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St Paul's
Catholic College
Booragul

3 April 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

COVID-19 Update No. 15.

You would have received a letter from our Director of Schools, Gerard Mowbray regarding schools next week in the lead up to the Easter vacation. In this letter he has stated that teachers will not be setting and sending any work home and that students will begin their holidays early. Students might like to use this time to catch up any work that might have been missed.

It was also stated that schools will remain open for the supervision of students for parents who need their child supervised if parents are unable to do so because they are engaged in essential work. Teachers will be using this time to prepare for Term Two.

I have written letters to our students. In them, I spoke about the past few weeks of online learning being like a "training exercise". Next term will most likely be the real exercise and this mode of curriculum delivery will potentially continue for the entire term. I also spoke about the need to look after one another, to be mindful of their own social media world and to support other younger members of their own families with their learning if possible – hopefully taking some pressure off mums and dads. (I hope I haven't just opened up another avenue for kids to fight with one another!)

I have also made it clear that they need to make the most of every learning opportunity, yet at the same time be relaxed about things if what they are trying to do doesn't work for reasons beyond their control. Teachers and our support staff are working non-stop to make things work easily, but as I have said previously, we are all learning this new way of delivering curriculum together. Things will continue to improve but things will also go wrong. We all need to "go gently" with one another.

Holy Week begins next week. Churches across the nation are closed. I leave you with this short reflection to consider:

"In St Paul's Letter to the Ephesians (5:8-14) the last sentence has long been understood as an extract from a very early baptismal hymn that the Pauline author cites, reminding his audience of how their baptism has brought them from—the darkness of sin—to live now as children of the light.

At the Easter Vigil, the Church lights and venerates the Paschal Candle as a symptom of the risen Christ, as Light of the world. Each of the newly baptized throughout the year is given their own candle lit from the Paschal Candle as a symbol that they have come to the light and should henceforth live as 'children of the light', their journey through life lit by the light of faith. Sadly, it is likely that the Covid pandemic will prevent the public celebration of this beautiful ceremony this year. The Gospel for this Sunday, will remind us of the candle we received at our baptism, ensuring that our lives would be lived in the light of Christ. Along with our fellow citizens—and indeed the world as a whole—we have to journey through the "darkness" of this pandemic. Let us do so confident that the light we have received will light our way and help us to be "lightbearing stars" (to use Paul's words to the Philippians [2:15]) in our own time and place." (Fr Brendan Byrne SJ)

Look after each other.

Yours sincerely



Mr Graeme Selmes
Principal