

2 April 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Lent officially ends today, Thursday, April 2nd, and we begin our journey into Holy Week. Today is the beginning, Holy Thursday, or Maundy Thursday, which comes from the Latin *mandatum*, meaning commandment, and refers to Jesus' commandment that we 'Love one another' (John 13:34). Holy Thursday commemorates Jesus' last supper, his final meal with his disciples when he washed their feet, offered the bread and wine as his body and blood, and commanded them 'to love one another as I have loved you,' with the total forgiveness and acceptance that Jesus showed in his love for others. The message is for all of us to do the same – to forgive, accept and love one another.

Christians around the world will celebrate Holy Thursday today by reenacting the washing of the feet, coming together for communion, or praying the Stations of the Cross that tell the story of Jesus' last days before his resurrection. These last days are known as the *Easter Triduum*, the three days from the evening of Holy Thursday to the evening of Easter Sunday. While Good Friday and Easter Saturday are sombre memorials, days of silence and inner reflection, Holy Thursday and Easter Sunday are times of celebration, community and joy! They mark communal celebrations and the new life of the resurrection.

We end our term on Maundy Thursday, a day of community and celebration. We came together for our End of Term Assembly and acknowledged those students who have demonstrated compassion through our Compassion Awards.

We conclude the term on Maundy Thursday, a day of community and reflection. At our End of Term Assembly, we acknowledged students who have demonstrated compassion through our Compassion Awards.

We would like to recognise the following **Compassion Value Award recipients**:

Year 7: Riley Horner and Baxter Collins

Year 8: Saige Jolley and Sienna Maroulis

Year 9: Abby Collins and Thomas Humphries

Year 10: Eliza Nielson and Micah McCarthy

Year 11: Flynn Quarrell and Marlee Sammut

Year 12: Millie Crawford and Elijah Falconer

Congratulations to all of our Compassion Award recipients.

During the Assembly, we also celebrated the achievements of our students throughout the term, hearing reports from our Student Leaders across Learning and the Arts, Wellbeing, Sport and Culture and Identity. As a whole school community, we prayed the Stations of the Cross, reflecting together as we look towards the hope and new life of Easter.



We also recognised the incredible success of our Easter Raffle, which raised more than double the amount from last year for St Mary's Primary School in Uganda. We are sincerely grateful to our Iona community for their generosity and support. This contribution will make a meaningful difference, and we are very proud of what has been achieved together.

***Risen Lord,
Thank you for the gift of Easter and the hope it brings.
Fill us with your spirit.
May we be examples of wisdom, kindness and joy.
Bless everyone in our school community with peace this Easter.
Help us to be signs of your resurrection.
We pray as one,
Amen,***



Year 7, 2027 Applications



A reminder that families with a sibling currently attending Iona College must submit an enrolment application for Year 7 2027 to be considered for placement. Applications close **Friday, 8 May 2026**.

If you have already applied, no further action is required. Applications can be made online via the following link. Applications can be made [via the following link](#).

Year 12 After School Study Sessions – Term 2

We are pleased to offer after-school Year 12 Study Sessions in Term 2 for any students enrolled in Unit 3 subjects who would benefit from a structured and supportive study environment.

These sessions will take place in the Resource Centre each Thursday from 3:15 pm – 4:45 pm, beginning in Week 2 of next Term (the 30th of April). Students will have access to a quiet, focused space, with the support of either a Year 12 English or General Mathematics teacher, depending on the week.

While each session has a nominated subject focus, students are welcome to use this time to study for any of their Year 12 subjects. To make the sessions comfortable and inviting, a complimentary tea, coffee and hot chocolate station will also be available.

Session Schedule (Term 2)

- **Week 1 – Thu 23 April**
No session (Year 12 Retreat)
- **Week 2 – Thu 30 April from 3:15 – 4:45 pm**
Year 12 English teacher available for assistance
- **Week 3 – Thu 7 May from 3:15 – 4:45 pm**
Year 12 General Mathematics teacher available for assistance
- **Week 4 – Thu 14 May from 3:15 – 4:45 pm**
Year 12 English teacher available for assistance

- **Week 5 – Thu 21 May**
No session (Careers Expo)
- **Week 6 – Thu 28 May from 3:15 – 4:45 pm**
Year 12 General Mathematics teacher available for assistance
- **Week 7 – Thu 4 June from 3:15 – 4:45 pm**
Year 12 English teacher available for assistance
- **Week 8 – Thu 11 June from 3:15 – 4:45 pm**
Year 12 General Mathematics teacher available for assistance
- **Week 9 – Thu 18 June from 3:15 – 4:45 pm**
Year 12 English teacher available for assistance
- **Week 10 – Thu 25 June from 3:15 – 4:45 pm**
Year 12 General Mathematics teacher available for assistance

These sessions are designed to support students in building strong study habits, consolidating their learning, and accessing help when needed as they progress through Unit 3.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please feel free to contact Kate McLaren at kate.mclaren@iona.vic.edu.au.

Kate McLaren
Director of Culture and Strategy (Learning)

Practice GAT

A reminder that the Practice GAT will take place on Monday, 20 April. All students enrolled in a VCE or VCE VM Unit 3/4 study are expected to attend, with VCE VM students completing Part A only.

Important information:

Arrival: Students must arrive by 8.40 am for a 9.00 am start. With over 200 students involved, it is essential that all students are seated and ready before the start time.

Session times:

- **Part A:** 9.00 am – 11.15 am
- **Part B:** 12.00 pm – 1.45 pm

Transport: School buses will not be running, so students will need to make alternative arrangements. Further details were shared with families earlier this week.

Growing Empathy Through Practice

Empathy can be strengthened through intentional practice. Young people develop empathy when they:

- Identify others' emotions and notice subtle cues
- Listen actively without immediately giving advice or judgement
- Recognise different perspectives, even when they don't agree with them
- Ask curious, kind questions to deepen understanding

Studies also show that participating in service or volunteer work can increase empathy. When young people spend time supporting others or contributing to their community, they gain insight into different life experiences and learn how their actions can make a positive difference.

Try This at Home

Next time you watch a movie with your children, pause occasionally, and ask:

- *What is this character feeling right now?*
- *What might they be thinking?*
- *Why do you think they feel this way?*
- *Can you relate to their thoughts or emotions?*

These conversations help young people practice perspective-taking in a natural, enjoyable way. Over time, this builds emotional awareness and strengthens their capacity for empathy and compassion in everyday life.

One of our favourite clips from the Year 7 unit [can be found here](#)

Kylie Power

Deputy Principal (Wellbeing)

Australian Catholic Youth Festival MACS Reunion



Cass, Lavenia and Kasey recently attended the Australian Catholic Youth Festival MACS Reunion with MACS school groups who also attended, where they engaged in three key sessions: Leading in Presence, Leading in Service, and Leading in Witness. Each session encouraged deep reflection on what faith means in our everyday lives and how it shapes who we are as individuals.

A central theme of the day was recognising that faith looks different for everyone. Students explored the importance of embracing these differences, understanding that each person's journey is unique and valuable. Through this, they reflected on the concept of discipleship by being followers of Christ, living out faith through action, and remaining open as learners and students of faith.

Inspired by Jesus' model of engagement, the sessions highlighted the idea of belonging first. When individuals feel a sense of belonging, they are better able to understand their beliefs, which in turn shape their values and behaviours.

Following this experience, Cass, Lavenia and Kasey have committed to strengthening the presence of faith within our school community beyond the classroom. They are passionate about turning these teachings into meaningful action, helping to create a community where faith is lived, shared, and celebrated every day.

Year 10 & 11 Literature Excursion: & Juliet



Recently, a group of Year 10 Elective Literature and Year 11 Literature students had the opportunity to attend a performance of *& Juliet*, a contemporary musical re-imagining of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

& Juliet invites audiences to consider an alternative ending to *Romeo and Juliet*. Through modern music and dynamic staging, the production explores themes of love, fate, identity, independence, and choice, which are key ideas closely aligned with the Literature curriculum.

Seeing a live performance allowed students to deepen their understanding of characterisation, plot, and dramatic conventions, while also encouraging them to think critically about adaptation and reinterpretation of classic texts for modern audiences.

The excursion was a valuable enrichment experience that complemented our study of *Romeo and Juliet*, helping students to appreciate the continued relevance of Shakespeare's work and the many ways it can be re-imagined for new generations.

Georgia Lappin
Teacher

Parent/Carer Information Digital Safety Online Information Session

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION SESSION



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

JOIN THE CYBER SAFETY PROJECT FOR EXPERT ADVICE

Navigating the Digital Playground

CYBERBULLYING

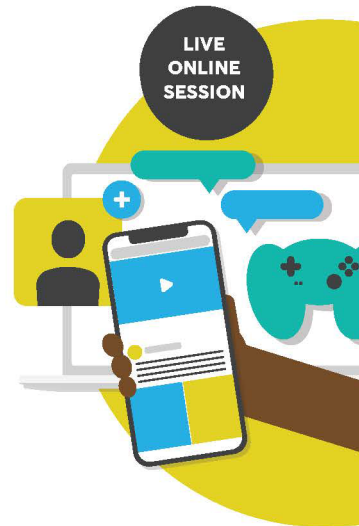
SCREEN TIME

PRIVACY SETTINGS

AI & MISINFORMATION

SOCIAL MEDIA

GAMING



WHY ATTEND?

You Are Your Child's First Line of Defence Online.

In today's connected world, parents play a powerful role in shaping safe and healthy digital habits. This practical session is designed especially for busy parents who want to:

- ✓ **Feel confident** navigating their child's online world
- ✓ **Create a safer, more balanced** digital environment at home
- ✓ **Support digital wellbeing** and encourage responsible tech use
- ✓ **Know what to do** (and where to turn) when things go wrong online

WHEN & WHERE

LIVE ONLINE

Date: Monday 25th May 2026 7-8pm

SCAN TO REGISTER
or visit

[Registration Link](#)



PRESENTED BY

CYBER SAFETY PROJECT

Cyber Safety Project, Australia's premier
online safety education provider.

cybersafetyproject.com



Biolab Excursion

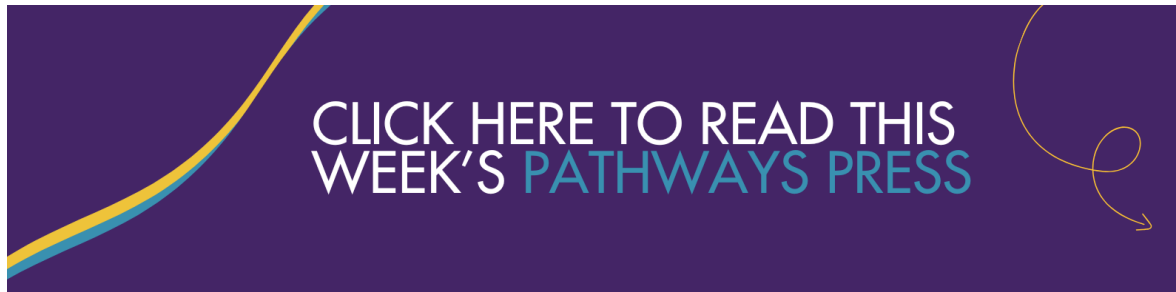


Last week, our Unit 3/4 Biology students took part in a hands-on biotechnology workshop that gave them a rare opportunity to step into the shoes of real molecular biologists. The session focused on how scientists can insert a human gene into bacteria so the bacteria can produce a useful substance. Working in small groups with experienced mentors, students explored several key laboratory techniques used in gene technology. They learned how scientists cut and join pieces of DNA, insert them into bacterial cells, and then encourage those cells to copy and use the new genetic information. These techniques are the foundation for producing important medicines such as human insulin.

By the end of the day, students were not only able to carry out sophisticated laboratory procedures, but also explain why scientists use bacteria to produce human proteins and how these processes impact real-world problems. This was a fantastic opportunity for our students to experience the excitement of modern science firsthand. We are proud of the way they embraced the challenge and look forward to seeing how this inspires their future learning.

Hannah Neumann
Teacher

Iona Pathways Press



This week's edition of the Careers and Pathways team's Pathways press is available [via the following link](#).

Save the Date for the Upcoming Careers & Pathways Expo



Please save the date for our upcoming **Careers & Pathways Expo**.

Date: Thursday 21 May 2026

Time: 5.00 – 8.00 pm

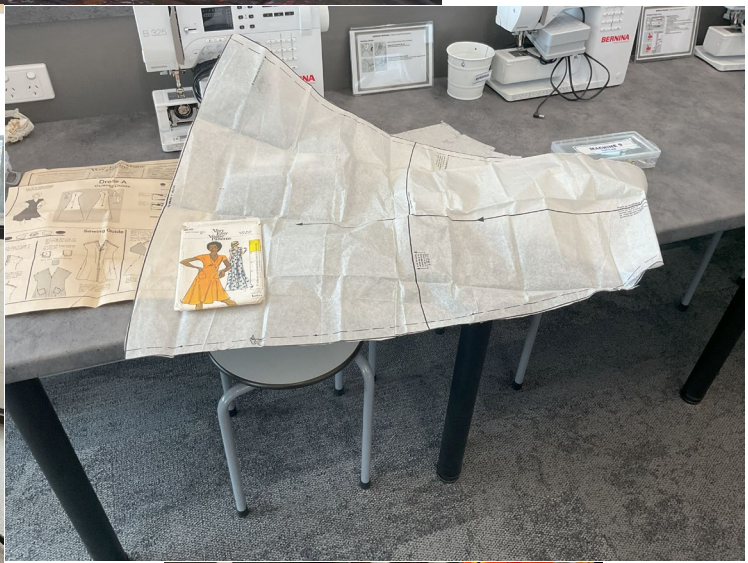
Venue: Iona College Stadium

Further details will be shared next term.

Year 11 PDN: Research & Team Development

During Term One, students explored what it truly means to move towards a “zero waste” approach in fashion design. Using donated garments from local Geelong companies (Pearls and Roses and Bridal House), students are setting up folios covering sustainability, textile waste, materials, anthropometrics, inspirations and visualisations that apply design elements and principles.





NGV Excursion

To further inspiration and exposure to influential designers, students were fortunate enough to attend the NGV's exhibit of Vivienne Westwood (1941–2022) and Rei Kawakubo (1942-), proving to be a wonderful experience for building upon ideas for their future folio works.



Term 2 Dates to Remember

Date	Event
Monday 13 April - Sunday 19 April	Admin Office Closed for Holidays
Monday 20 April	Practice GAT (Year 12s and Year 11s VCE 3/4 Students)
Monday 20 April	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development)
Tuesday 21 April	Term 2 Starts
Wednesday 22 April	Iona College Cross Country
Thursday 23 April - Friday 24 April	Year 12 Retreat
Friday 24 April	Year 7 Embrace Day
Tuesday 28 April	Iona Athletics Carnival
Thursday 30 April	Flying Brick Cider House Music Performance
Monday 18 May	Blurred Minds Parent/Carer Evening (Francis Centre, 6 pm - 7 pm)
Tuesday 19 May	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development)
Thursday 21 May	Iona College Career Expo (Iona Stadium)
Monday 1 June - Wednesday 3 June	Year 7 Camp Group 1
Wednesday 3 June	Units 1 and 3 – All OATS and SACS
Thursday 4 June	Autumn Soiree
Monday 8 June	King's Birthday Public Holiday
Tuesday 9 June	Daniel Principe Parent Carer Evening (Francis Centre, 6 pm - 7 pm)
Thursday 11 June	Year 10 Immunisation
Monday 15 June - Wednesday 17 June	Year 7 Camp Group 2
Tuesday 16 June	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development) except for GAT Students
Tuesday 16 June	GAT (Year 12s and Year 11s VCE 3/4 Students)
Wednesday 17 June - Friday 19 June	Year 8 Camp Group 1
Saturday 20 June - Wednesday 1 July	Indonesian Study Trip
Monday 22 June - Tuesday 30 June	Central Australia Immersion
Wednesday 24 June	Year 8 Camp Group 2
Thursday 25 June	Year 12 Clogs Winter Ball
Friday 26 June	Term 2 Concludes (2:05 pm)
Monday 6 July - Friday 10 July	Admin Office Closed for Holidays
Monday 13 July	Student Free Day (Staff Professional Development)
Tuesday 14 July	Term 3 Starts

We hope that our community has a wonderful Easter break, and we look forward to welcoming our students back to Term 2 on Tuesday, 21st of April.

Thanks for your support.

Damian, Kylie and Melissa