



HARP OF THE SPIRIT

TERM 3 – ISSUE 7

8 August 2026



ST NARSAI
ASSYRIAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

In this issue

- Principal
- Deputy Principal (Curriculum)
- Head of Primary
- K-2 Curriculum Coordinator
- Science
- Christian Studies
- English
- Counsellor

From the Principal

Edwar Dinkha



Dear Parents, Students and Friends,

Welcome back to Term 3. It has been wonderful to see all students settle quickly back into their school and study routines.

Our Year 12 students commenced their HSC Trial Examinations earlier this week, while our Year 11 students have begun the final term of their Preliminary HSC course. We extend our best wishes to all Year 12 students undertaking these important examinations and pray that God blesses them with wisdom, confidence, and success as they strive to achieve their very best in every subject.

During the break and throughout the early weeks of this term, teachers and faculty teams have carefully reviewed and analysed student performance data from Semester 1. This process has enabled staff to identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth, ensuring that targeted strategies are implemented to support improved student outcomes throughout Semester 2.

As part of this commitment, a dedicated team of teachers will work with students who did not meet Semester 1 expectations through a series of Academic Intervention Workshops. These workshops will focus on developing effective study habits, strengthening work ethic, improving time management skills, and evaluating students' commitment to their learning. The goal is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and support necessary to achieve greater academic success during the remainder of the year.

Parents play a vital role in this process. Your encouragement, guidance, and active involvement are crucial in helping your child implement their individual improvement plan and develop the habits necessary for academic growth. As a minimum expectation, students should dedicate between one and three hours each day to completing schoolwork, revision, and assessment preparation, which may also include private tutoring where appropriate. Parents are strongly encouraged to maintain regular communication with teachers and staff to ensure their child receives every available opportunity for support and success.

I would also like to reaffirm that we expect every student to apply themselves diligently across all subjects and to strive for personal excellence. Students who demonstrate a lack of commitment to their studies will continue to be challenged, supported, and held accountable by staff as we work together to foster a culture of high expectations, responsibility, and achievement.

By working in partnership, our students, parents, and staff can ensure that every child is equipped to reach their full potential and experience success throughout the semester

May God bless all our students with a productive, rewarding, and successful Term 3.

Feast of the Transfiguration

The college commemorated the Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ on Thursday, which is one of the seven Holy Feasts in the Assyrian Church of the East. This Feast recalls the revelation of Christ's glory on Mount Tabor in the presence of three of His disciples: Peter, James, and John. Our College Chaplain, Fr. Shamuel and Mrs. Kako accompanied a group of students to St. Hurmizd Cathedral for this special service.

SHAWA B'TABAKH

On Friday, and in a special college ceremony, our staff and students stopped and joined all Assyrians around the world to remember all Assyrian Martyrs and commemorated the Assyrian Martyrs' Day, 7th August- SHAWA B'TABAKH.

At St. Narsai Assyrian Christian College, we continue to honour our martyrs by offering special educational programs that help our students to know their Assyrian nation's history better as they develop and strengthen their Assyrian cultural heritage and their Christian faith.

May all our Martyrs rest in peace and may God give them a place in the kingdom of Heaven.

Alaha manyikhlon sahdan Atoraye wyawilon sama go malkoot dshmaya.

NAPLAN 2025 Principal's Message

Celebrating Outstanding NAPLAN Success

This year's NAPLAN results once again provide our college community with much reason to celebrate.

Our Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students have achieved results above the national average in Grammar and Punctuation, Spelling, and Numeracy, reflecting the strength and effectiveness of our teaching and learning programs.

A significant proportion of students in all cohorts achieved results within the two highest proficiency levels, demonstrating not only that they meet national expectations but that many exceeded them.

These outstanding outcomes are a clear indication of the high standards we set and the commitment our students bring to their learning.

These achievements are the result of the consistent implementation of evidence-based teaching practices and a strong focus on literacy and numeracy across all year levels. Our strategic and targeted approach continues to deliver excellent outcomes and reinforces our commitment to academic excellence.

We are proud to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of our students, teachers, and support staff. The success of our Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 cohorts reflect a collective effort and a shared commitment to helping every student reach their full potential.

Congratulations to our students, staff, and families on these exceptional achievements in the 2026 NAPLAN assessments. Together, we celebrate a result of which our entire College community can be immensely proud.

From the Deputy Principal (Curriculum)

Mary Khina

Welcome back to Semester Two. I pray that all students had a restful and enjoyable break with their families and are refreshed and ready for the second half of the 2026 school year.

This will be a very busy term, particularly for our HSC students who will be completing their Trial HSC exams and preparing for their last term at the College.

Half- Yearly Reports and Interviews

All Years 7-11 Half Yearly reports were emailed to parents at the end of Term Two. Please contact our office on 8818 1300 or info@stnarsai.nsw.edu.au if you have not received your child's report.

It was wonderful to meet with many parents during the parent/teacher interviews that were held on the last day of Term Two. I continue to encourage those parents with specific concerns regarding their child's progress and who were unable to attend and meet with teachers to contact them through our front office. We will be meeting with students who did not meet their full potential in Semester One to discuss strategies for improvement.

Students who demonstrated outstanding achievement during Semester One were recognised at a special morning tea with the Principal on Monday, where they were presented with certificates celebrating their success. These awards acknowledge not only strong academic performance, but also the commitment, perseverance, and positive approach to learning that students consistently demonstrate throughout the semester. We congratulate all award recipients on their achievements and encourage them to continue striving for excellence in all aspects of their learning.

Year 12 Trial HSC Exams

I wish all Year 12 students the best of luck as they commenced their Trial HSC exams on Monday. For most students, this is the last assessment task for their courses before the final HSC exams. I also wish all students completing their practical projects all the best as they complete a major component of their coursework in the coming weeks. We pray that they achieve their best. I remind them of the Bible verse that we have on all our exams – *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"* – Philippians 4:13.

Within this newsletter is an article on managing cognitive load in study sessions. Please read and discuss these strategies with your child as they prepare for their upcoming exams.

Congratulations to our Year 7 and Year 9 NAPLAN Achievers

Student reports for the 2026 NAPLAN tests were sent home with students in Week 1 of this Term. Well done to all the students that completed the tests. We achieved some exceptional results and I look forward to sharing these with the community in coming weeks.

We are incredibly proud of our students who excelled in the 2026 NAPLAN tests.

To our Year 7 and Year 9 achievers, you have set a fantastic example for your peers and have shown what can be accomplished with determination and effort. Your hard work, dedication, and perseverance have truly paid off.

To celebrate their outstanding achievements, our high-achieving students were invited to a special lunch with the Principal last Thursday.

Teachers have already started to analyse the student data and modify their practices to ensure that students are supported in their literacy and numeracy skills. Students are encouraged to continue working on their literacy and numeracy skills using the lessons set in Education Perfect and in their classes.

Reading a NAPLAN individual student report

Parents and carers can access guidance on how to interpret their child's NAPLAN Individual Student Report through this ACARA YouTube Video. The front page of the report provides general information about the NAPLAN assessments and explains how to read the results. The following pages outline your child's achievement in each assessment area using four proficiency levels.

The results are classified into one of 4 proficiency levels: Exceeding, Strong, Developing and Needs additional support.

- **Exceeding:** the student's result exceeds expectations at the time of testing.
- **Strong:** the student's result meets challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing.
- **Developing:** the student's result indicates that they are working towards expectations at the time of testing.
- **Needs additional support:** the student's result indicates that they are not achieving the learning outcomes that are expected at the time of testing. They are likely to need additional support to progress satisfactorily.

The report allows parents to compare a student's performance against national and school benchmarks:

- **Black Triangle** – Represents the national average for students in the same year level.
- **Light Shaded Rectangle** – Represents the achievement range of the middle 60% of students nationally in that year level.
- **White Triangle** – Represents the school average for that year level.

Please note that due to technical issues affecting some schools during the 2026 NAPLAN Writing assessment, the school average is displayed only for Year 3 Writing results and is not available for Years 5, 7, or 9 Writing reports. The final page of the report provides a brief summary of the skills typically demonstrated by students at each proficiency level. Longer descriptions of the skills typically demonstrated by a student at each proficiency level can be found at <https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/results-and-reports/proficiency-level-descriptions>. More information regarding the NAPLAN Individual Student Report can be found at <https://nap.edu.au/docs/default-source/naplan/isr-parent-carer-faq.pdf>

From the Head of Primary

Renia Isaac

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we journey through Term 3, our Primary students have the opportunity to pause and reflect on two significant aspects of who we are as an Assyrian Christian school: our faith in Christ and our rich Assyrian heritage.

At St Narsai Assyrian Christian College, we believe that education extends beyond academic learning. Each day, we seek to nurture students who grow in knowledge, character and faith. We want our children to understand that living as followers of Christ means showing kindness, compassion, respect, forgiveness and service in the way they speak, learn and interact with others.

This week, we celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration, remembering the moment when Jesus revealed His divine glory to His disciples. This important feast reminds us that Christ's light should shine through our words and actions. It invites our students to think about how they can be positive examples at school, at home and in the wider community.

We also commemorate Assyrian Martyrs Day, a solemn and meaningful occasion where we honour the courage, resilience and unwavering faith of the Assyrian people who gave their lives for their beliefs and identity. This day encourages our students to show gratitude, take pride in their heritage and recognise the importance of preserving our language, traditions and faith for future generations.

These moments are not simply events on our school calendar. They are valuable opportunities for our students to develop a deeper sense of belonging, identity and purpose. Through liturgies, classroom discussions, commemorations and prayer, we hope our students continue to grow in their understanding of what it means to live their faith and honour their heritage with pride.

This sense of faith, heritage and belonging will be reflected in a special way this week as our Faith Prefects attend church on Thursday at St Hurmizd Cathedral, representing our college within the wider Assyrian Church of the East community. Our College Captains and Primary Captains will also attend Sunday's service for the Assyrian Martyrs Day commemoration, where they will join the community in honouring the fallen martyrs. Through these experiences, our student leaders are reminded that leadership is not only about representing our school, but also about carrying forward our faith, culture and heritage with reverence, pride and respect.

We thank our families for your continued partnership in nurturing children who are grounded in faith, proud of their Assyrian heritage and committed to serving others with kindness and integrity. May these significant occasions inspire our students to carry Christ's light in all they do, cherish the legacy of those who have gone before us, and continue to grow as faithful, compassionate and confident members of our college and wider community.

From the K-2 Curriculum Coordinator

Mary Khano

Celebrating Our School Community

What a wonderful and eventful time it has been at our school! Our students have enjoyed meaningful opportunities to celebrate culture, support others and share their hopes for the future.

During NAIDOC Week, students participated in activities that celebrated the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Through stories, art, music and classroom learning, students developed a deeper appreciation of the world's oldest continuing cultures and reflected on the importance of respect, connection and reconciliation.

Our "When I Grow Up" fundraiser was another memorable occasion. Students arrived dressed as the people they aspire to become, filling the school with future doctors, teachers, athletes, scientists, artists, firefighters and many other inspiring professionals. It was wonderful to see their creativity and hear them speak enthusiastically about their dreams. Thank you to our families for supporting this fundraiser and helping to make the day such a success.

As we look ahead, we have many significant events to anticipate. Our school community will come together to celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration, a special occasion that reminds us of Christ's glory and encourages us to listen to His teachings and live with faith, hope and love.

We will also commemorate Assyrian Martyrs' Day, honouring the courage, sacrifice and resilience of the Assyrian people. This important day provides an opportunity for students to deepen their understanding of their heritage and remember those who gave their lives for their faith, identity and community.

Our upcoming Fairfield Bulls Sausage Sizzle and Jersey Day promises to be a fun-filled community event. Students will be invited to wear their favourite sporting jersey and enjoy a delicious sausage sizzle. Further information about ordering and participation will be shared with families.

Finally, excitement is already building for our Book Week Parade. Students are encouraged to begin thinking about a favourite book character they would like to portray. Book Week is a wonderful celebration of reading, imagination and the joy that books bring to our lives. We look forward to seeing our school come alive with colourful and creative costumes.

Thank you to our students, staff and families for your continued enthusiasm and support. We look forward to another enriching and enjoyable term together.

From the Science Department

Elias Atto

As we begin Term 3, I would like to extend a warm welcome back to all our students. We hope you enjoyed a restful break and are ready to return to the world of Science with enthusiasm and curiosity.

This term promises to be both engaging and enriching for our science students. Across all year groups, students have commenced new units and will be participating in a variety of activities aligned with the content of their respective courses. We firmly believe that meaningful learning occurs through experience and exploration. With this in mind, we are committed to providing students with regular opportunities for hands-on investigations and the practical application of scientific principles, many of which are already underway.

Year 10

Last term, our Year 10 students engaged with Virtual Reality (VR) headsets to explore the concept of space. This immersive experience supported their understanding of astronomical structures and movement, enhancing their engagement with a traditionally abstract topic. Meanwhile, Stage 6 Chemistry students continued to strengthen their practical skills through investigations relating to reaction rates, equilibrium and chemical analysis, enabling them to connect theoretical concepts with real-world applications.

This term, Mr Parker has initiated an exciting new Garden Club, providing students with the opportunity to participate in the planning, planting and establishment of a school garden. Through this initiative, students will develop a greater appreciation of sustainability, environmental stewardship and the important role plants play within ecosystems.

Year 12

Our Year 12 students have spent the past two weeks revising in preparation for their Trial Examinations. We wish them all the best as they complete their exams and hope their dedication and hard work are reflected in their results. In addition, Year 12 Chemistry students recently attended the KickStart Chemistry Workshop at the University of Sydney.

This valuable experience provided students with the opportunity to consolidate key course concepts, gain insights from experienced educators and further prepare for the demands of the HSC course.



Year 11

Year 11 students are also finalising course content ahead of their Preliminary Examinations. As part of their Biology studies, students are currently planning an excursion focused on Ecosystem Dynamics at Botany Bay. This fieldwork experience will support their understanding of ecosystems by allowing them to investigate the complex interactions that occur within and between ecological communities, while applying practical fieldwork techniques in an authentic environment.

National Science Week

In celebration of National Science Week, a science competition will once again be open to all interested students, with winners receiving gift vouchers. We encourage all students to participate in this fun and rewarding opportunity, designed to inspire curiosity, creativity and a lifelong interest in Science.

We look forward to seeing continued growth in students' passion and engagement with Science as we provide them with opportunities to thrive, think critically and appreciate the relevance of science in their everyday lives.



From the Christian Studies Department

Jessica Kako

"And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works." – Hebrews 10:24

Dear St Narsai Parents, Guardians and Students,

As we begin Term 3, we give thanks to our Lord for the many opportunities our students have had to grow in faith, deepen their understanding of the Christian tradition and actively participate in the life of the Church. Guided by the College's Christian theme, Called to Serve, this term has already been filled with meaningful celebrations, prayer and learning experiences that continue to strengthen the spiritual life of our College community and encourage our students to live out their faith through service to others.

Term 3 Raza Qadisha

We commenced Term 3 by gathering as a College community to participate in Raza Qadisha (Liturgical Service). This sacred Raza provided an opportunity for students and staff to come together in worship, thanksgiving and reflection as we entrusted the term ahead to God's guidance and care.



Feast of the Transfiguration

On Thursday 6th August, our College commemorated the Feast of the Transfiguration, one of the seven Holy Feasts of the Assyrian Church of the East. Selected Christian Representative Council (CRC) students proudly represented St Narsai Assyrian Christian College at the special liturgical service held at St Hurmizd Cathedral. Throughout the day, students also engaged in meaningful Christian Studies activities that reflected the significance of the feast day and deepened their understanding of Christ's divine glory revealed through the Transfiguration. The day concluded with a lunchtime prayer service where students gathered in prayer and reflection.



Called to Serve: Learning from the Saints

This term, students from year 7 to 10 have commenced their new Christian Studies unit, The Saints. Through class discussions, reflective activities and engaging learning tasks, students are exploring the lives, virtues and significance of key saints within the Church. As they engage with this unit, students are encouraged to consider how the example of the saints can inspire them to live faithfully, serve others and respond to God's call in their daily lives.



Called to Serve: Year 11 Winter Appeal Outreach

During the school holidays, our Year 11 students continued to live out our College theme, Called to Serve, by giving back to the wider community and spreading kindness to those in need. In partnership with Maidservant of the Lord's Mission, students assisted in distributing the generous donations collected through our Winter Appeal to individuals experiencing homelessness. This meaningful act of service allowed our students to witness firsthand the impact of compassion, generosity and community spirit. Through this experience, they were reminded that even the smallest acts of kindness can bring hope, dignity and comfort to others, and that each of us has the ability to make a lasting difference in the lives of those around us.

As we continue through Term 3, we pray that our students may be inspired by the examples of the saints, strengthened through prayer and worship and encouraged to grow in their relationship with Christ each day.



Please see the table below for further details on these upcoming events:

Week	Date	Event
7	Saturday 15th August <i>Commemorated at school on Friday 14th</i>	Commemoration of St Mary
8	Thursday 10th September	Whole School Liturgical Service
9	Sunday 13th September <i>Commemorated at school on Monday 14th</i>	Feast of the Holy Cross
10	Monday 21st September	Year 12 Final Liturgical Service and Breakfast – St Mary's Church

From the English Department

Amy Kurver

Year 7

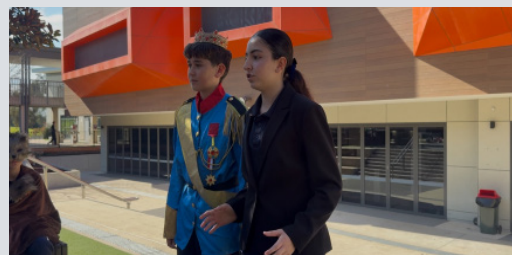
Students in 7S have been enthusiastically working on producing their own class play as part of our Term 3 English unit on Fractured Fairy Tales.

Throughout the term, students have explored how traditional fairy tales can be reimaged by changing characters, settings, perspectives, and plotlines. As a class, they created their own unique spin on a classic fairy tale, resulting in an original fractured fairy tale production.

Working collaboratively in small groups, students planned and wrote their own scenes, applying the writing, drama and film techniques studied throughout the unit. They focused on developing engaging dialogue, creating believable characters, using stage directions effectively, and incorporating a range of film techniques to enhance their storytelling.

Students have now begun filming their play and will also be editing the final production themselves, allowing them to experience every stage of the creative process from scriptwriting through to post-production. It has been wonderful to see their creativity, teamwork and confidence grow as they bring their ideas to life. This project has provided an authentic opportunity for students to apply the skills developed throughout the term while strengthening their communication, collaboration and problem-solving abilities.

We look forward to sharing the finished production with our school community later this term.



From the College Counsellor

Berta Rasho

Our Biggest Resilience Mistake | By Dr Justin Coulson

We are accidentally raising fragile children.

It's not because we're bad parents. It might be the opposite. It's because we're "good ones". We love our kids so much that we smooth the path ahead of them, intervene when things get hard, and rescue them from discomfort before it has a chance to teach them anything.

It feels like protection. It might be the opposite. But it takes wisdom to know the difference. And it's hard because it seems that the stakes are high.

About ten years ago, my daughter (Abbie), came home from school in tears. Her best friend, Abby, had discovered that her mum's cancer had returned after years of remission. The doctors had caught it too late. Her body was riddled with it, and the prognosis was terminal. Four weeks. Christmas.

Abbie announced that, to support her friend, she would sign up for the Leukemia Foundation's "World's Greatest Shave". We asked what colour she would dye her hair. Her response: "I'm not dyeing it. I'm shaving it." We tried to convince her it was a bad idea. The possibility she would be teased or worse worried us. Grade 8, we suggested, can be tough on kids who look different. Abbie dismissed our concerns. She was all in.

Sadly the doctors' forecast was accurate. Mrs Johnson passed away at Christmas time. We hoped Abbie would change her mind about the shave but she grew more determined.

The day arrived. Abbie's head was shaved with Abby, Mr Johnson, and our entire family bearing witness. Thousands of dollars were raised in honour of Abby's mum, Mrs Johnson. And many tears were shed as our brave daughter said goodbye to her hair.

Now for the sad part. Despite her bravery, despite the school principal inviting Abbie onto the stage at assembly to describe what she'd done and how much she'd raised, despite the Johnson's being well known in our school community, and despite the applause for her efforts, Abbie came home in tears on many afternoons. She was called names. She was pushed and shoved. Her lunch was stolen. Abbie was "different", and the kids let her know it.

"Do you regret it?" I asked one afternoon as I comforted her.

"Dad, my hair will grow back", she responded. "But the Johnson's don't get their mum back. It's a small price to pay."

Anti-Fragile

Nassim Taleb is a statistician and philosopher who thinks about risk and uncertainty. He claims there are three kinds of systems:

1. Fragile ones – the type that break under pressure.
 2. Resilient ones – the kind that absorb a shock and return to where they were.
 3. Antifragile ones – which use stress as fuel. They don't just survive difficulty. They grow because of it.
- Most of us are trying to raise resilient kids. Taleb invites a more interesting question: what if we aimed higher?

The trap we don't see coming

Fragility rarely announces itself. A child whose parents have smoothed every conflict, intervened in every struggle, and removed every meaningful obstacle can look perfectly capable – right up until the moment they aren't. The problem isn't that these kids lack love or support. It's that they've never had the chance to build internal architecture for stress.

When difficulty finally arrives – and it always does – they have no practiced response. Weakness was never allowed to become strength.

Resilience versus antifragility

Resilience means returning to baseline. It's recovery. It's important, and we should cultivate it. But antifragility is the capacity to be changed by hard experiences in ways that leave you better equipped, not merely restored.

A child who navigates a painful friendship fallout without a parent stepping in to fix it doesn't just get through it. They learn about conflict, about emotion, about repair, in ways no amount of coaching from the sideline could teach. The difficulty was the lesson.

Presence without rescue

This doesn't mean leaving kids to struggle alone, or treating hardship as automatically character-building. This is not a "toughen up princess" message. Chronic stress without support is damaging, not developmental.

The antifragile environment is one where a child encounters age-appropriate difficulty and knows they're not alone in it.

The parent's role shifts from problem-solver to context-setter. You're not fixing the situation. You're providing the secure base from which they can engage with it themselves.

For a primary school child, that might mean resisting the urge to call another parent when friendship gets complicated, and instead sitting with your child while they figure out what they want to do. For a teenager, it might mean allowing a poor decision to carry its natural consequences, and being present for the debrief rather than the prevention. You're nearby, not in between. The children who adapt when plans fall apart, who recover from failure without collapse, who find their footing in genuinely hard circumstances – they're rarely the ones who had the smoothest ride. They're the ones whose difficult experiences counted for something. Who felt the weight of things, and discovered they could carry it. I almost prevented my daughter from having one of the most powerful experiences of her life. By getting out of the way but staying nearby, she showed me she was stronger than I could ever have known.