



The John Berne School  
Hope Always

CELEBRATING **25** YEARS  
*Acceptance. Hope. Change.*

Hope Always

Issue 2 2023 Newsletter

Dear parents, carers, and friends of Berne



May is a special month for many Catholics around the world, as it is dedicated to honouring the Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ. During the month of May, there are several special devotions and traditions Catholics participate in as a way of showing respect and love for Mary. For example, some people like to recite the Rosary daily.

One reason why May is a particularly fitting month for honouring Mary is because it is the beginning of Spring in the Northern Hemisphere and Spring is typically associated with new life and growth. This can be seen as a metaphor for Mary's role as mother to all Christians.

It is also worth noting May is the month in which many important feast days take place, such as the Feast of the Ascension and Pentecost Sunday. These Feast days help to anchor Mary's month of special devotion within the broader context of the liturgical year, reminding us our faith is a community effort that extends beyond individual piety or devotion.

Considering these many traditions and occasions, Term 2 was a wonderful time for Catholics to deepen their devotion to Mary and to reflect on her powerful presence in our lives as faithful followers of Christ. As a Marist school it was important for us to remember Marcellin Champagnat's deep devotion to Mary as he experienced many moments of grace and closeness to her throughout his life. One such moment occurred during a particularly harsh winter when he learned a fellow Brother in a town far away had been struck with a serious illness. Concerned about the young Brother, Marcellin and Brother Stanislaus set out on a 22-kilometre journey across rough countryside to visit him.

On their return trip, walking through heavily timbered territory, the two men were caught in the full fury of one of the region's worst snowstorms. They became lost, leading to hours of wandering on the slopes of Mount Pilat and were completely exhausted. Night set in and the possibility of death in the snow increased with each passing hour. It was at this point both men turned to Mary for help and prayed the Memorare.

Within a short while, they saw a lantern, not too far in the distance. A local farmer, Mr Donnet, had left his house to enter a nearby stable as he did every night. On this particular evening however, he took an unusual route and did not enter the stable through a convenient door in the wall of the house.

*Continued next page*

## Upcoming Events

**18 July**

Students return Term 3

**14 August**

Parent/Staff/Student Interviews

**15 – 18 August**

Snow Camp (by invitation)

**21 August**

Assumption Day Mass

**4 – 8 September**

Stage 5 Work Experience

**6 – 8 September**

Stage 4 Activities

**21 September**

Students last day of Term 3

**22 September**

Pupil Free Day - 25 Year  
Celebration Luncheon

**10 October**

Students return Term 4

For reasons that can be explained only by faith, this particular night, he braved the wind and snow and chose a route that would take him outdoors with his lantern. Marcellin and Stanislaus saw the light in the distance and were able to make their way to the farmer's house and seek refuge from the storm.

As we head into the holidays and reflect on what has been a busy and successful term, I ask you to keep in mind the faith and conviction of Marcellin and, when times are difficult and you feel lost, I encourage you to pray the Memorare as Mary has a powerful presence in our lives and will help guide us through the most challenging times.

Hope Always!

James Le Huray  
Principal

## Champagnat Day



The Berne school community celebrated St Marcellin Champagnat's feast day with a Mass, shared lunch and a fun afternoon bowling at Strathfield. Congratulations to Year 10 student, Johnathon who was awarded The John Berne School Champagnat Award for 2023 recognising the values that St Marcellin personified: Character, Stability and Good Example. Johnathon also won our mid-term attendance raffle receiving a \$50 gift card in recognition of his excellent attendance record.

Teacher, Michael Muranty was presented with an award honouring his 25 years of service to Marist Education. We have been blessed to have Michael teaching at Berne since 2000.



# Celebrating 25 Years

On April 27th we proudly celebrated 25 years of Marist education at The John Berne School. In April 1998 Berne opened its doors enrolling its first 30 students in facilities that were part of the old St Thomas Boys High School site at Lewisham. From humble beginnings, the school buildings have been extensively renovated and we now share the site with Eileen O'Connor Catholic College.

Father Gavin Foster SM, Chaplin St Joseph College Hunters Hill and Fr Phil Robson CM, a Berne staff member from the school's first year, concelebrated Mass held in St Thomas Becket Parish Hall. We were delighted to welcome many honoured guests on this special occasion: Br Peter Carroll fms, Provincial of Marist Star of the Sea Province; Br Darren Burge fms, Vice Provincial and previous Principal of The John Berne School; Br Michael Callinan fms; Dr Frank Malloy, National Director Marist Schools Australia Limited;

Dr John Kyle-Robinson, Regional Director Marist Schools Australia Limited; Professor Br David Hall fms, Chair of Marist Schools Australia Limited Board and members of The John Berne School Advisory Council. We were also delighted that several past staff members, volunteers and past parents could join us and one of the highlights of the occasion was hearing them share stories of their years at Berne.

Of course another highlight of this wonderful day was one of our traditions - the famous Berne sausage sizzle!

In a moving speech delivered by Berne's founding Principal, Br Michael Flanagan fms, he shared his inspirations for the school's motto, Hope Always. Br Michael laid the foundations for Berne's mission and purpose and the Marist values underlying the work we continue to do here today.



## Br Michael Flanagan's speech:

"Hope Always...Spes Semper  
Where did the motto of this unique school come from?  
There were two strands that came together in my mind sometime in 1997 at Winston Hills.

The first was a quote of Robert Kennedy's (paraphrase): "He or she who hopes for a perfect world, participates in the hope of Christ." Hoping for the absolute best for every person is the measure of the hope Christ has for each of us. Christ's hope is a hope on Steroids.... It's magnificent in its scope.

The second was a line from a Willie Nelson song: "I'll be loving you always." Some of the greatest insights into the nature of God...and therefore our nature...can be heard in popular songs. We believe in an "always" God...a God that loves us always, stays with us always, perseveres with us always, forgives us always. This does not change if we fail or don't measure up. Our souls can never be lost. We cannot be lost to God. Ever.

Thus, two words came together: Hope and Always. Hope Always.  
The John Berne School is named after a street kid that Marcellin Champagnat loved as his own and never lost hope in. The boy changed and became a Brother, Br Nilamon, dying in Champagnat's arms thanking him for all he had done for him.

This school exists to hope in each of its students as Christ hopes in them. It has the courage to take on this daunting task because our God loves us all, equally, and forever.

Sempiternam. For all time; Always; For ever more."

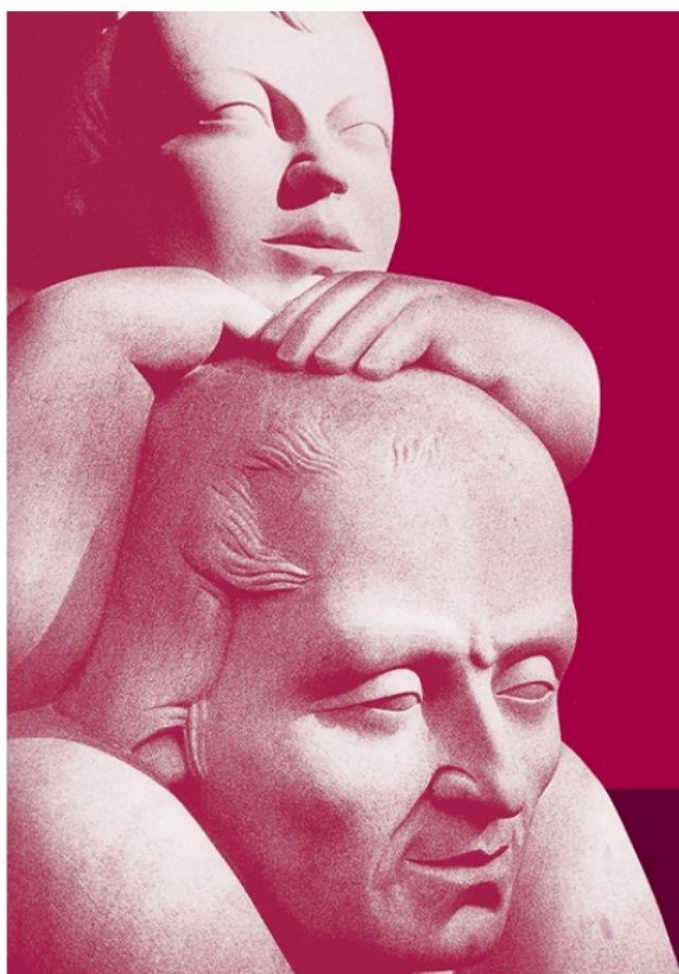
# Celebrating 25 Years





# The Annual Berne Luncheon 2023

Celebrating 25 Years of Marist Education



**Friday, 22 September 2023**

11.30 am - 3.30 pm

**Doltone House Jones Bay Wharf**

3/26-32 Pirrama Rd, Pyrmont NSW 2009

**Dress**

Lounge Suit



**MC:** Mike Whitney, former cricketer, television host, presenter, entertainer and author.

**Please celebrate this wonderful occasion by joining us and booking your seats.**

The John Berne School exists to fill a gap in the education system: the education of young people who find themselves excluded from mainstream education.

The school gives students in difficulty a second chance at achieving the educational outcomes that will enable them the opportunity to reach their potential.

Berne is for students who specifically need time out to improve their literacy, numeracy and social skills in a flexible learning environment.

**Tickets:**

**Individual:** \$170

**Table of 10:** \$1,600

**Tickets available online:**

<https://www.trybooking.com/CGZDB>

OR

Scan the QR Code to book your tickets.

**Enquiries:**

For any inquiries please contact us

**T:** 9560 9260

**E:** [events@johnberneschool.org](mailto:events@johnberneschool.org)



# Stage 5 Activities

Stage 5 students have completed an array of exciting excursions throughout Sydney over the last term as part of their flexible learning program. These excursions were carefully selected to provide our students with valuable social and teamwork skills, as well as unique and memorable experiences that they may not have had otherwise.

One of the most unforgettable trips was to the historic La Perouse area where students went on a scenic bushwalk and explored various local historic sites, including the abandoned gun placements set up during World War 2. On another day, students walked across the Sydney Harbour Bridge and climbed the Bridge Pylon Lookout/Museum to learn about the history of this engineering feat.



Students also enjoyed testing their skills at indoor rock climbing, a bushwalk exploring the Middle Head historic defences, as well as having a relaxing day of fishing and swimming at Clifton Gardens. These are experiences that many of our students may not have had before, and we are thrilled to provide them with opportunities to explore new environments, challenge themselves and see what they are capable of.

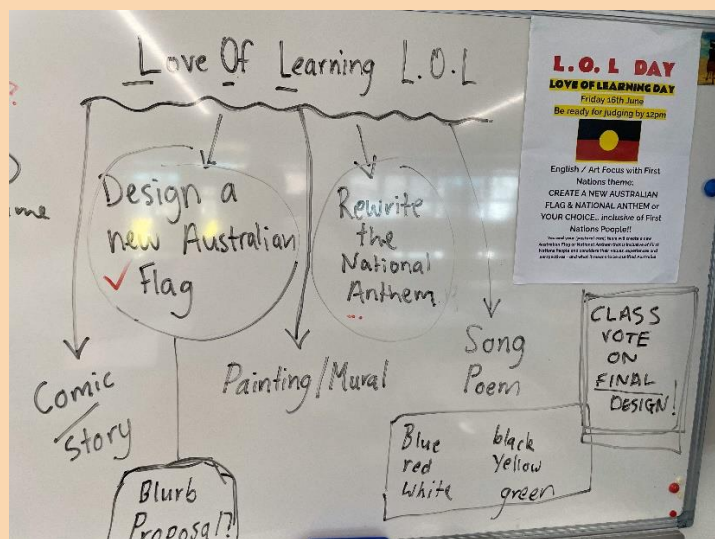
We are grateful to our dedicated teachers, who have thoughtfully planned, organised, and led these activities to ensure that the students had safe, enjoyable and educational experiences. At The John Berne School, we believe that learning can happen both within and beyond the classroom, and we look forward to continuing to provide meaningful and engaging experiences for our students in the future.



# Love of Learning Day



This term our Love of Learning (LOL) Day focussed on English and Art incorporatin a First Nation's theme. In pastoral care classes, students were assigned to work as a group to design a new Australian flag, national anthem or a creative art piece. Br Chris and James had the difficult task of judging the finished projects. Congratulations to Luke's class for their winning LOL Day presentation and to Michael's class for achieving second place.



# Volunteers Week

International Volunteers Week was celebrated 15<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> May. We would like to give a very special shout out to two of our very own. John and Patricia have been volunteering at Berne for well over 20 years and still counting. Our students made and presented them with cards with messages of appreciation from everyone in our Berne community. Thank you, John and Patricia for your dedicated work and for being such wonderful role models for our students.



# Love Bites Program

We are very fortunate to have the Love Bites Program being delivered at our school by Mission Australia to Stage 5 students during Terms 2 and 3. Love Bites is an extremely successful school based Domestic and Family Violence and Sexual Assault prevention program. The program emphasises the importance of a whole school commitment to respectful relationship education. Love Bites provides young people with a safe environment to examine, discuss and explore respectful relationships. The overall aims of the program are to equip young people with the knowledge needed to have respectful relationships, encourage and develop their skills in critical thinking and assist them in being able to solve problems and communicate effectively.

Phoebe Taylor  
School Counsellor





# Stage 4 Camp

This term, Stage 4 students spent three days at a fun-filled camp in Gerroa.



We began with a drive to Stanwell Tops for morning tea, followed by lunch in Kiama and a visit to the blowhole before settling into the Gerroa campgrounds.

Although it rained during our visit in Kiama, it brought us closer as a Stage group

when we shared lunch in the school bus, trying to stay dry, laughing and eating our sandwiches.



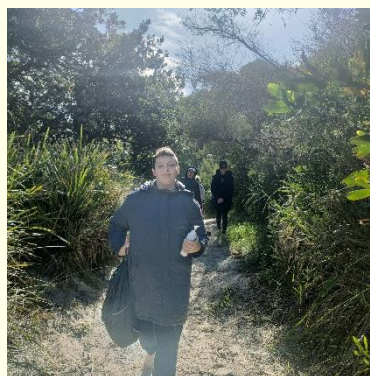
When we arrived at Gerroa, we quickly set up our tents and then feasted on hamburgers prepared by staff and students.



Fortunately for us, the rain had stopped, allowing us to enjoy a warm campfire at night when the temperature dropped. We took this opportunity to make damper prepared by Kristina, which students cooked on the campfire and ate with Golden Syrup.



The sun shone brightly the next morning as we set out for Callala Beach. Despite the wind, the white sand and stunning



views of the coast made it worthwhile. Later that afternoon we took on the challenge of go-karting around the campground, followed by a lovely stroll along 7 Mile Beach. In the evening, we dined on a delicious lasagne dinner prepared by the students, complete with cake and

custard for dessert. Before the night ended, we spent time around the campfire roasting marshmallows, playing spotlight, and playing card games.

After a long but enjoyable three days together, we were all exhausted and were ready to return



home. Thank you to Jayne and Gemma, who always ensure the students' safety and enjoyment during camps. Thank you to the Stage 4 students who took on the challenge of coming to camp, especially to our first-timers, who proved themselves to be exceptional campers.

Kristina who worked tirelessly to ensure that the camp ran smoothly and successfully.

Supi Taufa'ao  
Teacher Assistant

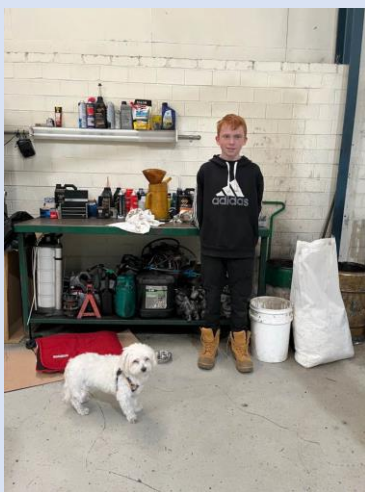
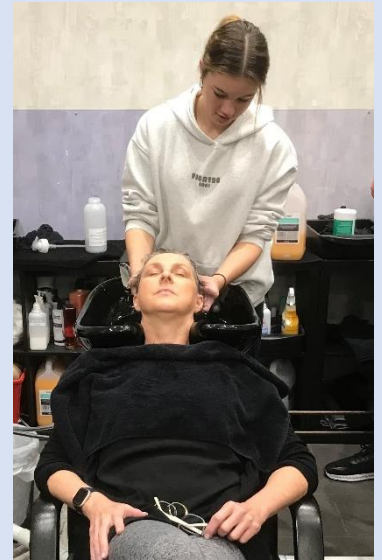


# Work Experience

It is difficult to operate outside your comfort zone, and students are encouraged to use work experience as an opportunity to not only try new jobs, but to practice fitting in with new situations and develop confidence when meeting and interacting with new people. Workplace learning also provides exposure to a range of occupations to allow students to make informed choices about their career preferences when they leave school.

Work experience week in Term 2 saw Stage 5 students in a range of different workplace occupations including administration, hospitality, retail, education, farming, social work, plumbing, fitness training, carpentry, building, car mechanics, hairdressing, painting and at a veterinary practice. Three of our hard-working students have reported that they have been offered part-time work through their work experience placements which is a great result.

Having to find an employer at the last minute puts unnecessary pressure on everyone involved, and often results in frustration when students are refused many times when they make their phone calls to employers. Students are encouraged to source and approach employers themselves, as these are valuable work-related skills. The assistance provided by families in finding positions is certainly appreciated, and we do ask that you continue to support your sons/daughters in their attempts to find work, by strongly encouraging them to make phone calls, or visit workplaces in person.



# Positive Paws Program

This term has seen yet another successful course at the Guide Dog Puppy Program. The students who were lucky enough to attend will be graduating the training course at the end of term and receiving their Puppy Guide Dog training certificates.

The students have had the chance to experience the different types of blindness that Guide Dog owners have by wearing special glasses and having to perform certain tasks to experience the difficulties people with limited vision have in their day-to-day life.

The pupils have learnt to look at the puppy's body language, how they react to certain situations, working in pairs to evaluate the puppies' strengths and weaknesses. All this is invaluable to the trainers and the information feedback is taken very seriously.

Pupils have also been lucky enough to talk with real life Guide Dog trainers and their dogs in training.

All the pupils have enjoyed the term and learnt a lot of new skills. Congratulations to Jayden and Johnathon who have been invited to continue with the program as mentors next term.

Jayne Layland  
Stage 4 Teacher



## Get Involved

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# Puppy Raising Program



At eight weeks of age, our Guide Dog pups are placed in the community with volunteer Puppy Raisers. These families or individuals ensure that our new puppy recruits get the best possible care, in a loving home environment while receiving necessary training.

These special, dedicated Puppy Raisers all have one thing in common – they embrace the opportunity to help change people's lives forever.

### What is required?

Puppy Raising is a 12-14 month commitment. During that time, Raisers are responsible for:

- Making the pup part of your family and keeping them safe.
- Attending weekly training sessions in your area.
- Have a yard with dog-proof fencing unless you live in a flat or unit.
- Have access to a car to transport your pup.
- Teaching the pup some basics skills, including sitting nicely when being groomed, walking nicely on a lead, good house manners, and providing regular socialisation experiences.
- Establishing good toileting, feeding, sleeping, and walking routines.
- Live in the areas of Sydney, Blue Mountains, Central Coast, Newcastle, South Coast, Southern Highlands or Canberra/Queanbeyan. This is to ensure your pup can attend regular training sessions.
- Be home for most of the day; your pup must not be left alone for more than four hours at a time without supervision and human company.
- Be available to walk your pup each day.
- Allow your pup to sleep and spend time indoors.

### How do I apply?

- Scan the QR code below and apply online.
- Once you have submitted an application, one of our staff will contact you to discuss the program and book in a House and Yard inspection.



**We're here whenever you need us.**

☎ 1800 436 364

🌐 [nsw.guidedogs.com.au](http://nsw.guidedogs.com.au)

# Guide Dogs.



## Welcome new students

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to the students who have joined our school this term – Indiana, Lucien and Nathan in Year 9 and Patrick in Year 8.

## Dadirri



During this term students in Stage 5 have been learning about Indigenous Spirituality as part of their religious studies. Our students engaged in 'Dadirri', an ancient practise of deep and respectful listening to build community – a way of encouraging people to explore and learn from the ancient heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, knowledge and understanding. This practise aims to help young people to have appreciation for the land and to recognise the vitality of this appreciation for our future. Students valued this experience in quiet, still awareness and are to be commended for their active and respectful participation.

## Notifying the School about Student Absences

As we reach the end of the second term for 2023 it is timely to remind our parent/carer community of the requirements around student attendance. In order to comply with the Education Act, parents or carers must notify the school office with a reason for their child's absence from school on the morning of the absence. Additionally, a written note, medical certificate or email must be sent to the school within 7 days of a student absence. Unexplained absences are recorded immediately on a student's attendance record unless the school receives a legitimate reason for absence. Days absent without explanation are recorded on all student reports.

We ask for administrative purposes that all correspondence regarding student absences be directed to the school office by email [office@johnberneschool.org](mailto:office@johnberneschool.org), SMS 0439 144 497 or phone 9560 9260 (a message can be left on our answering machine outside of school hours). Again, please remember that you need to provide a reason for your child's absence. Please do not assume if you speak with a teacher or school counsellor about your child's absence that the information will be passed on to the school office.

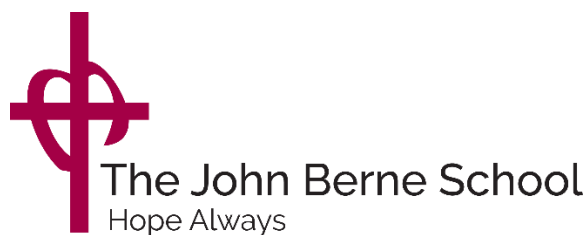
Students, together with parents and carers, are reminded of the importance of punctuality as both a requirement upon enrolment and a significant contributor to student learning.

# National Reconciliation Week

This year, National Reconciliation Week was celebrated from 27 May to 3 June. As this is the same week our Stage 5 students were out on work experience, students in Craig and Mel's class marked this occasion in Week 5 by creating a classroom DISPLAY. We researched what traditional land everyone in the class lived on, we spoke about what the theme "Be a Voice for Generations" means and how each of us can work towards achieving reconciliation in Australia.

This theme was the main focus for this term's assembly and Grant and Declan delivered a presentation to the students about the 1967 Referendum, the Mabo decision and Sorry Day. We know there is so much more to be done, and this year's theme encourages all of us to be a voice of reconciliation in our daily lives.

Melissa Painter  
Stage 5 Teacher



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