



The John Berne School
Hope Always

Newsletter

Dear parents, caregivers, and friends of Berne

"Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice." John 10:1-4

It is interesting that biblical imagery continues to hold popular meaning for us today as it did in Israelite tradition. The shepherd of Israel was God who protected the flock, provided it with food, kept it healthy and gathered its scattered members. In this text Jesus emphasises the importance of calling the name of each member of the flock. When Jesus calls his followers personally, this summons transforms them and also gives them a place in the community. This is how Jesus fulfilled his duty to heal and restore the flock.

Jesus also protects his flock and provides for it. When he calls himself the "gate," he is probably referring to the practice, common across cultures, of a shepherd sleeping at the gate of a livestock corral. Stationed this way, the shepherd keeps out predators or thieves and saves the flock from wandering out into the night. The next day, the shepherd stands at the gate to call the sheep and lead them to the day's pasture.

When Jesus promises to be the gate, he promises his followers that he will protect them and provide for them always. The flock might come under threat or even sustain some damage but the shepherd is tireless in his efforts to heal it and make it whole again. An invitation is there for each of us to consider when Jesus called us by name to project the voice of Christ and be a "gate" they can rely on as securely as Jesus.

We do like to think that we offer a place in the community to help the students grow to allow them to transition to new pastures where they can experience other shepherds who can lead them to success. To those

supporters who so generously gave of their time and financial assistance at the recent Annual Berne Luncheon, know that you are very much part of the story of helping the flock to be nurtured. I wish to sincerely thank you for being fine gatekeepers in keeping the gate open for our students.

We have just had National Volunteer Week so it is fitting that we honour those who have given so generously of their time and skills to the school. We have a wonderful team of volunteers who have been with us for many years, some with over 10 years of service. A tremendous effort and a blessing for the entire Berne community.

May we all be blessed in lighting the path that continues to help our students shine.

Br Mark Paul fms
Principal



Issue 3 2017

Upcoming Events

24–26 May

Year 7 and 8 Camp

24 May

Year 9 Sailing

27 May–3 June

National Reconciliation Week (NRW)

29 May

Assembly — NRW

7–9 June

Outdoor Education Activities

12 June

Queen's Birthday Public Holiday

19–23 June

Years 9 and 10 Work Experience

26 June

Year 10 Performance at
Belvoir St Theatre

30 June

Students' last day Term 2

18 July

Students' first day Term 3

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Music in Flexible Learning

Music at the school is really finding its rhythm with numerous students unleashing previously hidden talents.



The drum and bass combo has been a winner with most students, particularly those stunned to find they have great rhythm. Watch this space for a performance at the end of term using a mix of live drums, programmed drums, guitars and keyboards. Will someone freestyle over the top? Let's see.

— Cameron Craig, Teacher

Marist Association

The Marist Association aims to provide the necessary structure to keep Marcellin's dream alive. It is a body of people, canonically recognised in the Catholic Church, who share responsibility for the leadership, governance and animation of Marist ministries. The Association is open to anyone with a Marist heart. It formally brings together the Marist Brothers in Australia with other people who are passionate about, and committed to Marist spirituality, life and mission.



At The John Berne School we have several members who are part of the Association and often have gatherings to share and discuss our thoughts. If you are interested in learning more about the Marist Association or would like to join us in prayer and discussions please contact the school for more information.

— Tanja Dunne, Local Coordinator

National Volunteer Week

"Give Happy. Live Happy" is the motto for National Volunteer Week which was celebrated across the nation during May 8th to the 14th.

We are very grateful for our six volunteers at The John Berne School: John Cowen, Patricia Robinson, Rob O'Callaghan, Wendy Ballesty, Louise Watts, Suzanne Davies and Gretchen Riordan.



We truly appreciate their presence and support of the staff and students and their willingness to share their time and gifts with us each week.

— Nicole Arathoon, Volunteers Coordinator

Congratulations David and Chelsea

Congratulations to Berne teacher, David Riddington, on his wedding during the last school holidays. We wish David and Chelsea every happiness for their lives together.



DRUMBEAT Program

We are very lucky to have Sally Riley from Catholic Care Lewisham, delivering the DRUMBEAT program again to those Year 10 students who did not complete it last term.

Holyoake's DRUMBEAT program is the world's first structured learning program using music (drums), psychology and neurobiology to reconnect with ourselves and others.

The name DRUMBEAT is an acronym for Discovering Relationships Using Music, Beliefs, Emotions, Attitudes, and Thoughts.

Each DRUMBEAT session uses the drum and focuses on different relationship themes such as identity and social responsibility, values, dealing with emotions, peer pressure, harmony, communication and teamwork.



This program forms part of our anti-bullying initiative at the school by increasing social skills and awareness of others. The program will end with a final performance.

This week's focus was on relationships and the importance of being aware of others. As part of the session each participant danced in the middle whilst the remainder played the rhythm of the dance on the drums.

The students had great pleasure in seeing my dancing skills (or lack thereof).

— Phoebe Mitsak, Counsellor

Belvoir St Theatre Date

Some Year 10 students will be performing at the Belvoir St Theatre on Monday 26th June, 2017 at 2pm. If you wish to attend, please RSVP to office@johnberneschool.org ASAP.

The Annual Berne Luncheon

The Annual Berne Luncheon is our major fundraising event each year which gives our supporters an opportunity to see and hear how your contributions make a difference to our school community.



Over 320 guests attended this year's luncheon

Our MC for the afternoon, Wendy Harmer, created the perfect setting with her warmth, humour and candour to open the hearts, minds, and spirits of those in attendance to celebrate the achievements of our alumni — whose life changing time at Berne was made possible by the generosity of the community. We are particularly indebted to Wendy's generous offer of some very personal, vintage Australian cartography and although not required this year I am hoping that she will save the chart for next year's auction.



The Hon Kristina Kenneally and Wendy Harmer

As always the Hon Kristina Kenneally, our ambassador, provided a thought provoking address where she referenced American musician Joe Henry's recent comments on the current state of the world: "This is not who we are but it is where we are". Kristina contextualised this beautifully to our own situation in Australia and our school by calling us not to make judgements for all time based

on how things are in this moment. We again are indebted to her for the advocacy and support provided to the school.



Anthony waving to his greatest supporter — mum

Kristina interviewed three former students: Anthony Esposito, Arabella Croft and Mark Hinton who took to the stage to share their journeys which illustrated the fact that despite being in a challenging place at the time, their true selves were



Arabella telling her Berne story

not where they were at that moment. This brought laughter and joy to us by acknowledging their difficulties and how they pushed through to win the hearts and admiration of everyone present.



Mark reminisces about his time at the school

Capitalising on this wave of positive sentiment Damien Cooley, our auctioneer,

generously gave his time and made a personal appeal to help us once more raise funds from a very willing audience. After an effortless 15 minutes, Damien had brought the final hammer down on all the auction items and cleared the Champagnat Scholarships which are crucial in covering tuition fees for those students and families in need. Never one to rest on his laurels Damien encouraged even more generosity,



Damien Cooley working the room

raising the bar of selflessness in the room to set a new standard of giving. All the donors were met with a standing ovation from Berne staff for their altruism.



Many thanks to our volunteers from Trinity Catholic College

On behalf of the entire Berne community, I thank each and every one of our supporters; we are very grateful to



Special thanks to Ange and Catherine for their work behind the scenes that made all this possible

those who give of their time, thoughts and prayers, special guests at the luncheon and corporate donors.

— Br Mark Paul, Principal

Thank you to all our Supporters

Many thanks to all our supporters who contribute to the school and its programs. The achievements of the students who attend Berne would not be possible without your help. A special thanks to our corporate sponsors whose commitment is invaluable.



Fundraising and Donations

The Annual Berne Luncheon is over for another year and we are very grateful to all who attended and contributed so generously. If you weren't able to come to the luncheon or would like to donate, please visit our website: www.thejohnberneschool.org at any time.



Attendees of the Luncheon

Over 320 guests attended the luncheon in support of the school. We hope you enjoy some of the photographs taken during the afternoon and we look forward to seeing you again at next year's luncheon.

— Development Office



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Clean Up Australia Day

The Clean Up Australia Day campaign made its way to The John Berne School with students in Years 9 and 10 spending time cleaning up the school grounds and the streets which border the school.

The national campaign started 26 years ago and over this time Australians have devoted more than 31 million hours towards cleaning up and collected over 331 thousand tonnes of rubbish.



Joseph and Matthew cleaning out the back

With our bright yellow gloves and bags we proudly contributed to this national number with our one hour of time and ten bags of rubbish. Well done to all staff and students who gave their time and energy to support such a worthwhile cause.

— Nicole Arathoon, Year 9 Coordinator

Stations of the Cross

Friday 7th April saw the whole school travel south to The Hermitage,



The idyllic surrounds of The Hermitage

Mittagong. This is the Marist Spirituality Centre of the Marist Brothers and has been for over one hundred years.

It is a school tradition at the end of Term 1 to gather as a community for some recreation, meals and quiet, prayerful reflection on Jesus' last journey, often called the Stations of the Cross.

The Stations are set out in the beautiful grounds between the road that joins La Valla, the former Marist Novitiate, and Le Rosey, the former boarding school for aspiring brothers, which leads up to the Chapel of the Visitation.

Unfortunately, this year the chapel was unavailable so there was a sharp U-turn after station 7 and we had temporary stations going down the



The Stations of the Cross at Mittagong

hill to the Stanislaus Room for the final station and a final awards assembly. The Stations we followed were John Paul II's scriptural accounts.



Tania, Faye and Sharon serving hot cross buns

The weather was superb, the food well prepared, a beautiful site and a great way to spend the last day of Term 1.

— Br Chris Hogan, Teacher

What is Flexible Learning?

Flexible Learning at The John Berne School provides students in Years 9 and 10 with an opportunity to engage in studies which are not covered within the six key learning areas of Mathematics, English, Geography, History, PDHPE and Science.



Dave and Eryn turning leftovers into a new meal

In small groups, students are provided with three lessons each week to enhance their skills in gardening, music, sports and games, cooking and woodwork.

Flexible Learning classes also provide staff and students a wonderful opportunity

to build rapport outside of a classroom setting learning hands on skills.

— Nicole Arathoon, Curriculum Coordinator

Sailing Program

This term, Year 9 students have the opportunity to go sailing on Sydney Harbour, with the support of Sailors with DisABILITIES.

Every Wednesday, Year 9 students are learning to sail a yacht with the guidance from the volunteers on board. The goal is for the students, by the end of the eight week program, to sail the yacht as a team through Sydney Harbour without assistance.



Christian and David surveying the horizon

Students are enjoying this remarkable opportunity to challenge themselves and develop their teamwork skills. Some of the comments from the students highlight this:

"One of the advantages of doing this program is you're taught to read waves".



Kerry and George raising the sails

"Sailing is a very fun experience".

Our sincere thanks to Sailors with DisABILITIES and David Pescud for this wonderful program.

— Kelly Wafer, Teacher

A Reflection on Marcellin

Marcellin Champagnat wrote many letters to his fellow Brothers as the leader of the Little Brothers of Mary in the early establishment of the Marist Brothers in France.

In a particular letter written by Marcellin to Brother Jean-Marie, he spoke about the importance of relationships. In his letter he spoke about having a bon enfant style of relating and teaching students. There is no direct English translation, although at some stage it was translated as 'good natured'; a poor translation of Marcellin's intention.



Saint Marcellin Champagnat

Marcellin's intention of having a bon enfant style of teaching for his Brothers was to form deep relationships with the students they work with and care for in their community. Getting to know their students beyond face to face teaching; their lives, joys and challenges. It is an intuitive way of having an affective spirituality and a simple and pragmatic way of doing God's work.

— Dominic Ritchie, Acting Assistant Principal

100% of Berne students who participate in our intensive literacy instruction see growth of between 2 and 5 years

Cyber Safety

In the past week there has been a number of news items urging parents to be aware of their children's use of social media platforms such as Snapchat. There have been reports of strangers asking for photos or attempting to get in contact with children.

Undoubtedly, social media has many benefits and these far outweigh the disadvantages however, discussions about its use and abuse need to be ongoing. Bullying and harassment conducted online is a reality which some young people engage in and many others experience and have to deal with. Recent media reports about tragic consequences are becoming far too common. Social media allows messages, photos or video to spread rapidly throughout not only to the intended audience but also the wider community.

Cyber bullying can be relentless and is exacerbated by the increased difficulty in identifying the bullies as well as the always available nature of the internet. Sometimes, young people post images of themselves which may come back to haunt them years later. Once something is out there in cyberspace it is out there forever.

— Dominic Ritchie, Acting Assistant Principal

National Reconciliation Week

National Reconciliation Week (NRW) runs annually from 27 May – 3 June. This year's theme is 'Let's Take the Next Steps' as we reflect on two significant anniversaries in Australia's reconciliation journey – 50 years since the 1967 referendum, and 25 years since the historic Mabo decision. We invite all families and friends to join us to commemorate these significant milestones with an assembly on Monday 29th May at 8.40am.

National Reconciliation Week 2017
27 May to 3 June



PARENTS' CORNER

Self-Confidence

The ability for adolescents to develop self-confidence is one of the most essential traits they can acquire in life. Once they have faced their fears they can develop self-confidence and have belief in themselves and their abilities.

In the purest sense, self-confidence is knowing what you're good at, the value you provide, and acting in a way that conveys that to others. Contrast this with arrogance, which typically involves believing you are better in a particular area than you are, or low self-esteem which involves believing you're less valuable than you think. The closer your self-assessment is to reality, and the more you behave accordingly, the closer you are to displaying healthy self-confidence.

Confidence grows when young people give something a go, learn from others and find inspiration to overcome fear. My tip here is for all students to get involved in extracurricular activities and I suggest parents and carers encourage their children to try an activity that seems interesting and give it a go. The payoff could be discovering a talent they didn't know they had and gain a big boost in confidence.

Having self-confidence helps to develop resilience and just might provide them with the skills to manage confronting situations and relationships.

If you can spare 30 minutes together over the weekend, I would encourage you to sit down and watch the following YouTube clips: ['A father's love'](#) and [Nick Vujicic Inspirational Video](#) then discuss the stories, as a way of finding inspiration and the motivation to take action.

— Dominic Ritchie,
Acting Assistant Principal

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