

6 March 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week is an important week in our Catholic tradition, marking the beginning of Lent. On Shrove Tuesday, (pancake Tuesday), we had our first fundraising initiative of the Lenten season, a traditional pancake stall. This was popular with students and staff alike, raising both funds and awareness for the Feeding Program at Saint Mary's School in Uganda.



During our Ash Wednesday Liturgy, we gained a deeper understanding of this program, from the experience of staff members Tom Chalkley and Jack Jenkins, who visited St Mary's in 2024. Learning about the difference our support makes in the lives of these children was a powerful reminder of the importance of compassion and generosity.



Easter Fundraising

This week, we launched our much-loved Annual Easter Egg Raffle! For those new to Iona, this is a special tradition where our community comes together to donate Easter eggs and raise funds for a meaningful cause.

How It Works:

- Families are invited to donate Easter eggs for the raffle.
- Students will receive raffle tickets early next week and are encouraged to sell them.
- At the end of the Term, raffle tickets will be drawn during Assembly, and winners will receive beautiful Easter hampers made from the donated eggs.

All Easter egg donations and sold raffle tickets can be dropped off at the Main Reception by Tuesday, 2 April.

Where the Funds Go

All proceeds from this initiative will go directly to St Mary's Primary School's Feeding Program. Last year, two of our staff members visited St Mary's in Uganda and saw firsthand the incredible impact this program has on students. During their visit, they created [this moving video showcasing the program's work](#), which we encourage you to watch.



If you would like to make a direct contribution to support the children and staff at **St Mary's Primary School, Uganda**, donations can be made [via the following link](#) or the **QR code** in the poster below. This cause is very close to our hearts, and we deeply appreciate your support.

Parent Volunteer Helpers for Easter Hamper

We are also looking for **parent volunteers** to help assemble our fabulous Easter hampers. If you'd like to lend a hand, we will be gathering on:

Thursday: 3 April

Time: 9:15 AM – 10:45 AM

Where: Iona College (meet at Main Reception)

This is a great opportunity to meet other Iona families, get involved, and have fun while supporting a great cause.

If you'd like to volunteer, please register your interest by [completing the following form](#). Thank you for your generosity and support in making this initiative a success!



As a school community, we also recognise the important work that Caritas does through Project Compassion. We will continue to promote this organisation, alongside the St Mary's Feeding Program, for the duration of Term One. See the QR code below to donate to Caritas.



International Women's Day



Tomorrow, we will come together as a college to celebrate **International Women's Day**. This year's theme, '**Accelerate Action**', highlights the need for swift and decisive steps toward achieving gender equality. It calls for increased momentum in breaking down systemic barriers and biases that women face in both personal and professional spheres.

Our College Leaders (Wellbeing), Paris and Luca, will raise awareness of this important day by sharing a message of solidarity with our community.

Prayer for International Women's Day

God our Creator,

We thank you for all women throughout the world. We celebrate their strengths and their achievements and pray for the day when each woman will be treated with honour and dignity. We pray that all women benefit from financial opportunities, access to education, the possibility of choosing their life journey, religious freedom and the right to vote. Protect them from exploitation, discrimination and repression. We thank you for the women who have been pioneers in all areas of life in the arts, sciences, business, education, literature, sport, the army, agriculture, religion, medicine, industry and politics. We are grateful to them for their perseverance in opening the doors of opportunity for those who have followed them. We acknowledge, with gratitude, the role of women in our families and in our societies, those who have guided, taught, loved and protected us. We pray for your continued blessing of all women. May they reach their full potential in faith, as well as in life.

Amen.

Prayer from The Archdiocese of Brisbane

Year 12 Guest Speaker



Last Friday morning, the Year 12s had the opportunity to hear from another guest speaker, Margie Abbott. Margie is a sister of Mercy based in Geelong and has been involved in many initiatives across charity, education and in particular, environmentalism. She has also written a book and studied numerous subjects ranging from anthropology to cosmology.

Below is an excerpt from Josie Leonard, a member of the student team in the Culture and Identity space, about her reflections on the morning:

Through the presentation, Margie spoke passionately to us about her work and highlighted the importance of nature and the connection between humans and the environment. Margie discussed the *Laudato Si*, a letter to the world written by Pope Francis, whom Francis house is named after. Through this discussion,

Margie emphasised the importance of courage, compassion and having a 'consciousness' of the issues in the environment. She shared the Pope's message of 'caring for our common home' and bringing people together, linking to the value of compassion which is represented by Chisholm House.

Margie also showed us short videos about pollution, the climate crisis and its devastating impact on innocent creatures, such as seabirds. She challenged us to think critically about issues through three key questions – How come [something is done this way]? What if [this thing happens]? And Could it be [something else]?

Margie also introduced us to the idea of eco-spirituality, emphasising the interconnectedness of humans with the universe. Overall, Margie inspired us to think more deeply about our world and the importance of caring for nature. It was wonderful to hear her passion and dedication to her cause.

Wellbeing At Iona



Sleep Wellbeing, Weekly Grab

At Iona College, we know good sleep is important for our whole school community -- our students, our caregivers and our school staff.

Many people wonder whether they or their family members might have sleep apnoea. The 'STOP BANG' questionnaire is an acronym for a set of questions that can help you talk about your risk of sleep apnoea with your doctor. Here is an example of questions asked by the Alfred Hospital:

[https://www.alfredhealth.org.au/images/resources/patient-resources/STOP-BANG Questionnaire for Obstructive Sleep Apnoea.pdf](https://www.alfredhealth.org.au/images/resources/patient-resources/STOP-BANG%20Questionnaire%20for%20Obstructive%20Sleep%20Apnoea.pdf)

Common Questions Answered:

But isn't sleep apnoea something which only happens to men? Sleep apnoea can occur in men, women and sometimes even children. Sleep apnoea is often undiagnosed in women because we assume it only happens to men.

Could my morning headaches be a sign of sleep apnoea? Yes, they could be.

Shouldn't I just try to lose weight to fix my sleep apnoea? Sleep apnoea makes you put on weight, and it is reportedly virtually impossible to lose weight when you have untreated sleep apnoea. Sleep apnoea can also impact your mood, making this even harder.

Wouldn't I know if I had sleep apnoea? Not necessarily. Sleep apnoea causes you to stop breathing, and your brain wakes you up to start breathing again. However, you typically fall asleep again very quickly, so

you won't remember waking up. And this can happen hundreds of times a night and puts tremendous pressure on your body.

If you are at risk of sleep apnoea, please do get it checked out by a medical professional as it can be very dangerous.

Happy sleeping!

Helpful Apps:

Doze App for our teenagers <https://www.dozeapp.ca/>.

Insomnia Coach for us adults <https://mobile.va.gov/app/insomnia-coach>

Here is another helpful link: <https://drcolleencarney.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Am-I-sleepy.pdf>

Marisa Lavars
College Psychologist

Student Progress Meetings



By now, you should have received an email with a link to book your **Student Progress Meetings**. Please take note of the following dates and formats:

Unit 3 Student Progress Meetings

- Tuesday, 11 March
- On-site (Face-to-Face)
- 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm

Whole School Student Progress Meetings

- Thursday, 20 March
- On-site Hybrid - Face-to-Face & Online
- 3:30 pm – 6:30 pm
- Wednesday, 26 March
- Online Only
- 3:30 pm – 6:30 pm

We look forward to connecting with our families and working together to support student learning and progress.

Melissa Gould
Deputy Principal Learning

Iona Pathways Press

The 6th March edition of the Iona Pathways Press can be [found here](#).
In this edition you will find information about:

- Dates to Diarise in Term 1
- Victoria Police ~ SWL and Work Experience Info Night
- Work Experience Opportunities
- Victorian Careers & Employment Expo 2025
- ANU Applications for 2026 Entry
- News from La Trobe University
 - Bendigo Campus Talk & Tours
 - Diploma of Rural Health
- Monash Business Explorer Program 2025
- Newly Revised Courses for 2025 at RMIT University
- Computer Science Degrees in Victoria in 2025
- Information Technology Degrees in Victoria in 2025
- Snapshot of Deakin University in 2025
- Snapshot of Deakin – Waurn Ponds Campus in 2025



Find & Subscribe to the Pathways Press Newsfeed.

For Students: Visit the College Career website, click on 'for students' choose Newsfeed and subscribe: [Iona College Geelong \(ionacareers.com\)](#)

For Parents: Visit the College Career website, click on 'for parents' choose Newsfeed and subscribe: [Iona College Geelong \(ionacarers.com\)](#)

To contact the Pathways team please email pathways@iona.vic.edu.au

Summer Soiree



A reminder about the upcoming Summer Soiree on Thursday 13th March. This concert will be jam-packed with many ensemble and solo items. While tickets are FREE, we ask that you book so that we can ensure seating is set up for those attending. You can book through the [following Trybooking link](#). Come along and support our young musicians and learn more about our Music Program.



Jodie Townsend
Teacher / Head of Performing Arts

Tour and Information Sessions



**BOOK YOUR TOUR AND
INFORMATION SESSION
TODAY.**

A reminder about our upcoming annual March Tour and Information Sessions.
Our student-led tours provide a great opportunity to explore our College, ask questions and hear directly from students about life at Iona.

Please book your spot online - <https://iona.vic.edu.au/tour-and-information-session/>

Book Tour and Information Session



Term 1 Dates to Remember

Date	Event
Thursday 30 January	Year 7, Year 12 and New Students (Year 8-11) First Day (Year 7 & New Students Year 8-11 - Formal Uniform, Year 12-Uniform of Choice)
Friday 31 January	Year 8,9,10 & 11 First Day 2025 (Uniform of Choice for all students)
Friday 7 February	Assembly and Commissioning of the College Leader Ceremony (Formal Uniform)
Tuesday 11 February	School Mass (Formal Uniform)
Tuesday 11 February	Year 11 & 12 Parent/Carer Welcome Evening (On-site)
Thursday 13 February	School Photos (Formal Uniform)
Tuesday 18 February	School Photos Catch-Up Day
Tuesday 18 February	Year 7 Parent/Carer 'In-Person' Welcome Evening
Thursday 27 February	Iona College Swimming Carnival
Wednesday 5 March	Ash Wednesday (Formal Uniform)
Monday 10 March	Labour Day Public Holiday
Tuesday 11 March	Year 10 Immunisation
Tuesday 11 March	Unit 3 Student Progress Meetings (On-site)
Monday 17 March	Open Day Tour & Information Sessions (4:15 pm - 5:45 pm)
Tuesday 18 March	Open Day Tour & Information Sessions (11:00 am - 12:30 pm)
Wednesday 19 March	Open Day Tour & Information Sessions (11:00 am - 12:30 pm)
Wednesday 19 March	Open Day Tour & Information Sessions (4:15 pm - 5:45 pm)
Thursday 20 March	Open Day Tour & Information Sessions (11:00 am - 12:30 pm)
Thursday 20 March	Student Progress Meetings (Online)
Friday 21 March	Staff Professional Development (Student Free Day)
Wednesday 26 March	Student Progress Meetings (On-site & Online)
Thursday 27 March	Iona College Athletics Day
Monday 31 March - Wednesday 2 April	Year 8 Camp (Group 1)
Wednesday 2 April - Friday 4 April	Year 8 Camp (Group 2)
Friday 4 April	End of Term 1 (2:05 pm Finish)
Tuesday 22 April	Term 2 Starts

If you would like to download a printable version of the schedule above, [please access it here](#). This link will be updated each week in the newsletter as new events are added to the calendar.

A reminder that this Monday, 10 March, is a Labour Day Public Holiday – we hope that our community has a restful break.

Thanks for your support.

Damian, Kylie and Melissa