Dear Members of the Academy Community,

We arrived at our destination on Friday 6 and were conducted by our future Bishop to the house prepared for us, after midnight. Our first day in Melbourne was Saturday 7 March 1857 and here we are ever since — diary of Ursula Frayne.

Last Monday, 20 April, the Academy celebrated Foundation Day – 163 years of continuous education on this site. Mother Ursula Frayne and her co-founders managed to establish the Academy of Mary Immaculate within 6 weeks from the time of arrival in Melbourne – an incredible effort and one that highlights the tenacity and strength of Ursula - a woman of faith, fortitude and action!

Aware of this anniversary, I spent some time reflecting on what Ursula Frayne would make of the teaching and learning that is currently in place – remote learning. Very different from the beautiful penmanship that we see in the College register. However, I believe Ursula would embrace this new challenge as she embraced the challenges of her time.

We are now at the end of the second week of remote learning and I am very pleased to say that all has gone very smoothly. Thank you to the numerous parents who have contacted us in acknowledgment of the hard work and commitment of teachers, preparing for this new way of learning. Your emails have been much appreciated. Likewise, we have also received positive comments from the students and their attendance has been exemplary.

I trust that on ANZAC Day each of us will take some time to reflect on the sacrifices of the ANZACS and those who fought in all wars. Each year, the College pauses to reflect on the meaning of ANZAC Day. This year we have an online reflection. I encourage families to log on to Daily Messages on SIMON to access the Academy ANZAC video. We stand in solidarity with the ANZACS and all those who have died in wars.

Given the tragic accident leading to the deaths of four members of the Victorian Police Force, we also stand in solidarity with the Police community. The quest for peace is a constant quest - in the words of one of the hymns we pray:

“Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me”

Every blessing,

Sr Mary Moloney rsm
Principal

ANZAC DAY REFLECTION

Dear Lord,

We give you thanks on this Day for all who have served in the defence of this country.

As we remember those men and women who served - in the ranks of our Navy, Army, Air Force, Merchant Navy and Police, we give thanks to you, gracious God, for their great sacrifices in conflict and in captivity - for the cause of peace and freedom. In our nation of wealth, prosperity and comfort, let us not forget the cost of these privileges which we now enjoy.

And, gracious Father, we pray for peace. Have mercy on our broken and divided world and banish the spirit that makes for war. We ask that leaders of nations and governments will pursue freedom, justice and the welfare of all peoples.

And finally, we pray for ourselves. In the midst of worldly turmoil and strife, make us yearn for peace - not only with each other - but peace with you through our crucified and risen Saviour. Trusting in Him for the forgiveness of our sins, help us to look forward to His kingly return. Amen

Lest We Forget

Red poppy

Keep SAFE. Keep POSITIVE. Keep LEARNING.
BUXWEAR UNIFORM
We have reopened our Thomastown shop on reduced hours:

Wednesday to Friday: 9.00am – 5.00pm
Saturday: 9.00am – 2.00pm

The website is also up and running again

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL – WELLBEING AND OPERATIONS

Remote Learning
This term has certainly presented a very different landscape for all of us, given we are in such unchartered territory. Despite this, the term has started extremely well. We understand that this new learning environment can present its concerns and anxieties, but the feedback we have received from parents has been extremely positive.

The staff has worked so very hard to ensure that learning continues to be robust and engaging and the students have responded so very well. Moreover, attendance rates have been excellent and the students’ attitude has been first class.

We understand that this situation puts a strain on families, but your support has been wonderful and, to that end, we sincerely thank you. Please do not hesitate to contact the College about any concerns you may have because we are here to support you in every way possible. We will continue to be constant in our communications with you and we ask that you continue to communicate with us as we navigate the way forward.

Wellbeing
The wellbeing of your child and your family continues to be of paramount importance for us in supporting you during this period of remote learning.

Wellbeing Leaders will be in constant communication with your daughters throughout every week and they are readily available to support your needs or concerns when they arise. As a Wellbeing Team we are meeting every two weeks to discuss the various ways we can implement wellbeing throughout this period and it is important that we are made aware of issues that we need to address.

Additionally, during this period, I encourage you to access the Google Wellbeing Site as it has a myriad of resources to help support you and your daughters. In particular, as I have indicated before, there is a ‘Coronacare’ page which has an abundance of material to help deal with this situation with which we are faced. This page can be found at: https://sites.google.com/academy.vic.edu.au/studentwellbeing/coronacare

The Empty Tomb: Our Reason for Existence

‘…Perhaps the wide and varied challenge from the COVID-19 pandemic invites us to walk still more closely with Christ. This is the risen Christ who remains in and with us even as we face the many challenges in this moment. The tomb may be empty, but we must look beyond the absence in order to experience the Presence…’

Source: Global Sisters Report
In the coming weeks, there will also be an ‘Academy Student Support’ page, in which you will find messages of support from the College Senior Student Leadership Team and I will let you know when these clips and materials are available.

Closing Remarks
As we continue our way forward, please know that we are here to support you and your families in every way possible.

Let us continue to be hope-filled rather than heralds of despair and may we, as a Catholic community, continue to pray, not only for our Academy community, but for the global community beyond us that we can pass through this difficult time with compassion, justice and love.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

“We should be shining lamps, giving light to all around us.”

Catherine McAuley

Mr Paul Finneran
Deputy Principal- Wellbeing & Operations

**DEPUTY PRINCIPAL – LEARNING AND TEACHING**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome back to Term 2. What a beginning it has been! Our College theme, ‘Make it Happen’ has been well and truly realized in the most unexpected way. Just a few short weeks ago, it became apparent that the move to remote learning would be a reality in Term 2. In this short space of time, students, teachers and families alike have been challenged to reimagine school as we know it. As a relatively new member of the Academy Community, I have been inspired by the work ethic and commitment of staff, the adaptability and good humour of students and the support of our Academy families as we navigate this unchartered territory.

Remote Learning has many challenges, but like any new venture, so many possibilities. Teachers have committed themselves to upskilling their technical expertise, to ensure constant communication and interaction with our students. No doubt, Google Meets have become a regular occurrence in your household for example, as the school community continue to learn together. Teachers have been tireless in their efforts to utilize new and different technology to engage students in their learning and most importantly, to encourage students to feel connected to the school and to each other. However, teachers are learning new things every day. We are learning the value in finding a balance between online interaction and offline, independent work; we are realizing that the delivery of content must be more varied and more succinct to support students in isolation; we are learning the importance of slowing down the curriculum to cater for this new space. Every day we are learning.

We must also acknowledge and congratulate students for their resilience in these difficult circumstances. Not only has the student body shown flexibility in adapting to remote learning, they have demonstrated real imagination in the ways they are fostering school spirit, supporting each other and committing to their studies, despite the inherent challenges. The very nature of remote learning challenges students to be more independent learners and more creative problem solvers and despite the disruption to the traditional school environment, they are invaluable lessons well learned during this crisis. All of this learning, for staff and students alike, involves risk, missteps, persistence, patience and good humour. Regardless of our positive start, we have more learning to do, we will face more challenges over the course of the term and we will no doubt make more mistakes along the way. We appreciate the support of families in these uncertain times.

Ms Fiona Lennon, Deputy Principal – Learning and Teaching
“During quarantine I’m not going to lie, it has been a bit boring but there have been some things that I have been doing to stay occupied. I have cleaned out my room and helped around the house with chores.”

“Coming from an Italian background, we use music a lot to celebrate. My dad is a serious music fanatic along with my mum. I know and have known songs from so many different decades...”

“According to my parents I have a very old soul and I love listening to old music such as - Fly me to the moon by Frank Sinatra, Brown eyed girl by Van Morrison, My Girl by the Temptations, Superstition by Stevie Wonder and many others. I would do anything to be able to go back in time and see what it was like in the 50’s-80.”

“Having online school is helping me though, filling my time. I don’t mind the schoolwork to keep me occupied, its actually quite fun. It’s a new experience that I didn’t mind learning.”
“I have an older brother who loves playing video games and occasionally (if he lets me) I play some games with him which is always fun!

“I have found some new hobbies of doing puzzles and gardening. I have created a garden patch from scratch and planted many vegies. I also love to read and have read nearly 20 books with so much spare time!”

We all know that many aged care residents are in lockdown in Melbourne unable to be visited by their families. This is happening in order to keep vulnerable people safe. However, it is also adding to the isolation and loneliness many elderly people can experience. Hopefully, even if in just a small way, our Year 10 student letters will bring a bit of joy to these elderly residents.

Mr Mark Hyland, Director of Faith and Mission

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

Justice Group and FIRE Carriers met online this week to share our thoughts and ideas. We are very aware that many people are experiencing difficulties at this time including many of our own families. However, we are also conscious that the organisations we usually support throughout the year are calling out for assistance. With that in mind we have included links to four of these organisations in case any of our families are able to consider making a donation. This is also a good opportunity for families to explore the websites to find out about these organisations with whom the Academy community has a relationship.


https://www.openingthedoors.org.au/

https://www.mcauleycsw.org.au/

https://www.asrc.org.au/

Ms Sue Moran and Ms Catherine Glenister, Justice Group Leaders
REMOTE LEARNING

Innovative Examples:

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT
This week 9 Barak were set the task of creating an atomic model at home. Students searched far and wide (in home isolation) to collect materials. There were so many outstanding submissions as you can see in the compilation. 9 Barak were very resourceful and should be congratulated for a job well done.

Ms Sarah Maher, Science Teacher

FOOD TECHNOLOGY
Students have commented on how much fun it was in Food Technology to actually be able to cook in their own kitchen.

Academy’s Year 11 Food Studies students were lucky enough to spend time with an extraordinarily talented and generous parent who was able to run us through the finer details of running a cake decorating business.

Year 11 student Alannah Ramunno, organized her mother to chat with us about setting up a small business, designing and decorating cakes and utilizing specialist equipment. Students also had questions about promoting a small business on social media platforms such as Instagram.

Danni has offered to conduct a masterclass in biscuit making with the students. We will all be making Mothers’ Day biscuits at home under her expert guidance via Google Hangouts.

Thanks Danni! The Year 11 students really enjoyed speaking with such a knowledgeable and generous foodie!

Ms Amy Prendergast, Food Technology Teacher

https://www.instagram.com/danniscaketocelebrate/?hl=en
McAULEY RESOURCE CENTRE
The Junior Book club continues to meet each week via Google Meet. All members of the book club have been given a copy of the one book that we are reading and discussing together – *The January Stars*. We are privileged that author, Kate Constable, will launch her book at next week’s Google Meet.

*Mrs Anne Chowne and Ms Pam Saunders, McAuley Resource Centre Co Learning Leaders*