful to see both the staff and students interacting in a range of activities and programs such as Goal Setting, Creating Vision Boards, Chess, Music and Sport during the first phase of this term and we will be looking to add more opportunities as the year progresses.

Professional learning is important in building the capabilities

of all staff. This Friday 10th March, the College has a student free day. This will provide an opportunity for all staff to engage in professional learning with the aim of improving their knowledge, skills and professional capability to deliver key curriculum priorities and contribute to the College's key strategic directions.

In the same way that our students have begun preparations for this year's Inter-House Athletics Carnival, our Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students have been developing an understanding of the NAPLAN testing. This initiative assesses the types of skills that are essential for every child to progress through school and life. The tests cover skills in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy. While we encourage all students to participate, we like to remind the College community that this is only a snapshot in time of their performance in these areas of learning. NAPLAN takes place from 15 - 27th March.

Please note that the College does not administer analgesics (eg: aspirin or paracetamol) as a standard first aid strategy and is unable to provide paracetamol or Panadol to students. A written request is required from parents for the administering of all prescription and non-prescription medication. Parents also need to supply the relevant medications.

Please ensure that your child has a current health or medical action plan and that the College is notified if your child is required to take prescription medication through the school day. If your child is starting a new course of medication, the first dose should not be taken at school in case of an allergic reaction. This must be done under the supervision of the family or a health care practitioner.

I would like to acknowledge the important work that volunteers carry out within our College. It has been wonderful to see a number of parents moving about the College since this initiative commenced. Many tasks are greatly enhanced by the generous donation of time and talent by volunteers who work in a variety of areas. If you would like to volunteer in any capacity at the College please contact Liz Alexander or myself.

As I finish this article, I can hear the laughter of students as they interact with their peers and teachers in a range of activities to celebrate the day, something I am sure would bring a smile to St Thomas Aquinas.

I wish you a safe long weekend and encourage both staff and students to ensure they experience some downtime in order to recharge their batteries, for the second half of the term.

God Bless,

Kieran

Kieran O'Dywer
 (Acting Principal)



VIRTUE THIS WEEK - KINDNESS

Expressing genuine concern about the well-being of others; anticipating their needs

From the Deputy Principal



Positive Behaviour Support (Communication) - Part 4

Dear Parents and Families,

Research has demonstrated that positive behaviour support is significantly effective in minimising and managing challenging behaviours in the classroom. It reduces stress, frees up much-needed time for teaching, improves overall student behaviours and creates better classroom cultures.



Communication is the third Universal of Positive Behaviour Support that we will be exploring. Communication is the exchange of thoughts, ideas and information for the purpose of establishing mutual understanding. It occurs between staff, students and parents, playing an important role in building relationships, partnerships and collaboration. This facilitates the teaching and learning of students and supports the development of parent engagement in the College. Communication can be verbal, non-verbal and/or written and electronic. All communication must be safe, respectful and appropriate.

Effective communication is:

- Clear and concise to provide clarity
- An open, honest and genuine process between staff, students and families
- Consistent between verbal and nonverbal messages
- Carefully considered, controlling the use of tone and demeanour
- Targeted to meet and address the needs of those participating in the communication
- Appropriate and relevant to the purpose
- Listening and undertaking actions that demonstrate understanding
- Using feedback to modify thinking or behaviour for the purpose of improving learning
- Safe, respectful and appropriate
- Developing communication skills, knowledge and attitudes to engage in respectful relationships and to communicate appropriately.

The more a teacher is aware of their students, and their surroundings, their culture, their family, the more connected the students feel. Developing strong relationships is like making small regular deposits in a bank account. They can seem insignificant in the beginning, however over time they accumulate great wealth. Teachers who let down their defences and show some of their humanity overwhelmingly have fewer issues with behaviour and motivation.

God bless,

David

David Williams
Acting Deputy Principal

COLLECT - SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

O God, Who seest that we have no power whatever from ourselves, keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body and from all evil thoughts which may hurt the soul. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.



Primary

GRATITUDE

Mary Mascarenhas, Adrian Soefting, Markos Yassa, Marina Sorial, Emma Fitzpatrick

DILIGENCE

Eli Taveira, Harriet Gomez, Audrey Gallagher, Patrick Hardiman, Max Mandarano, Luis Obrador, Sophia Borg, Olivia Fitzpatrick, Maverick Frieh, Gemma Higgins, Gina Nimr, Ryder Youngman, Scarlett Attard, Christopher Freriks, Helena Soefting, Eleanor Foley, Jack Lewis, Benjamin Salib, Gemma Verleg, Marina Sorial

PERSEVERENCE

Benedict Davis, Michaela Garner, Raphael Smit, Lexi Sharkey, Bethany Garner, Leo Mandarano, Luis Obrador, Maria Falts, Gina Nimr, Scarlett Attard, Israel Autheman, Jack Lewis, Tiffany MacDonell, Angela Phillips, Marina Sorial

RESPONSIBILITY

Rebecca Higgins, Maria Sorial, Patrick Hardiman, Max Mandarano, Luis Obrador, Olivia Fitzpatrick, Gemma Higgins, Gina Nimr, Benjamin Salib, Gemma Verleg

LEADERSHIP

Olivia Fitzpatrick, Christopher Freriks, Helena Soefting, Jack Lewis

INITIATIVE

Leo Mandarano, Maverick Frieh, Gemma Higgins, Scarlett Attard, Christopher Freriks, Jack Lewis, Gemma Verleg, Marina Sorial

Secondary Girls

GRATITUDE

Rebecca Fitzpatrick, Poppy Taveira
Lauren Elliott, Zuri Perez-Melei

Secondary Boys

GRATITUDE

Sebastian Hayward
Jacob Smit

SECOND HAND UNIFORM SHOP

The Uniform Shop is open Monday afternoons only from

2:45pm - 3:30pm.

You are welcome to call for an appointment or to check stock availability.

Michelle can be reached on 0468438404

Michelle also offers a Blazer re-braiding service, cuffs bound, hems, zips replaced, tears mended and repairs to wool jumpers.

Please also note the office no longer accepts items for re-sale therefore please drop at the shop on a Monday afternoon when Michelle is present.

HATS FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS

College branded hats are compulsory for Secondary Students to wear when outside during recess and lunch.

These are available through the Noone Uniform Shop in Officer and are priced at \$17.50

The hats are also worn for all outside sport.

COLLEGE ASSEMBLY TUESDAY 14 MARCH

(AFTER THE LONG WEEKEND)

A College Assembly will take place on Tuesday 14 March at 8:30am.

Easter Egg Guessing Competition



Lunch Times outside the Library Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

50c per guess.

St Thomas Aquinas College

DINNER AUCTION 2023

The Dinner Auction Committee is looking for new members.

Any help you can offer, big or small, is greatly appreciated for this important fundraising event.

Please call or text Monica Murnane on 0400 097 399 for more details.

The Dinner Auction will be held in the 2nd half of the year with a date to be announced soon.

Saint Thomas Aquinas

1255 - 1274

The great Saint Thomas was born of noble parents at Aquino near Naples in Italy, in 1225; his century was replete with great names and Christian works, yet he dominates it by the power of his thought and the perfection of his works. In his childhood he was the provider for the poor of the neighbourhood during a famine; his father, meeting him in a corridor with the food he had succeeded in taking from the kitchen, asked him what he had under his cloak; he opened it and fresh roses fell on the ground. The nobleman embraced his son and amid his tears, gave him permission to follow thereafter all inspirations of his charity.



hearth a burning coal, the Saint drove from his chamber the courtesan whom they had concealed there. Then marking a cross upon the wall, he knelt down to pray. Immediately, while he was rapt in ecstasy, an Angel girded him with a cord, in token of the gift of perpetual chastity which God had given him. The pain caused by the girdle was so sharp that Saint Thomas uttered a piercing cry, which brought his guards into the room. But he never related this grace to anyone save Father Raynald, his confessor, a short time before his death. Thus originated the Confraternity of the *Angelic Warfare*, for the preservation of the virtue of chastity.

The young student, like the holy man Job, made a pact with his eyes and forbade them to see anything which might favour in his heart any desires for a life of ease. At the University of Naples he led a retired life of study and prayer, and continued his charities, giving all he had which was superfluous. He was recognized already by his professors as a genius, but it was Saint Albert the Great who later said of his disciple whom some called "the mute ox", that "some day the lowing of this ox will resound throughout the entire world."

Having at length escaped, Saint Thomas went to Cologne to study under Blessed Albert the Great, and afterwards was sent with him to Paris, where for several years he taught philosophy and theology. The Church has ever venerated his numerous writings as a treasure of sacred doctrine; in naming him the Angelic Doctor she has indicated that his science is more divine than human. The rarest gifts of intellect were combined in him with the most tender piety. Prayer, he said, had taught him more than study. His singular devotion to the Blessed Sacrament shines forth in the Office and hymns which he composed for the feast of Corpus Christi. To the words miraculously uttered by a crucifix at Naples, "Well hast thou written concerning Me, Thomas. What shall I give thee as a reward?" he replied, "Naught save Thyself, O Lord." Saint Thomas was loved for his unflinching gentleness and his readiness to lend his services or great lights to all who sought them. He died at Fossa Nuova in 1274, on his way to the General Council of Lyons, to which Pope Gregory X had summoned him.

At the age of seventeen he received the Dominican habit at Naples. His family opposed this choice, and he was set upon by his brothers on his way to Paris. They attempted in vain to remove his holy habit, but he was taken in custody and obliged to suffer a two years' captivity in their castle of Rocca Secca. Neither the caresses of his mother and sisters, nor the threats and stratagems of his brothers, could shake him in his vocation. His older sister was won over by him and renounced a brilliant marriage to embrace religious life; later she was Abbess of her convent in Capua.

Reflection. The knowledge of God is for all, but hidden treasures are reserved for those who have ever followed the Lamb.

While Saint Thomas was in confinement at Rocca Secca, his brothers endeavoured to entrap him into sin, but the attempt only ended in the triumph of his purity. Snatching from the

2023 CALENDAR

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
3:30 - 4:30pm Study Hall				NO STUDY HALL
6 Mar	7 Mar St Thomas Aquinas Feast Day	8 Mar	9 Mar	10 Mar STUDENT FREE DAY
3:30 - 4:30pm Study Hall				NO STUDY HALL
13 Mar PUBLIC HOLIDAY	14 Mar	15 Mar 2:00pm - Community Afternoon Tea NAPLAN	16 Mar ATHLETICS DAY	17 Mar - St Patrick NAPLAN
3:30 - 4:30pm Study Hall				NO STUDY HALL
20 Mar 9am - Community Mass in College Chapel NAPLAN	21 Mar NAPLAN	22 Mar NAPLAN	23 Mar NAPLAN	24 Mar
3:30 - 4:30pm Study Hall				NO STUDY HALL

OFFICE HOURS

8:15am - 3:30pm
MONDAY - FRIDAY

TERM DATES 2023

1st Term:	30th January - 5th April	3rd Term:	18th July - 15th September
2nd Term:	26th April - 23rd June	4th Term:	2nd October - 7th December