God’s Masterpiece
by Mr Rowan Hendrickse - Chaplain

Sometimes in the craziness of life we look for shortcuts just to allow us to take a breath. To breathe and then run again. But what if in taking a shortcut we miss the lesson God is trying to teach us. And in taking a shortcut we don’t step into the blessing God has prepared for us.

One day the owner of a building company approached his chief builder with news that he was retiring. But before his retirement he would build the most amazing house overlooking the ocean. This would be his company’s Picasso, his Mona Lisa. He showed the building plans to his chief builder. His chief builder agreed, this house that his boss would be retiring in would be talked about all over the world.

Construction began and it didn’t take long before word got out as to how amazing this would be. The finest wood was ordered and all the workers marvelled at the winding stair cases, the raised ceilings, the balconies, the lighting and the rooms that overlooked the ocean. Everything was precise, there was a place for everything and everything had its place. During the day it would be a beautiful fixture and at night the lighting would light it up like a lighthouse.

Six months in and the chief builder became unhappy with how long it was taking and how pedantic the boss was being. He could see how magnificent, how majestic, how incredible the finished product could be. Even so, he ordered his men to cut corners and buy cheaper wood and told them the boss would never know. The workers were unhappy and protested but eventually obeyed the orders of the chief builder.

Finally the chief builder rang the boss and gave him a date for when the house would be ready and the boss would receive the keys to his brand new house.

The big day arrived and all the workers including the chief builder waited with anticipation for the boss to walk through the front door into his new house. The chief builder handed the keys to the boss and told him this had been the best house his company had ever built. On hearing this the boss thanked the chief builder and placed the keys to the house in the hands of the chief builder. He then told him that the house he had built was a gift, for being a faithful worker over the years and helping him run his company. The chief builder’s heart sank...because he knew the house which was now his wasn’t what it should have been.

Sometimes in ‘life’, the greatest gift we have, we forget that it’s a gift and that we are building something special. Ecclesiastes 9:10 ‘Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might’.

Let me encourage you, what you’re building is special, it’s amazing, it just could be God’s Picasso, His Mona Lisa. Take time to learn the lesson God is trying to teach you right now.
College Head
By Mr Gregg Weaver - Head of College

Welcome back to the last term of school for 2016. Our numbers are looking very healthy for next year and no doubt after Saturday’s Open Day we will have plenty more families wishing to partner with us in the quality and caring education of their children.

Creativity, Construction, Design & Discovery

The College’s Creative Arts and Technology Exhibition, Thursday 8th - Saturday 12th October, was superb. Thanks to all who made it such a spectacular event. Not only did the exhibition showcase fabulous and unique student artworks and technology products, but it provided a window into the way in which this College is dedicated to developing creative capacities and appreciation within each and every student.

Picasso once said “all children are born artists.” The problem is to remain an artist as we grow up. I believe this passionately, that we don’t grow into creativity, we grow out of it. Or rather, we get educated out of it. The consequence is that many highly-talented, brilliant, creative people think they’re not, because the thing they were good at school was not valued, or was actually stigmatized. We can’t afford to go on that way.

Hillcrest is reiterating and renewing the place of Creativity and Innovation as being a vital component of what we want for all our students. What matters is that all are encouraged, and given a wide range of opportunities to explore creativity. We must endeavour to do all we can from home and school to not stifle but release passions and abilities, not squash but inspire and give expression to the creativity that is God given.

God is our creator, the most creative one of all – from cells to solar systems, plants to planets, colours to texture to form. We are his image bearers, our students and your children are his image bearers – created to be creative, enabled to be constructive, imaginative, original, artistic, inventive, resourceful, productive and visionaries.

Student Achievement

Congratulations to our Year 9 Agriculture students who, this week, won the 2015 Gippsland ‘Cows Create Careers’ schools competition! Given that we were competing against 22 other schools and over 200 students from across Gippsland and the Mornington Peninsula, that’s quite a win. Along with the $500 cheque that we received (pictured), we are set to gain some positive media attention for Hillcrest Agriculture. Also, congratulations to students Sarah Catania, Quinn Watson, Aimee Tooth and Natalie Flores (Team ‘Holy Cow’) for their award of 2nd prize with their outstanding presentation and model of a dairy.

Staffing Matters

I would like to keep you all up to date on staffing matters relating to next year due to enrolment growth, adjustments to staffing structures, and three resignations. There have been three appointments already confirmed: Sandra Jamieson as a Teacher of Year 6, Felicia Chun as a Teacher of English Secondary, and Polly McNicol as a Specialist Teacher of Visual Arts and Media.

Positions currently being interviewed for are: Director of our Early Learning Centre, Head of Humanities, Head of Mathematics, Teacher(s) of German, and an ELC Assistant.

We will also be shortly advertising for two trainee positions for 2016 in Sports and Outdoor Education.

For those who are not yet aware, we have employed a new Maintenance staff member. Peter Schroeder has joined us in the role of Maintenance Coordinator.

Debating Team

Special mention of our Junior Debating team winning the CSSN Inter-School finals yesterday against Heatherton Christian College and Heathdale Christian College. Congratulations to Abhi Ramesh, Reshma Navaneethakumar, Jordyn Hogg and Carolene Allwyn for their outstanding debating skills and Mrs Rodrigues as their inspiring coach.

Crest Connect

The first day of Term 4 saw all our teachers enthusiastically working together in familiarising themselves and working with the new Learning Management System which we are calling CREST CONNECT that will replace Moodle in 2016.

It is envisaged that we will have designed and populated the site by the start of the 2016 academic year and will carefully rollout the online Assessment and Reporting capabilities over the course of next year.
Consultation on Education in the Early Years

By Mrs Janet Anderson - Head of Junior School

Recently, three staff members participated in a state-wide consultation process initiated by Jenny Mikakos, the Minister for Families and Children. The consultation centred on ways to build a shared vision for the future of early childhood learning in Victoria.

Early childhood education encompasses children from ages 0 to 8 years old. At Hillcrest Christian College, a large number of these years are spent in the Junior School, so this is an area of intense interest for us as educators. The minister produced a consultation paper that you can access at http://educationstate.education.vic.gov.au/early-years (under Document Library).

This extract from the paper is of particular interest to us as educators and parents of children in their early years: “Neuroscience provides compelling evidence that the first years of life are crucial to brain development, and that a child's early experiences have long-term effects. ... It is more effective ... to support children’s development during their early years then it is to try to intervene or ‘fix’ issues at an older age.” (p. 6 The Education State, Department of Education and Training, Melbourne, 2015).

Mrs Joanna Wiggs, Mrs Marissa Watts and Mrs Jacqui Munro (the Learning Support Coordinator) joined with educators working in Early Childhood and Primary School Educational settings in the Casey and Mornington Peninsula areas. One of the main points of consensus at their meeting was the importance of parents and educators joining together to support children’s development and learning. Such a partnership is a foundation of an education at Hillcrest Christian College.

Transition

By Mrs Marissa Watts - ELC Director

The final Term of the school year is exciting for the children, but also a bit daunting. Thinking about the journey this year; the progress, development and confidence that the children have gained, the educators marvel at how much a child can change and grow in just one year.

At Hillcrest, we are fortunate to have access to Junior School teachers through our Specialist subjects; Music, Physical Education and Library. The children in 4ELC are already familiar with the school surrounds from the weekly walks to the DC and Music Room, along with regular runs on the oval.

In just a couple of weeks, the children in the ELC will take another step towards the beginning of their formal education. Transition time and Orientation Day enable the children to visit their new classrooms so they can become familiar with a new classroom, new friends and new teachers, as well as understanding new ideas and expectations.

The children’s current teachers have done much to prepare the students for a change next year. From the learning that has occurred in readiness for a new school (or ELC) year, to familiarising the children to parts of the Junior School, the teachers have encouraged and supported the children (and their families) for the new adventures that await them. We wish them all the best and God’s richest blessings.

The educators are looking forward to the exciting times ahead in Term 4. Please see your child’s teacher if you or your child has concerns about their transition.

Change is a Constant

By Mrs Joanna Wiggs - Prep Coordinator

Change is a constant in our lives as children and adults. Starting school is a major change for children and families and begins a journey that involves change to a new year level each year.

It is normal for children to have strong feelings as they start to think about these changes, including excitement about the prospect of a new phase in their lives and nervousness about what lies ahead. Some common feelings children have as they contemplate and undergo change include:

- excitement
- sadness
- anger
- anticipation
- fear or anxiety

Understanding and helping children to handle feelings associated with change will not only help reduce stress but can also provide the opportunity to develop lifelong, positive coping strategies.

Young children often have difficulty explaining their feelings in words. Consequently they may show their feelings through behaviour. Understanding how your child is feeling and why he/she is behaving in a particular way can help you work out how to provide support emotionally and practically:

- Spend time with your child
- Help your child recognise and express her/his feelings
- Get involved in your child’s play

More information about how to help your child have a successful transition to the new school year school can be found at http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/families
Humanities Report
By Mrs Marjorie Cardwell - Head of Humanities

There are some very special events coming up in the Humanities Faculty over the next few weeks.

As VCE studies wind up, the Year 11 Legal class still have one very significant excursion ahead. Next week they are heading off to Marngoneet Correctional Centre next week to meet prisoners and examine the effectiveness of our prison system as it aims to rehabilitate, punish, deter, denunciate and protect society.

The following week, the top Year 12 Legal student will be presented with the prestigious Duffy & Simon Law Award which includes $200, a gift and framed certificate. This is an award offered to Hillcrest annually by Duffy & Simon and represents not only a financial incentive to achieve throughout the year, but a valuable addition to students’ curriculum vitae.

In Middle School, the Year 7 History classes will participate in an archaeological dig from 27th to 30th October. It will take place in the ‘backyard’ of the Year 7 block (M1-M4).

It is a new assessment that links the skills and knowledge from two History units (‘What is History’ and ‘Ancient Rome’) along with two English units (Procedure and Report writing).

There will be five separate digs, one for each class and our students are very excited about the event!

It is encouraging to see teachers of the various subjects and levels of Humanities developing relevant and exciting opportunities for our students to engage fully in their learning beyond the classroom.

Yr 6 Multicultural Day
By Bridget Holloway – 6C Student

Multicultural Day was a special day in Year 6, where people came to our school and taught us about other countries. Students also had the option of dressing up in something we might wear from our country of origin. We had to bring an item of interest or something that represented our country. We got to bring a dessert that our country eats to share with our class. This was a very good idea because it gave people a chance to try all different desserts from all around the world that they hadn’t tried before.

On the day, people came to our school and taught us about cultures and things about all different countries. We had workshops that went for about an hour, teaching us some of the dances or cultural things they do. We had 3 workshops on different countries. We learnt about Indonesia, India and Italy.

For the Indonesian presentation, the lady showed us some of the traditional dances they do. The lady got some of us to go up on the stage and do a dance in a group. For the India workshop, a man came in and taught us about India’s culture and showed us some hand signs that stand for animals and things. He also did a traditional dance including those signs and sang.

In Italy’s workshop (pictured), we were shown how to say some words in Italian and how they cook. People were called up onto the stage and asked how they would make tomato sauce and how to put bottle lids on and things like that.

Our presenter also called people up to put on some of the things Italians wear, such as hats and scarfs. After we had finished the workshops we had a Japanese and German rotation. In Japanese we made origamis and in German we made traditional bears. Overall, the day was very educational and fun.
CSSN Athletics Carnival
Mr Grant Armstrong - Secondary Sports Coordinator

On Monday, 7th September Hillcrest Christian College competed in the CSSN Athletics Carnival held at Casey Regional Athletics Track. The squad finish 3rd overall out of 21 Christian schools from all over Victoria, which was an excellent result.

Some outstanding individual efforts included the following:
1st Place in Division 1:
- Thomas Arcaro – U/13 Boy 200m
- Liana Wood – U/15 Girls 100 m
- Jorja Growcott – U/14 Girls Triple Jump
- Ravihari Kirikoththiyalage – U/16 Girls Discus
- Harrison Paul – U/16 Boys 400m
- Hamish Bonser – U/16 Boys High Jump
- Benjamin Pike – U/16 Boys Long Jump
- Erinn Bonser – Open Girls Discus and Shot Put
- James Cross – Open Boys 200 m and 400 m
- Cyrus Wong – Open Boys Long Jump

State Cycling Championships
Congratulations to Joshua Hardy-Brown who competed in the State Cycling Championships recently. Josh got a 6th place for the U/17 mountain bike race after some unfortunate mechanical problems. He then went on to win the State Championship in the U/17 road category.

Some improved on their times from last year. I encourage any students who are skiers to consider going to this event in the future. Please feel free to discuss this program via the email below.

If your child has had success in their sporting endeavours at the highest level, please provide the details of their achievements so we can celebrate their God given talent.
grant.armstrong@hillcrest.vic.edu.au

Tour of Hope from Brazil
By Mr Stuart Alsop - Marketing

Football stars from Brazil came to Hillcrest on Wednesday, 7th October to conduct a soccer clinic.

The stars comprised of Brazilian players who played for the National Team as well as professionally in Brazil, Europe, Asia and South America.

Hillcrest was last on their list of clinics after their week long tour of other schools. The players conducted a soccer clinic with our students and intertwined their own personal journeys and shared about their own Christian faith.

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Victorian Snow Sport Championships
Ella and Matthew Beard competed in the State Snow Sport Championships at Mt Buller at the end of August in the following events at Giant Slalom, Skier X and Moguls. Both of the students
James Foley & Brad the Bunny Visit
By Mrs Michelle Nye - DC Director

Last Friday Year 5 and 6 had the wonderful opportunity to see how illustration works in the wonderful world of picture books as James Foley visited Hillcrest in the Discovery Centre. James was here on his book tour, promoting ‘My Dead Bunny’ (pictured). Needless to say, the story of a family pet returning from his untimely death to be with his family had the Year 5 and 6s very intrigued! All the students who were part of the seminar commented on how fun the session was and many of the teaching staff were impressed with James’ ability to engage the students and maintain a quiet, though excited cohort of students for an hour!

After lunch James worked with a selection of students who were art inclined during a VIP workshop with clay. The students enjoyed some yummy treats and drinks while they listened intently to James as he described how to use clay and sketch a draft before beginning. From here, the students drew a rough draft of their character and then proceeded to work with clay (a courteous donation from our Art Department) and mould their characters using the many tools available to them. James was very intuitive and appreciative of the creativity of many of the students, even taking a few sketches for himself (signed by the students of course) to show at his other workshops. Some students, as you can imagine, were very chuffed by this!

At the end of the day, James was still as spritely as ever, eagerly viewing the Art showcase in the MPC. He loves what he does and that passion shone throughout the entire day!

Anna Branford and Lily the Elf visited Year 1 & 2
We also welcomed Australia’s favourite creative writer, Anna Branford, who recently published the Lily the Elf series. She has written 16 books including the Violet Mackerel series that have now been published in several languages.

Anna spoke with Year 1 and 2 classes and shared about living on the Isle of Man where she spent her childhood before moving to Australia. She loves writing about life from a worm view perspective. It was interesting to talk about her new books as they are set under the Princes Bridge, opened on 4th October 1888 in Melbourne.

Students in Year 2 were treated to a writing workshop and were given some sentence starts to use as writing prompts. This proved to be very exciting as we all wanted to share our ideas with Anna, who listened to some of our fabulous stories. The teachers will now be able to encourage our young writers to continue their story writing journey.

Young Australia’s Best Book Awards
The Young Australian Best Book Awards (YABBA) are selected and voted upon by children across Australia each year. The YABBA Awards encourage children to read recent Australian published books, rate them against all others and then finally reward the book they feel is best. Proudly we have been preparing our students for this event and students from Prep to Year 9 have been a part of the voting process.

Students from 6P and 5R will attend the Award Ceremony on Tuesday, 27th October and will have the opportunity to meet over 27 authors and illustrators on the day during book signing.

Read to Me! Club
There is overwhelming evidence that literacy has a significant relationship to people’s life chances. Literacy skills and a love of reading are keys to success and opportunity. Read to Me! Club is a great opportunity to support your primary aged children with their literacy development. Each Wednesday from 3:45pm, is Share a Story with one of our College teachers, Sing a Song and Create and Make. Come along and help your children understand and interpret the written and illustrated image! Guest readers in October!

- Wednesday 14th October – Joanna Wiggs
- Wednesday 21st October – ELC teachers
- Wednesday 28th October – Ruth Phillips
- Wednesday 4th November – Heather Zubek
Student Devices 2016
By Mrs Maria Varlet - Head of Learning & Teaching

In 2016 the College 1:1 device program will continue, with all 2016 Year 7 students receiving a Windows Tablet device under a 3 year program. We are currently waiting on some recently released demonstration devices to be forwarded to us so that we can make a final decision on the make and model of the device. A yearly levy (expected to be between $240-$280) will be charged to the student account each year for the 3 year duration of the program. The details of the specific device and costs, along with the Agreement Form to be signed by parents, will be emailed to all parents once the model choice is finalised.

Current Year 10 and 11 students come to the end of their 2 year device program at the end of this year. For 2016, these students have the option of continuing to use the Surface Tablet, purchasing a tablet outright through the College program, or using another device of their choosing that is suitable for the requirements of VCE. More information about the minimum requirements of a device and information on how to order a College device will be emailed to parents of all current Year 10 and 11 students in the next week.

The characters were a writer, comedian and a seal, set at a creek, with the issue being a secret hollow tree, and the words needed in the story were curiosity, eye-opening, reflection, frantic, and memory.

Students are encouraged to raise their own entry and competition fee which set the Year 5 students into action. They liaised with staff and ran movie sessions in the Junior School at lunchtimes, then sought sponsorship from friends and family. I am pleased to announce that last week the Hillcrest Exceler8ers won the award for the greatest sponsorship raised in Victoria. The students should all feel very proud of their contribution both financially and in their completed story book.

With 10 students on the team, students spent an hour brainstorming some fantastic ideas of how the story could play out, then designated tasks and away they went. There was a flurry of excitement, stress and more excitement as the clock ticked by. At recess, we read through the different chapters that had been written by that stage and noticed some incongruities with the connection between where one student had finished and the next had started between chapters. By lunchtime fatigue started to set in, but a tasty lunch reinvigorated students’ motivation and it was all full speed ahead to get the book written. Ruan Swanevelder was the project manager, displaying exceptional leadership and people skills, and Gabrielle Samtoy was chief editor, who had a very big task pulling the writing side of things together.

Students learnt so much from the experience and I received very positive feedback afterwards in a debriefing session with the students. Students expressed their enjoyment from working with other year levels, the team work they established, the sense of accomplishment they achieved and the fame of having legal copyright to a book. Some of the challenges which students wanted to address next time were the flow between chapters when each student has their own style of writing and their own picture of what is happening, the time frame for editing and finding a more efficient way to illustrate.

A copy of this wonderful book is in the Discovery Centre for all to read and enjoy.

The students involved were Ruan Swanevelder, Gabrielle Samtoy, Jason Turner, Stephane Bannister, Hivin Silva, Manat Kaur, Oscar Humphries, Leisha Jakimuik, Grace Tinsley and Casey Salipadoru.
PFA NEWS
By Mrs Tanya Maher - PFA President

Family Portrait Day
Again in 2015, the PFA would like to offer families the opportunity to have family portraits taken by a professional photographer. Keep your eyes peeled for details regarding this event, a notice will be sent to families in the very near future. Interested families can mark Saturday 31st October, Saturday, 7th and Sunday, 8th November into their calendar.

2016 Family Market Night
The Family Market Night committee is looking for volunteers to assist with the planning and preparation of the 2016 event. This is a great College community activity and the more people who join the FMN Committee, the less work each individual needs to undertake! The FMN committee runs independently to the PFA. In this way, people can join the FMN committee and assist for a short period of time, rather than commit to a being a part of a year-long committee that is the PFA.

Imagine getting your PIP hours completed in Term 1, join the FMN committee and you will be done! Those College family and friends who may be interested in being a part of the 2016 FMN Committee are encouraged to send an email to pfa@hillcrest.vic.edu.au with your name, the manner in which you may like to be involved and your mobile telephone number.

If you are merely interested in ‘having a look’ at whether you may like to commit to the FMN committee our first meeting is scheduled for the 22nd October in the Homestead starting at 7.30pm. We hope to see many new faces!

PIP – Year 8 Graduation
By Mr Dwayne Smith - Year 8 Coordinator

Do you still have PIP hours to complete? Please consider helping our students have a memorable night at the Year 8 Graduation.

Areas to assist (on the day of the graduation) include:
• Team 1 - Set Up and decoration (5 helpers): 2:00pm – 5:00pm
• Team 2 - Serving dinner to the students (5 helpers): 5:30pm – 7:00pm
• Team 3 - Cleaning up (5 helpers): 7:00pm – 8:30pm

To assist us in planning please contact Miss Olivia Hodson via email:
(olivia.hodson@hillcrest.vic.edu.au) with your preferred time slot by Tuesday, 27th October 2015.

iTrack
By Mr Gregg Weaver - Head of College
The Smith Family is looking for 1,500 volunteer mentors to deliver an online mentoring program for high school students who are considering their post-school options. The iTrack program pairs adult mentors with students in Years 9-11 from Smith Family partner schools in low socioeconomic areas. The mentors provide guidance, advice and encouragement about workplace, study and career opportunities in a secure online environment.

According to the Smith Family, 87% of last year’s participants said that chatting with their mentor helped them understand more about reaching their career goals. Smith Family National Manager of Volunteering, Ms Lauren Stocker, urged anyone considering becoming a volunteer mentor to sign up for the program:

“Our iTrack program is actually one of the easiest volunteering opportunities to get involved in. It’s an hour a week over two school terms and because it’s online mentoring, volunteers don’t even need to leave their home or office to take part.

Ms Stocker said the contribution that volunteers made to programs like iTrack is ‘enormous’ and that the benefits ‘go both ways’.”

There will be two branches of the program in 2016 (May and July) with the mentoring relationship lasting 18 weeks. For more information, or to register for the 2016 program, visit The Smith Family’s website.