

Principal's Message

Dear valued members of the St Leo's community,

Welcome to the 2024 school year. I am excited to be back at the College, filling in as Acting Principal while **Tony Gleeson** takes some much-deserved leave during Term 1.

It has been a very positive start to the new year. Students have settled very quickly into the rhythms of school and classrooms are abuzz with learning. In 2024 we continue our strategic focus on 'Embedding High Expectations' and 'Ensuring Growth for all'.

Our opening College Liturgy was a great way to celebrate the start of the new school year. It provided the opportunity for us to come together and reflect on our college theme for the year 'Change the World with Kindness'. Our 2024



theme was selected by our student leaders and captures the sentiments from Ephesians 4.32,

'Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave you'. The Liturgy also provided the opportunity to welcome our newest students and staff, including ringing the bell of discipleship to mark the commencement of their St Leo's journey.

Communication

Good communication is key to an effective ongoing partnership between the College and home. This fortnightly *Lion Roars* newsletter, along with messages via the Compass App, are essential communication tools for parents. These communications provide important updates from the Principal and College Leadership Team, vital information from teachers, and key information for the weeks ahead. A College expectation is that all parents read the College Newsletter each fortnight and regularly check Compass messages to ensure that you are aware of all important information.

Lenten Season

The Season of Lent is a time of preparation for the celebration of Easter. It is an annual journey whereby we are drawn more deeply into the mystery of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Through this Lenten season we are reminded of the Good News of Jesus Christ - knowing that if we are sorry for our sins, we will be forgiven.

Baby News

Congratulations to **Vince and Jessica Tavernese** on the arrival of baby **Georgia**.

Born at 2.12pm on Tuesday 6 February, she weighed 3.2kg.



The College came together with staff and students from Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School for a beautiful and meaningful Ash Wednesday Mass. Ash Wednesday marks the commencement of 40 days of prayer, penance and almsgiving. The scripture passage that inspires our 2024 College theme, is a reminder during this Season of Lent to 'Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave you'.

My very best wishes to you and your families for 2024.

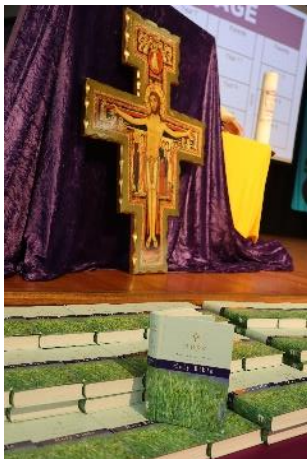
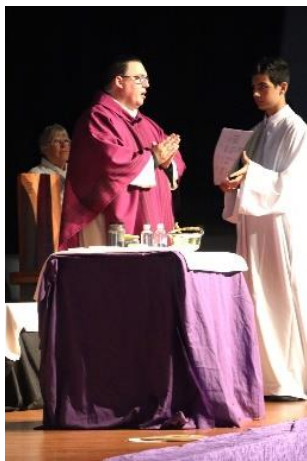
Anthony Mahoney, Acting Principal

From the Assistant Principal

**Mr Patrick Brennan,
Assistant Principal, Evangelisation & Catechesis**

Has it only been two weeks? I say this with delight and admiration for all that has taken place in our start to the 2024 year at St Leo's. The reward of seeing the College filled with the chatter of students and staff – reconnecting and embracing new beginnings, makes the work of dreaming and planning so very worthwhile. A year that we will continue to build on the momentum and success of 2023 whilst *Embedding High Expectations & Ensuring Growth for all*.

I'm sure that many if not most people know the month of January gets its name from the Roman deity, Janus. Janus was a God with two faces - one looking back at the old year just passed, and one looking at the new year that awaits us all. In schools though, the notion of looking back doesn't really fit with the excitement that comes from a new academic year. Schools tend to be about, 'what's next?'



Our students arrived back with a renewed sense of purpose. It helps that we go from 0-100 in moments, from ensuring we have high expectations from lesson one, to our pastoral care and expectations in terms of uniform and behaviour. Optimal outcomes will be achieved if we are all consistent and aligned with our shared vision; together is better.

I add my welcome to new and returning students, families and staff. I hope that you all find our inclusive community one where you feel of value and where you continue to grow in the partnership of educating young people in knowledge and Catholic faith. At our Opening Liturgy, I listened to prayers of gratitude for those people and circumstances who have enabled them the opportunity and support as they start their journey at St Leo's. These are moments to savour for students, parents and carers as well as educators, and highlight that community is at the heart of our interactions together.

It was wonderful to see so many parents in attendance to see the traditional Year 7 ringing the bell of discipleship then being presented with their Bibles for use and personal reference both here at St Leo's and when they leave the College. Parents and carers then enjoyed a delicious morning tea with staff and their children.

In Memorium

Some very sad news to share.

Doug Kitic, husband of long-term staff member **Tracey Kitic** passed away recently. Doug was surrounded by family and passed peacefully.

Please keep Tracey and her family in your prayers.

*Eternal rest grant unto him, oh Lord
and let perpetual light shine upon him.*

May he rest in peace.

Amen



On Wednesday we came together as a Cathedral precinct and celebrated Ash Wednesday Mass with students from OLOR Primary School. The Mass was celebrated by **Father Brendan Lee**, Moderator at Hornsby Cathedral Parish.

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent in the Western Christian calendar. It occurs 46 days before Easter and is observed by many Christians, including Roman Catholics. Ashes were placed on the foreheads of students in the shape of a cross as a sign of penitence and mortality. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of a period of fasting, repentance, and reflection leading up to Easter Sunday.

At St Leo's, we wish to nurture what we know is valued and working well whilst also strengthening the support we provide our students. 2024 sees the consolidation of our vision for pastoral and academic care where improvement for all is our priority. It's been wonderful working across the curriculum, wellbeing and faith-formation teams to ensure this occurs in 2024. All Year 7-10 students received a College Planner upon their return to school (Years 11-12 were given the option for one). Daily use of tools such as the College Planner are prerequisites for success at St Leo's. Greater emphasis on this important resource will be occurring in 2024 and beyond.

Year 7 'Belong - The Amazing Race of Faith' Event – 27 February

In just a few weeks, Year 7 will join other students from across the Broken Bay Diocese in a day of faith formation, reflection and fun. In addition to their religious education teachers, Year 7 will be joined by members of the College Leadership Team as well as special guest, Most Rev Anthony Randazzo, Bishop of Broken Bay. Students are to meet at 9am at the Light of Christ Centre. The day will conclude at 1.40pm where students will be dismissed. Supervision will be provided until the end of the school day. Students should be in their sports uniforms and are encouraged to wear sunscreen and the College cap or hat. Full details will be sent to Year 7 via Compass closer to the date.

What's Coming Up?

Spiritual Growth Domain

Youth Ministry at St Leo's is invitational and aims to provide opportunities for students to be themselves and exercise their freedom to learn more about God. 'Evangelisation' and 'Catechesis' are two fancy words that mean we want to *reach out*

to students and help them to *grow spiritually*. We recognise that each student is on their own personal journey and that they bring with them great richness of background and experience.

[Deacon Adrian Gomez](#) is the Youth Ministry Co-ordinator and co-ordinates a range of voluntary activities.

Some of the regular prayer activities that students are invited to attend include:

- **Friday Mass / Liturgy** - in the College Chapel on Fridays during Mentor and Recess. It has been wonderful to see over 30 students giving up their break time to gather in prayer. A talented group provides uplifting music for each celebration. When a priest is not available for Mass we celebrate a Liturgy of the Word. Parents are welcome to attend - sign in at Reception for a 10.40am start.
- **Wednesday Bible Study** - led by students in the Chapel on Wednesday during Mentor and Recess.

Rosary - led by students in the Chapel on Mondays at Recess. A small group of dedicated students pray each week. Parents are also invited for a 10.50am start.

There are also optional retreat experiences that occur throughout the year. Coming up in Week 4 is the *Youth Ministry Equipping School* (YMES) which is being held by *Catholic Schools Youth Ministry International* (CSYMI) in Canberra. A small group of Year 12 student leaders have been invited to participate in this intensive formation experience that inspires, trains and resources school youth ministry leaders from all around Australia. YMES contributes to an ACU Youth Academy qualification which gives students five bonus ATAR points for any course at ACU.



Edmund Rice Camps

During the holidays, 4 Year 12 students, Holly B, Emma W, Bridgette C and Ruby K, gave up a week of their time to volunteer with Edmund Rice Camps, an organisation that provides holiday camps for young people and families experiencing significant and complex disadvantages. Each day they were required to step far outside their comfort zones, participating in high energy activities, managing challenging behaviours and reflecting on their experiences. Each of them brought a different set of skills and were able to use them to create a fun and encouraging environment for the children. Staff and senior leaders were blown away with their commitment, providing nothing but praise for the way they all contributed to the camp.



A couple of the student's reflections from their time with Edmund Rice Camps:

'Camp was one of the best weeks of my life - it was truly such a wonderful experience, full of memories that I will never forget! It is such an amazing and rewarding feeling to give a comfortable and caring space for kids who just want to be kids!'

'Camp was such a great experience to step out of my comfort zone and make new friends, gain confidence, learn new leadership skills and help make an impact on the camper's lives'.

If you are 16 this year, and are interested in volunteering with Edmund Rice Camps, please see **Ms Robinson** for more information. There is a camp coming up in April, with a new leader training in March.

Academic Growth Domain

2024 NAPLAN (Years 7 and 9)

Notice to all parents of students in Years 7 and Year 9:

NAPLAN is fast approaching and to prepare for these assessments, students will need to ensure they have the appropriate lockdown browser installed on their device. There are different versions of the lockdown browser for different devices.

The downloads and user guides to help your student install these onto their devices will be available soon via the 'School Favourites' tab (star icon) on Compass. In this folder, navigate to "Parent Resources" where you will find the folder 'Lockdown Browsers'. This will contain all the lockdown browser instructions and downloads specific to each device. We will send out further information when this information has been uploaded.

Please ensure the appropriate lockdown browser has been installed on your student's device by the end of next week (23 Feb 2024) to enable them to complete the NAPLAN testing this term.

Thank you for your continued support.

Cultural Growth Domain

Welcome Back to CAPA at St Leo's!

Welcome back to our Lions, Pride and Specialty Groups this week. We are already off to a great start in Music and Dance. A reminder that Photography Club starts Week 3.

If you would like to register for any Lions ensembles or specialty programs, please contact **Mrs Field**.



CAPA Cubs: Week 3

An even bigger welcome to our Year 7 students who will start their CAPA Co-Curricular journey **this week (Week 3)** in Music, Singing, Dance, Drama and Art. Please double check the placement lists available on the Year 7 2024 Google Classroom page. All parents/carers have also been emailed confirming their child's registration to our ensembles or if they have been added to the waitlist for Dance and Art Club.

If you would like to register for any Cubs ensemble, please contact Mrs Field. All are welcome!



Private Music Tuition

St Leo's also offers our Pride Lands Private Music Tuition Program. If you are interested in receiving private lessons to learn an instrument and/or vocals, please complete the following [expression of interest form](#). Students are welcome to join the program at any time throughout the year, including mid-term.

Co-Curricular Website & Contact Details

All information regarding our CAPA Co-Curricular Program is available via our [St Leo's Co-Curricular CAPA Website](#), we encourage you to bookmark this page.

Thank you for your ongoing support and please do not hesitate to [email Mrs Field](#).

Co-Curricular Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) Program

CAPA CO-CURRICULAR ENSEMBLES & PROGRAMS 2024						
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
Before School	7:30-8:30am Lions Singers (MML02)	7:30-8:30am Lions Concert Band (MML03)	7:00-7:45am Pride Jazz (MML09) 7:45-8:30am Pride Hip Hop (MML09) ALTERNATE TIMES LATE START WEEK 8: 8:00am - 8:45am 8:45am - 9:30am	7:00-7:45am Lions Jazz B (TWG) 7:45-8:30am Cubs Dance (TWG) 7:45-8:30am St Leo's Company (MML09)	7:00-7:45am Lions Jazz A (MML09) 7:45-8:30am Lions Hip Hop (TWG)	7:30-8:30am Pride Performance Band (MML03)
Mentor/Recess (45mins)		Cubs Concert Band (MML03)		Photography Club (MMG02) WEEK A ONLY	Pride Drama Group (AHG02)	
Lunch (30mins)	Cubs Singers (MML02)	Accordion Group (MML01)	Male Vocal Group (MML01)	Girls Rock Band (MML01)	Cubs Art Club (MMG02) String Ensemble (MML02)	
After School	3:05-4:00pm Lions Drama Club (AHG02)			3:05-4:00pm Cubs Drama Club (AHG02) 3:05-4:30pm Pride Pom (MML09)		
DRAMA Cubs – Year 7 Lions – Years 8 + 9 Pride – Years 10-12	DANCE Cubs – Year 7 Lions – Years 8-12 Pride – Invitation Company – Invitation		MUSIC Cubs – Year 7 Lions – Year 8-12 Pride – Invitation Specialty Groups		ART Cubs – Year 7 Photography – Years 7-12	

[CLICK HERE: LIVE LINK 2024 TIMETABLE](#)

Physical Growth Domain

Internal Sport Program

Our Internal sport program has kicked off with all students in Year 7 – 10 having sport as part of their timetable. Year 7 and 8 students will undertake various activities at school run by both staff and external providers. This term sees Year 7 having Cricket NSW coming in to work with the students, and also undertaking self-defence classes. There has been a change with Year 9 and 10 sport this year with the students having sport every fortnight and they will be travelling off campus to various locations. Parents of Year 9 and 10 should have received compass notifications for permission to attend these venues.

Representative Sports - Trial and Training Information

The representative sport program at the College has begun over the last week with a number of sport sign-ups, trials and training sessions. Students are reminded to add themselves to the **St Leo's Sport Google Classroom** page using the code **6q7xvbm**.

This page is updated every weekend with the upcoming weeks trials and training sessions, and if there are changes due to weather it will be updated by 6:00am.



Broken Bay and Catholic Schools NSW Trials

As well as the College teams, our sporting pathways for students are through Broken Bay and then NSW Combined Catholic Colleges. Currently there are a number of opportunities available to students to register their interest.

Below are the current links and information about these upcoming trials. Students should see **Mr Kember** if they are wanting to be involved in these trials ***before signing up***.

Currently there are registrations open for following Broken Bay and Catholic Schools NSW selections:

- U/15 Girls Netball (Need to be playing at a representative level)
- U/15 Boys AFL
- U/15 Boys and U/16 Girls Rugby League
- U/18 Girls Rugby League

If you have questions or external sporting success please contact [Mr Michael Kember via email](#).

What's been Happening?

Parent Information Sessions, Years 7-11

A huge thank you to all St Leo's families who joined us for the online Parent Information Sessions on last Thursday. We hope you found the information useful.

An email will be sent to parents in each Year Group this week with a link to the Teams recording and/or presentation slides, along with the link to submit questions for the FAQ document.

Native Bees Arrive

The College Environmental EarthCare Group is thrilled to announce a captivating initiative - the introduction of Australian Native stingless bees to our campus.

What distinguishes these bees is their lack of stingers, ensuring a safe and allergy-free environment for all students. Our students now



have the chance to partake in practical learning experiences, incorporating various subjects across the school's faculties through the observation of these captivating creatures. Our school's environment will also benefit from these busy bees as they pollinate our native flowers in the College Reconciliation Garden.



HSC DANCE: Callback Excursion & Workshop

On Thursday February 15, Stage 5 and Stage 6 Dance students attended the HSC Callback Showcase at the Seymour Centre. The program featured a selection of exemplary dance performances from the 2023 Higher School Certificate practical exams including core and major studies in performance and composition. This experience gave Dance students a greater understanding of the level of achievement required to achieve outstanding HSC results.

On Friday February 16, Stage 6 Dance students attended the Callback HSC workshop at the Seymour Centre. This experience will help prepare and support students for their Practical HSC exams in Term 3.

CSNSW Softball

On Tuesday the Catholic Schools NSW Open Girls Softball selections were held at Stanhope Gardens. Three students from St Leo's travelled to the trials and had great success. **Maddi D** (Year 12), **Milla D** (Year 12), and **Ruby A** (Year 10) were all selected in the NSWCCC team and will compete at the NSW All Schools championships later in the term. This follows on from their successes during the school holidays. *Congratulations to Ruby, Maddi and Milla!*

Ruby was part of the U/16 NSW team that competed at the National titles in Victoria and after strong performances in the early rounds of the tournament qualified for the grand final. In the final up against a strong Queensland side, unfortunately the NSW team were narrowly defeated and finished as National runners-up.

Maddi and Milla were part of the U/18 NSW team that played in Nationals in Western Australia. Throughout the tournament the NSW lost only one match in the early rounds and went on to qualify for the grand final. In the final both girls were pivotal in NSW claiming an 8-1 victory over Queensland. This last week both girls have also received exciting news as they have both been named in the 2024 Softball Australia U/19 Women's squad. This will see both girls go into national camp in March before a team announcement in early April for the U/18 Women's Softball world cup in the USA later in the year.



State Futsal Representatives

During the school holidays, we have had a number of students excelling in their chosen sports. **Anthony M** (Year 11) and **Lennox L** (Year 11) both represented NSW in futsal. The boys played in the U/16 (Anthony) and U/15 teams (Lennox) at the National Championships on the Gold Coast.

Both boys played exceptionally well throughout the tournament which led to their teams qualifying for the finals. Unfortunately, Anthony's team lost out in a very tight extra-time semi-final, and the U/15 side qualifying for the final and finished as runners up. Congratulations to both boys on your achievements.

Parent Engagement News

The following opportunities are currently available for parents and carers:

Item	When/Where	Details
COLLEGE FAITH ACTIVITIES Weekly St Leo's Rosary & Mass	Rosary: Mondays 10.50am-11.20am Mass/Liturgy of the Word: Fri 10.40am-11.20pm Location: College Chapel (Please sign in at Reception)	All St Leo's parents are welcome to come together for our Rosary and/or Mass/Liturgy of the Word sessions in a spirit of faith and unity so as to strengthen the bonds that make our Catholic school community so special
BROKEN BAY DIOCESE 2024 LENTEN PROGRAM	The 2024 Lenten program invites individuals or groups to reflect prayerfully on the Sunday Gospel Reading during Lent.	Read Bishop Anthony Randazzo's Lenten Message 2024 & access this wonderful Lenten resource here
REVISED PARENTS CHARTER	CSBB has developed and launched a parent charter to support parents as the first and foremost educators of their children and the role they play in their child's faith formation, learning and wellbeing.	Parents are encouraged to read the charter here and hard copies are available at the school reception: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o CSBB's parent charter
PARISH-RELATED ACTIVITIES	World Day of Prayer When: Fri 1 March 11am Location: Holy Name Parish 35 Billyard Avenue, Wahroonga, followed by morning tea in the sunroom	The service for 2024 has been written by the people of Palestine. It is entitled: 'I beg you...bear with one another in love.' Everyone is welcome.
	Hornsby Cathedral Parish Youth Groups When: 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month during school term. Ages 8 to 11: 4:30pm - 6pm Ages 12 to 17: 6pm - 8:30pm Location: OLOR Cathedral, Fr Nulty Room	Term 1 Dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 4th February o 18th February o 3rd March o 17th March o 7th April
CCSP RESOURCES:	Wellbeing and Digital Technologies Webinar: When: 23 May 2024, 12.30pm - 1pm Click to register & secure your spot	Suitable for parents and carers of young people in secondary school, this webinar provides an overview of strategies to protect, respond to and support your child online. Learn about digital skills to protect and support young people's mental health and wellbeing online.

College Calendar – Key Dates

Note these scheduled dates **may be subject change** throughout the year. Students and parents will be advised of changes as soon as possible via Compass notifications and/or in The Lion Roars newsletter.

Week	Date	Event
6-8	Wed 13 Mar – Mon 25 Mar	NAPLAN window
8	Fri 29 Mar	Good Friday (no classes)
9	Sun 31 Mar	Easter Sunday
9	Mon 1 Apr	Easter Monday (no classes)
9	Tue 2 Apr	CSBB Curriculum Development Day (No classes for students)
9	Wed 3 Apr, 3.30-6.30pm	College Open Evening & Expo
10	Mon 8 Apr	Year 7-11 Interim Reports released to students and parents
10	Fri 12 Apr	Last day of Term I
1	Mon 29 Apr	Staff Development Day (No classes for students)
1	Tue 30 Apr	Term II commences for students

Greetings from your

PEC

Welcome back dear St Leo's parents & carers, and a warm welcome to new families. As your Parent Engagement Coordinator (PEC), I strive to strengthen relationships between parents/carers, St Leo's and the wider parish communities, so as to improve student & family learning and wellbeing. I pray that I will be able to support you in your journey here. Please feel free to reach out to me if I can be of assistance.

sajanee.senn@dbb.catholic.edu.au

Saj Senn