



APRIL 2020 | ISSUE 5

HARP OF THE SPIRIT

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents, Students and friends of the College,



I pray and hope that you and your loved ones are safe and well during these challenging and unprecedented times. As you know, the College has moved to online learning from Thursday, 26th March 2020 because students stopped coming to school as a result of advice given to parents by the Premier of NSW in relation to risks associated with COVID-19 Pandemic. The College continued to remain open during this time.

Since then, College staff have worked tirelessly and creatively to deliver online lessons and learning activities using our At Home Learning Program. Based on information gathered from last week's Students and Parents Surveys on our At Home Learning Program, it is pleasing to learn that the vast majority of our students and parents were satisfied with the current online learning model used by the College. As in any evaluation, we have taken on board feedback from both students and parents and we will be making adjustments and improvements in some areas to ensure a better and more effective online delivery model from Term 2.



Because of the evolving nature of COVID-19 Pandemic situation, we continue to receive almost daily advice from NSW Health, the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) & NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) about how schools will operate next term and about school procedures in relation to student assessments as well as other areas.

Based on current advice and for the first week of Term Two at this stage, we will continue with our At Home Learning Program, but the College remains open to students who wish to attend school. We will continue to communicate with you through normal school channels whenever new information is available.

Reports

Despite the current unprecedented situation in relation to COVID-19 Pandemic, this year's Interim Reports have been mailed to all Yrs. 7-11 parents. These Interim reports give a brief and limited glimpse of individual student's academic progress for Term One across all their subjects. Every report gives an indication about each student's achievement, cooperation and effort in each subject.



Traditionally, teachers request interviews with parents of students who show reason for concern in any one or more of these three categories. However, because of the current pandemic situation, phone interviews will replace face to face interviews early next term. Affected parents will be contacted ahead of time to arrange for a suitable time for the phone interview.

Holy Week

As we take time to reflect on this year's Holy Week during this difficult time, our thoughts and prayers are with you-our students, parents and families, the sick and the vulnerable and all those affected by COVID-19 Pandemic. May the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour be a blessing to you and your families, offering the hope that we will overcome this difficult period.

I take this opportunity to thank all members of the College community for their continued support to our College and wish you all a Happy Easter and a safe and restful Term One break. A special thank you goes to our dedicated staff for their genuine commitment to offering the best learning opportunities to all our students.

Thank you,
Mr. E. Dinkha
Principal

A LOOK AT WHAT'S INSIDE
THE ISSUE:

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FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Written by Mary Khina

Deputy Principal

Dear Parents, Students and Friends of the College

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all students and parents for their efforts with the At Home Learning program over the last weeks. I have been monitoring student engagement on Teams and it is very encouraging to see most students engaged and participating in the course work set by their teachers. I encourage parents to continue monitoring their child's online work and to contact the school if there are any questions or feedback that you would like to pass on.

Assessment Policies

A reminder to students, that all assessment policies and procedures are still in place as normal. Students are required to complete all course work and assessment tasks set by their teacher and show that they are meeting course requirements. Failure to do so will result in a mark of zero for the task, teacher communication with parents as well as a formal warning letter. In addition, students in Years 10, 11 and 12 that aren't meeting requirements risk receiving an N Determination for the course and may not be able to proceed to the next year. If you miss a task due to illness, you will need to complete an illness and misadventure form. Your class teacher can help you with accessing and completing the form.

HSC Exams

Current advice from NESA is that the HSC course requirements and exams are continuing. Teachers will be modifying the mode of submission for certain tasks inline with social isolation guidelines. All tasks will be submitted online. Students need to pay attention to the assessment notifications that are issued to them by their class teacher.

Design and Technology and Music students will receive details from the class teachers regarding changes to the practical components of their subjects in line with NESA advice. Students can also access the advice from the NESA website

<https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/about/news/novel-coronavirus>

We will continue to communicate any new information from NESA to parents and students.

Reports

Year 12 Semester One Reports will be issued to Year 12 parents after week 2 next term. These reports, which are based on assessments completed to date will offer a good picture of students' academic progress in the first half of their HSC course. These reports may also be used to indicate the achievement potential of each student in their respective HSC courses. Teachers are collecting data through student completion of course work and assessment tasks. These will be reported in the Half Yearly Reports at the end of Term 2 for Years 7-11. I encourage students to engage in all course work, not just assessment tasks, to ensure that the reports reflect their full abilities and potential in the subjects. The term break period can be a convenient time for students to reflect on their learning experiences and the progress they have made to date and take concrete steps to improve their achievement prospects as they continue their studies in their respective courses.

I would also like to extend a thank you to each and everyone of St Narsai staff for their incredible efforts in the recent weeks. Teachers have been working incredibly hard to ensure that all students are given ways to learn online. A sincere thank you to all parents for all the support and encouragement you have offered to the school staff as well

Finally, I pray that this Holy Season of the Resurrection of our Lord brings peace in your hearts and households. May this be a time that allows us to reconnect with our families and the simple things that we usually don't have the time for. May the blessings of Easter give you and your family the hope and strength that we will overcome the difficulties of the current climate that the world is facing.

TAS FACULTY

Written by Nenos Youkhanis
Acting TAS Coordinator

Dear family and friends of the St Narsai school community,

As the term ends, it is an opportunity to reflect on the progress and experiences of our learners in Technological and Applied Studies courses. One half of year 7 had the experience of learning the mechanics of flight and as well as building miniature aircraft that were powered by rubber bands. The other half of Year 7 explored the processes of designing and producing a textile product such as an apron. Year 8 learners experienced a variety of technologies including application development, Arduino prototyping and mixed materials production using wood and metal for phone amplifiers and LED light lamps.

Learners in Years 9 to 12 Technological and Applied Studies elective courses have had interesting learning experiences in the specialised fields in TAS. Year 9 and 10 Design and Technology have explored the different design concepts, processes and methods of prototyping, especially by using 3D modelling software. Year 9 and 10 Information Software and Technology have delved into the world of web development and robotics – building and programming robots that detect obstacles and colours. Year 9 and 10 Food Technology have developed their knowledge on nutrients and the nutritional requirements for each stage of the life cycle. Food Technology learners unleashed their inner chef through cooking practicals across the term by cooking different cuisines and courses.

Year 11 and 12 Food Technology discovered how food availability is determined by local/and or external influences and selection of food is influenced by physiological, psychological, social and economic factors. They also explored how Australian food industry has developed in response to changes in our physical, social, technological, economic and political environment. Year 11 Textiles Technology allowed learners to develop knowledge and understanding of the functional and aesthetic aspects of design applied to a variety of textile materials, methods and techniques. Year 12 Design and Technology continued working on their major project through the term and Year 11 and 12 Information Processes and Technology learners explored the different types of information systems used today as well as developing database solutions for specific scenarios. Year 12 Engineering Studies learners explored Personal and Public Transport and investigated the history, societal/environmental impacts, mechanics and materials in regard to vehicles.

Due to the pandemic at hand, TAS, as with other faculties, prepared and taught the remainder of the lessons online by using Microsoft Teams. It has been great seeing the amount of engagement and determination for learning by our students during these difficult times. Their determination, effort and drive are commendable. As this term comes to an end, as well as my role as acting TAS coordinator, I want to thank the TAS faculty, specifically Miss Yonan for her support during my tenure as acting TAS coordinator.

May the Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be blessed. Have a safe and enjoyable break.

Assyrian FACULTY

Written by Yacoub Oraham

Dear family and friends of the St Narsai school community,

The Assyrian Faculty is teaching different subjects to different grades in our college. Year 7 are learning about their life and identity as Assyrians, while 8 are learning about eating and drinking traditions and table manners mixing them with cultural expressions. As for year 9, students are learning about travelling and how to plan their own holidays, while Year 10 are learning about celebrations and their role in our lives. These were the reflections of our students about their learning.

Year 7

Every year, during this time we used to celebrate the Assyrian New Year. Although we are learning about our life and identity as Assyrian, but this year all celebrations and gatherings have been cancelled as per the latest instructions from the government about social distancing to keep everyone safe. However, although education is our main priority, but if we forget about our faith as Christians and our identity as Assyrians, it is not good, because everyone belongs to a community. Although we are living in this blessed country Australia, but we need to keep our faith as Christian, identity as Assyrian and our cultural practices alive to enrich the Assyrian society.

Year 8

Our current topic in Assyrian is Food this doesn't just mean regular food like McDonald or KFC. I mean cultural food that has been passed down to us through generations like dolma or Biryani. Overall this topic has been more exciting than the others because now we are learning about our own and other people's traditional food, plus everybody likes food.

COVID-19 is very dangerous and alive now. While we are forced to socially distancing ourselves from other, let us take a moment of our free time and maybe even make some of our cultural foods e.g. my family made dolma a week ago because my mum wasn't going out as much, what I am trying to say is that social distancing is an opportunity for all of us to sit and think that within this rushing life most of us have forgotten about mentioning God everyday on a personal level. I think it is time to start opening the bible, read and practise, spend more time with our family members and do some activities, but moreover thank God for everything that we have in our life.

Year 9

Due to our unfortunate circumstances of the worldwide pandemic of the Coronavirus, our school has situated a new strategy into the continuation of pursuing our student's learning through online learning. This is a new movement not only for students but for teachers as well and as a school community. There is most definitely a solution to every problem, but they do not come easy. Online learning requires taking upon the responsibility for the independence of our learning with the ongoing assistance of our teachers. A great example is the learning of our language, Assyrian. The acknowledgement of learning our language is vital for generations to come so we can keep our language alive. This term's topic for Assyrian is 'Travelling and Transport' where we learn about how travelling and different methods of transport was like in history. We also learn that our forefathers were the first to invent wheels which were later on developed into carriages. Through this, we can understand the lifestyle and daily practises of people in history and how we can appreciate the more modern and efficient ways of travelling nowadays.

Year 10

During this term we are learning about Celebrations. However, for the first time in our educational history, we are not celebrating the Assyrian New Year as a community and as a school due to the latest social distancing instructions, which were enforced by the government recently for our own sake and safety. Akitu Festival or what is known as Assyrian New Year means rebuilding and renewing the life on earth as April in our home of origin is the time where every tree blossoms and the lands become green pastures. Sitting at home and adopting ourselves to the new way of learning (At home learning) is challenging but we need to keep our culture and identity alive. We have a history of 6770 years. Let's celebrate this achievement and send small images to each other about Assyrian New Year to keep this tradition alive every year, while the world is entering a new phase of its life.

Thank you.

KEY DATES

Monday 27th April- Pupil Free Day. Staff return for Term 2

Tuesday 28th April - Term 2 commences for students online

Wednesday 20th May - Year 12 Half Yearly reports distributed and Year 12 Parent Teacher Interviews

(To be confirmed pending advice for NSW Health and NESAs)

Wednesday 1st July and Thursday 2nd July - Years 7-11 Half Yearly reports distributed and Years 7-11 Parent Teacher Interviews

(To be confirmed pending advice for NSW Health and NESAs)

Thursday 2nd July - Last day for students for Term 2