Welcome Back
I welcome back all of our students after the holidays hopefully refreshed and ready to take on the challenges of Term 4. In particular I extend our prayers and best wishes to our Year 12 students who in three weeks will begin their final set of exams. I know that they have been revising over the Term 3 study break with the assistance of our dedicated Year 12 Teachers and I extend them our encouragement to finish the year well.

I also welcome back our travellers from Japan and Central Australia. Under the leadership of Mrs Hanney & Ms McMenamin (Japan) and Mr Sharpe, Mr Gyulavary, Ms Parfett and Ms Lucarelli (Central Australia) our students have enjoyed a wonderful educational experience and have been great ambassadors for our school. I point you in the direction of our school website for some wonderful photos of both tours and encourage other students to consider these opportunities in the years ahead.

Graduation Mass & Valedictory Dinner
As I advised parents last term the timing of the Graduation Mass and Valedictory Dinner has been altered this year to allow all family members to participate in the final celebration mass of their sons and daughters at St Peter’s College. The graduation mass will take place on Tuesday the 23rd of October at 6pm at St Agatha’s Church followed by the Valedictory Dinner at the Multi-Purpose Hall at St Peter’s College. A final College Assembly highlighting the contribution of our graduating students will be held at 10.40 am on the same day and all parents are invited to attend followed by a lunchtime BBQ (12noon) from which our Year 12 students will be dismissed to allow them to prepare for their gradation mass and dinner held in the evening.

Over the years our students on the whole have been exemplary in their behaviour and I believe that this year’s group will live up to that standard.

However, incidents of inappropriate Year 12 celebration are often publicised at this time of the year and it can take only a few individuals or individual actions to damage the reputation of a school and a group of students. I therefore want to make it clear to our students that behaviour which publicly detracts from our hard earned reputation will not be tolerated. Persons and property must be respected at all times and where students are deemed responsible for inappropriate behaviour then the school reserves the right to exclude those students from sitting their final exams at St. Peter’s College and other formal functions of farewell.

The expectations outlined are ones which parents must also be conscious of in the unfortunate event that sanctions referred to should have to be applied. I have also instructed staff as a matter of school policy not to
attend Year 12 celebrations outside of school hours as from a legal perspective staff in these circumstances would be seen as being in a supervisory capacity whether this was the intended arrangement or not. Should parents choose to undertake supervision of any Year 12 celebrations then I ask them to consider the adequacy of that supervision given that the numbers at such an event could swell to well over 100 young people.

Bearing all this in mind, I look forward to our students finishing well and I thank them wholeheartedly for their contribution to this community over the last six years.

**Respect Life Sunday 2012**
Each year the Catholic Church celebrates Respect Life Sunday in October with new resources that positively contribute to building up a civilisation of life. This year, Respect Life Sunday will be celebrated on Sunday 14th October, and will focus on caring for those who have lost unborn children. I attach to this newsletter the brochure “Becoming the Good Samaritan?” which looks to reach out to all those who have lost a child through miscarriage or abortion. For Pope Benedict XVI the challenge of the Good Samaritan is in the development of a heart which sees where love is needed and acts accordingly.

**Congratulations**
Well done to ex-student Luke Parker who participated in the 2012 premiership victory for the Sydney Swans. At 19 years of age Luke was the youngest player on the ground and I am sure it will be the first of many premierships he will play in for the mighty Swans. Cheer Cheer!

**Principal Appraisal**
I insert the following letter and invitation from Catholic Education Office Consultant Mrs Rosemary Copeland in regard to my mid-term formative appraisal as Principal of St Peter’s College.

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As part of the contractual arrangements for Principals in Catholic Colleges, appraisals of their leadership are conducted.

Your Principal, Mr Tim Hogan, will have a formative appraisal conducted on October 15 and 16, 2012. Appraisals such as this look at commendations of what is going well, and make recommendations for the future.

In the processing of appraising Mr Hogan’s leadership of St Peter’s College, the Panel interviews staff, students and parents.

If you would like a 15 minute interview with the panel, please contact the Principal’s Personal Assistant indicating same, and she will arrange an appointment for you. However, if you cannot come to an interview, but would like to make a written submission, you are welcome to do so. This can be done by sending it to rcopeland@ceosale.catholic.edu.au or phone 5622661 by Friday, October 12th.

The Panel consists of two other Principals and the Secondary Consultant from the Catholic Education Office. At the conclusion of the review, a report is written, and this is sent to the Principal and to the Parish Priest, and remains confidential.

Yours sincerely,

Rosemary Copeland
CEO Consultant
Panel Chair

[Signature]

Mr Tim Hogan
PRINCIPAL
From the Deputy Principal of Students

Some tips for keeping our children safe online:
- Get your head around what your kids are doing on line.
- Ask what sites and chat rooms your children are in – open the computer up and get the kids to talk you through the sites they frequent. Identify and talk about perceived risks together.
- Read through the terms and conditions of sites together, including checking (and adhering to) age limits where applicable.
- Bookmark and save sites you are comfortable with so they can be revisited easily.
- If you end up in an offensive or inappropriate site, hit CONTROL-ALT-DELETE for the fastest way out.
- Keep passwords strong, private and hard to pick (eg. avoid pet’s names etc).
- Change passwords every so often.
- Reinforce and encourage playing and socializing in the “real world”!

Lunchtime Concert and Footy Colours Day
On the last day of Term Three, the College held the traditional Footy Colours Day, where students were encouraged to wear the colours of the football/soccer/rugby team that they follow. Many students got into the spirit of the day and the College became a sea of colour. Students were asked to make a gold coin donation if they chose to wear their footy colours and we raised over $500 for the Bishops Family Foundation.

At lunchtime, we were entertained by some of our talented students who performed a concert in the Multi-Purpose Hall, who displayed the many and varied music talents that we have at St Peter’s. This was a nice way to finish the term.

Wearing of College Sports Uniform
Please see below the circumstances for which students are permitted to wear the College Sports Uniform. Many students have been wearing the Sports Uniform to school outside of the circumstances outlined below. Please note that students who do this will have the Zero Tolerance consequences applied, meaning they will not be allowed to attend scheduled classes. The College reserves the right to not allow students to wear the Sports Uniform to/from school if this trend continues.

1. The College allows students to wear the Sports Uniform to school for the entire day if/when:
   - They have Year Level Sport for that particular day (Years 9, 10, 11 and 12), and/or
   - They have SIS Sport on that particular day

2. The College allows students to wear their Sports Uniform to school if they have Physical Education in period one. After period one, they must then change back into their proper school uniform.

3. The College allows students who have Physical Education during period four to wear the Sports Uniform home after their class.

Can I please request that all parents/guardians support these requirements and students are only wearing the sports uniform in the circumstances outlined above?

Mr Anthony Banks
Deputy Principal
Each year the Parents and Friends Association undertakes both fundraising activities and the donation of such funds to various areas of College activity.

**ST PETER’S SCULPTURE & GARDEN FUNDRAISING PROJECT**

Our NEW FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE FOR Semester 2. To Enhance the landscaping of the Sculpture & Garden area we have recently launched our ‘Buy A Paver’ with your individual or family name engraved on it for display in the St Peter’s Garden area. For further details on this exciting family focused offer please see attached flyer.

**RITCHIES COMMUNITY BENEFITS CARD**

A Reminder that 0.5% of your spend will be donated to St Peter’s College P&F Association for use across numerous activities at both the West and East Campus. Please contact the College Reception if you have not or if you need a replacement.

**NEXT MEETING DETAILS**

**TUESDAY 30TH OCTOBER**

7.30-9.00 pm St Peter’s College West Campus
Frankston-Cranbourne Road, Cranbourne, 3977
Enter via Navarra Drive Gates

**GUEST SPEAKER – MR ANTHONY BEUTELSCHEISS - TEACHER**

Learning Advisor, Maths, Science, Carbon Management, Applied Science

**NEW COURSE: CARBON MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATE III**

In 2011, Mr. Anthony Beutelscheiss completed the Cert III in Carbon Management course with a view to introducing this course into the Curriculum in 2012. This year Anthony has 8 students from year 10 who are completing the first year of this two year program which covers the following areas of study:

- Climate Change & Greenhouse Gases
- Measuring Carbon Emissions
- Carbon Reduction Options & Emission Factors
- Carbon Action Plans
- Implementation of Environmentally Sustainable Work Practices

Anthony will give an update on the progress of this course and the potential career pathways a course like this provides.

**TUESDAY 4TH DECEMBER - Christmas Celebration**

7.30-9.00 pm St Peter’s College West Campus
Frankston-Cranbourne Road, Cranbourne, 3977
Enter via Navarra Drive Gates

**CONTACT DETAILS**

*Members of the Executive of the Parents & Friends Association may be contacted through the College Office:*

Phone: 03 5990 7777
Fax: 03 5996 8277
Email: office@stpeters.vic.edu.au

**ST PETER'S COLLEGE WEBSITE**

Recent updates include an EXCITING New Fundraising Project from the Parents & Friends Association. Articles also on the Memorial Planting of the Pear Tree and Plaque for 9/11 Victim, Peter Gyulavary, twin brother of St Peter's College Teacher, Paul Gyulavary, Solomon Islands Immersion program students undergo Cultural and Language skills in preparation for their trip. Winter Sleepout fundraising results and St Vincent de Paul's Winter Blanket Appeal.

Visit our College website www.stpeters.vic.edu.au for all up to date information on the College structure and activities.

You will also find in ‘News and Events’ stories and pictures of the ‘Day to Day’ College life of our students. Check out our Footy Colours Day photo’s.

Find details on how to register to get your College Newsletter on-line. Remember, anyone can register to receive the College Newsletter on-line, so sign up extended family members and friends. Grandparents particularly love to keep up to date with your children’s school day to day activities.
Pictured:
Paul Gyulavary, Teacher at St Peter's College and his daughter Olivia, with Paul Gyulavary’s Tutor Group Students and Tim Hogan, Principal, surrounding the Pear Tree and Plaque that honours the memory of Paul’s twin Brother Peter, who was one of the victims of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre Twin Towers in New York City 9/11/2001.

Solomon Islands Immersion Program - Beach Cruiser Bike Raffle Results
Congratulations to Ms Tracy Lockley, Teacher and Learning Advisor Augustine House
Thank you to all staff and students who supported this initiative.
From: Marija Culanic, Sean Hardy, Gabrielle Harrison, Hannah Irwin, Braeden Johnson, Melissa Ryan, Breanna Scott and Lauren Turnbull

SYSTEMS ENGINEERING

Student’s working through the next phase of their Picaxe project. This involves designing, programming and producing an application for the Picaxe system.
(Pictured left to right: Yianni Goudas, Kyle Saari and Aaron Cohen)

Mr Stephen Stergiadis
SYSTEMS ENGINEERING TEACHER
Athletics Carnival Report

Casey Fields was again the venue for the annual House Athletics Carnival for 2012. Students competed in over 150 events on the day across both track and field events. There were numerous records broken on the day and the battle to be crowned the inaugural house athletics champion was close all day and came down to the final few events for the winner to be determined.

Overall Results:
1st Assisi – 950 points
2nd Avila – 913 points
3rd Romero – 863 points
4th Glowrey – 716 points
5th Augustine – 710 points
6th Kolbe – 655 points
7th Mackillop – 648 points
8th Marian – 481 points

House Spirit Award – Assisi House

Congratulations to the following students who were crowned age group champions:
U/13 Male – Thomas Kelly
U/13 Female – Mikaela Dakic
U/14 Male – Martin Martin
U/14 Female – Bethany Dodgson
U/15 Male – Kailum Newland
U/15 Female – Chloe Anderson
U/16 Male – Robert Schreurs
U/16 Female – Cristin Daly
U/17 Male – Nicholas Lekakis
U/17 Female – Jasmine Jakupi
Open Male – Benjamin Ashkenazi
Open Female – Shannan White

ATHLETICS CARNIVAL BBQ!

It was the day of the St Peter’s famous Athletics Carnival; the date was Thursday 6th of September. The day started to turn into a gloomy, cloudy day, but as the students started to get into the sporty spirit, the sun came out and put a smile on everyone’s face. It was about 10:30 when you could see the reactions on people’s faces when they could smell the sausages sizzling on the BBQ cooked by the Year 11 VCAL class.

The day was a great success with everyone having a huge smile on their faces as they smashed the sausages down, even after the sausages were sold out we went around the school with a tub full of cans, bringing the drinks to the customers. The profit made was around $500 which we were all very very proud of.

A massive thankyou and congratulations to the amazing teacher who organized everything for the BBQ, Ms Maher, You’re a star!

CONGRATULATIONS!

A big Congratulations to Naomi Miller from 7I (Cranbourne East), who in the July Holidays, represented St. Peters College in Inter-School championships held in Warragul. This event is held over 4 days where schools from all over Victoria come to compete in all different Pony events. Naomi performed extremely well winning overall Champion in her division for show jumping. Well Done Naomi we are all very proud of you.

Mr Justin De Goldi
SPORTS CO-ORDINATOR

Year 11 VCAL students

Ms Rebecca Stewart
Health & PE Teacher – East Campus
A reminder to all parents and Year 7 students that the final vaccines for 2012 will be given on Monday 15th October. This will include:

- 2nd dose of Hepatitis B (Boys & Girls)
- 3rd Gardasil (girls only)

These immunisations will be administered at both campuses on this day. Consent cards completed for earlier vaccines will cover this round.

Mrs Elizabeth Hanney
DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

The Graduates’ Association of St Peter’s College cordially invites Graduates from the Class of 2002 to celebrate their Ten Year Reunion.

Date: 20th October 2012
Time: 7.30pm; finishes 11pm.
Venue: St Peter’s College Hall. Navarre Drive entrance
Dress: Formal.

Tickets: $65.00 per head includes finger food - savoury and sweet, drinks (includes light/heavy beer, champagne, red & white wine, and soft drink) and live entertainment.

Intention to Attend: Please send an email to April Thompson, Marketing Officer, at athompson@stpeters.vic.edu.au with your intention to attend/inability to attend. A personalised invitation for you and your guest will then be forwarded to you.

RSVP: 15th October 2011. In order to secure the catering and festivities for the evening, payment and your RSVP must be returned by this date.

If you have any queries please contact the school or phone April Thompson on 03 5990 7777 or email athompson@stpeters.vic.edu.au.

We look forward to celebrating ten years on from Year 12 with you!

Ms. April Thompson
MARKETING OFFICER

CAREERS NEWS!

INFORMATION SESSIONS / WORKSHOPS
Swinburne Nursing Information Session: This session will cover the application process, contact hours, course structure and placement opportunities for nursing at Swinburne. Applications will also be accepted at the information session.
22 October, 5.30pm – 7.00pm, room WA 101, Wantirna campus, 365 Stud Road, Wantirna

Monash extension info evening: Monash Extension allows high achieving Year 12 students to get a taste of uni before finishing school – and be rewarded for it. Students complete a pair of first year university subjects as part of their final year school studies, allowing them to extend and enhance their learning in an area of interest. Studies are available from the faculties of Arts, IT, Science and Business. New subjects include Journalism Studies and Mobile Applications Development. To find out more, attend the Info Session:
Date/Time: Wednesday, 17 October at 7pm
Where: Clayton campus
For more info, please visit: www.monash.edu/extension

RADIO/TV AT HOLMESGLEN – Follow your dreams with a career in RADIOTV at Holmesglen. Holmesglen is offering the Diploma of Screen and Media (Radio and TV). Information session; When: 7pm, 19 Sept and 2-4pm, 17 Oct; Details: Kathleen O’Brien, Ph 9562 1922.

GAP YEAR/STUDENT EXCHANGE
Projects Abroad Information Session: Projects Abroad offer a range of volunteer opportunities, internships and language courses. There, volunteer opportunities range in length with places offered around the world. Learn more at their information night.
13th October, 1.00pm – 5.00pm, Northcote Town Hall, 189 High Street Northcote, Victoria

Ms Melissa Dillon
Head of Careers
ST AGATHA’S NEWS

St Agatha’s Voice for Life are planning a special “Mass of the Angels”
For all family members who have suffered the loss of a child in the womb or in infancy.
St Agatha’s Church, Cranbourne
Friday 19th October
7.30pm
Followed by a light supper

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS!

The fourth term has begun, the holidays are a memory! The time for exams is well and truly upon us. Parents of VCE students would be well aware of the level of stress that can come from this time, as are some students. Each of us should strive to make the best of our gifts, our talents. We should also understand that each of us is different, we are unique. No one is the same as us and no one will do things in exactly the same way as us. It is certainly important that every student give of their best and aim as high as they can in the VCE exams, but it is equally important to acknowledge that the worth of a person is not defined by an exam result.

Disappointment is natural but should not be so great as to be destructive. There are many options for students to pursue careers if their score is not what they would have hoped for. I think of last Sundays’ Gospel which was at first glance a bit of an odd mixture which spoke about marriage, divorce and Jesus blessing children.

The teachings from this Gospel were really about the intimate union of humanity with God. It speaks of the place of man and woman who are united in God and are equal in status before Him and equally loved. The part about blessing little children helps us to understand the importance of living simply and learning to value what is really important in life. Jesus tells the people that unless they can welcome the kingdom of God like a little child they cannot enter it. This statement of Jesus calls us to live simply, to know that we are loved by God and to love the things of God. He tells us that if we make life too complicated and worry continually, if we allow things to take the place of God in our lives we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

So let us support our students and each other through this time of stress and expectation with love and prayer. Let us help them to remember what is important and to understand that their results do not define who they are. We wish all our students good luck and peace at this time, however the peace needs to be planned and sought out.

A Reflection on Listening to God

Righteous Father, may the offering of our lives be a gift to you, and may your goodness be proclaimed throughout all the earth. Make us faithful witnesses of your glory as you send us out to testify to your love so all peoples may believe in the truth of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

Amen

Deacon Tony Aspinall
College Chaplain
Caring for those who have lost unborn children

Becoming the Good Samaritan?

But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; And when he saw him, he took pity on him, He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine.

LUKE 10:33-34

RESPECT LIFE

Healing the wounds of miscarriage and abortion

The death of any child is difficult, including those lost before birth.

When a child dies after birth, friends and family gather to support the parents, to grieve and to pray. Those who lose unborn children can also feel a deep sense of loss. Sometimes few others are even aware that the lost pregnancy ever existed. Parents who lose unborn children may feel that no one understands them because they are expected to “get over it” and “get on with their lives.”

In this special Year of Grace how might we reach out to all those all around us who have lost a child before birth and may be grieving alone? How might we help them to find healing and hope?

MISCARRIAGE

Karen Edmisten lost her baby at 15 weeks and says she fell apart, sobbing ‘I didn’t know how to act.’ In a new book After Miscarriage, Edmisten and others share their experiences, hoping to help others. One mother writes, ‘I wish I could explain to my friends how this feels. My miscarriage … my losses … have been the most profound experiences of my life. I have never felt anything like this before. I know myself as “normal,” and I know myself in grief … and I cannot really say that I am the same person.’ Edmisten explains that:

When we are mourning we don’t always want words. We know that no list of facts or level of wisdom will lessen our pain. There’s no solution to the loss … All we really want is a friend who will sit with us and let us be what we are: sad. Let us feel what we’re feeling: pain. Let us do what we need to do: cry. We want to get beyond the pain and discomfort and move on. But before we can genuinely heal, we have to slog through some misery.

It is not just mothers who feel the loss of their unborn child. As one father writes, ‘the half-truth we are never told but somehow pick up on is that miscarriage is not a man’s issue. The truth is that men and women suffer the loss in different ways. The falsehood is that men are removed from suffering.’ Parents who are feeling heartbroken after a miscarriage need to grieve. No matter the age or stage of development of the child, or whether they have had a chance to hold the child in their arms, parents do remember and grieve for their lost children. Edmisten has been involved in establishing Hannah Ministry to help support others through their grief. She says that our children deserve the dignity of our mourning, the recognition of their infinite worth and the respect that is manifest in our grieving their passing.
Becoming the Good Samaritan?  RESPECT LIFE PROGRAM

WOMEN AND ABORTION

Parents of aborted babies are not typically given permission to grieve. ‘The one in three Australian women who have lost a child to abortion are often left to cope alone.’ They have been offered abortion as a “quick solution” that allows them to “get on with their lives.” The issue of abortion often makes people uncomfortable. Someone close to us may have been involved in an abortion – perhaps a friend or family member – and this can make it difficult to discuss it openly. Many women are surprised to find that abortion is far from the “quick solution” that they had been promised. Melinda Tankard-Reist’s book Giving Sorrow Words gives us some powerful insights into women’s experience of grief. Researchers report that 10-30% of women suffer from severe negative psychological complications after abortion.

As Joanne Angelo M.D., Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry Tufts University Boston, who has been involved in Project Rachel and in treating women affected by abortion in the US, explains:

“The mother is expected to feel relief that her problem is over and ‘get on with her life.’ … Ordinarily, grief after an elective abortion is uniquely poignant because it is largely hidden. There most often are no provisions made to assist the parents of aborted children in their grieving – they have no child to hold, no photographs, no wake or funeral, and no grave to visit. A post-abortion woman typically finds herself alone to cope not only with the loss of the child she will never know, but also with her personal responsibility for her child’s death with its ensuing guilt and shame. As time passes … her grief often becomes overwhelming. Waves of unexpected emotion – sorrow, emptiness, guilt, depression, anger, hopelessness, and suicidal thoughts – may flood her consciousness on the date the child would have been born each year. … Mother’s Day, … at the birth of another baby, … seeing a child the age her child would have been …

She may have great difficulty trusting persons like those who advised her abortion … If she enters marriage without revealing her dark secret, her husband may never understand her mood swings, her difficulty with intimacy, her ambivalent relationship with subsequent children, or her attempts to deal with insomnia and recurrent nightmares with alcohol, prescribed medication, or illicit drugs.’

For more information on women and abortion see the brochure Healing the Broken Hearted Respect Life Sunday 2006 (see weblink on back page).

MEN AND ABORTION

We are often told “abortion is a women’s issue.” Yet clearly pregnancy involves both a man and a woman. If people think about the role men play in an abortion decision, they could think of the stereotype of a man who abandons his girlfriend or who forces an abortion on the mother of his child. The situation can be more complicated than this. Whichever role he played, abortion can have a deep long lasting impact on a man.

Men have been socialised to believe that abortion is a woman’s decision. The slogan “it is her body and her choice” can serve to silence a father at the very moment his support is most needed. If he tries to be supportive of “whatever she decides”, she may read his noncommittal attitude as “he does not care about me, or about our baby … he is not going to support me.” Alternatively, if he tries to support his partner by encouraging her to keep their unborn child, he may be accused of putting pressure on her. He might feel like he cannot win either way. He may suppress his own thoughts and feelings in trying to support his partner. Their lack of communication can lead to her going ahead with the abortion.

Vincent Rue, psychotherapist and Director of the Institute for Pregnancy Loss explains, ‘one of the sad realities of abortion is how caring men, who try not to hurt the women they love, in fact hurt them by saying nothing when abortion is first mentioned in the crisis decision making process. These men may be swept aside after the abortion by a fierce, often denied undercurrent of resentment stemming from their partner’s feelings of abandonment.’

Tragically, they may have kept their child if they had been able to discuss their true thoughts and feelings in time. There is a high rate of relationship breakdown after an abortion.

Yet men do remember and grieve for their lost children. Their stories rarely make it into the public domain. Nevertheless we are recognising that they too need to share their experiences. Some are surprised at their feelings, are not sure how to make sense of them and can struggle with them for years.

Thirty years after losing his first child, Australian author Peter Carey wrote about his experience in the New York Times. ‘Lately when I think of my children I have begun to remember not just the four-year-old, who is rattling on my doorknob as I write, or the eight-year-old but those other children I have spent a long time trying to forget.’ Carey’s girlfriend had an illegal abortion in 1961. She went on to give birth to three children born prematurely. Carey writes of his grief at losing these children soon after birth. Many years later he wishes ‘that we had honoured those children with a plaque, a name. I will always wish that forever.’

Writing in The Weekend Australian, Alan Close reflected on his lost chance at fatherhood and that he is ‘the father of several terminations’. He writes of struggling to watch others with their children. Sam de Brito writes about his experience in his blog for the Sydney Morning Herald:

I should have two children; one of them would be turning 17 this year, the other should be 11 years old … If you’re a man and your partner conceives but decides to terminate, a lot of the time that’s where the conversation ends; it’s her body, so it’s her decision … Having been brought up to believe that it is a woman’s choice, that I had no right to tell her what to do with her body. I kind of slept-walked through the process: helped with the costs, drove the girls to and from the appointments and was as supportive as I could be … As the years have passed since my decisions, a kind of phantom history has spooled out behind my two kids: birthday parties that never happened, schools they didn’t attend, fun they never got to have … I can’t tell you how many times I’ve wondered what they would have been like. The more I’ve thought about it, the more unsettled I’ve become about the flippancy with which I made the decisions …’

William Zimmerman writes that, … nothing could prepare me for the devastating experience of losing a child and the emotions I would encounter in the aftermath … There was only one thing that I knew I could do as a way to survive mentally and emotionally … that was to write.

Over a period of 10 years William wrote a journal of his thoughts to his unborn child, which he has since published.

Sometimes an abortion can have further tragic consequences. Joanne Angelo reports the suicide of a young man following his teenage girlfriend’s abortion (due to parental pressure). He was distraught as he had recently lost his beloved father and the multiple losses were more than he could bear. Increasingly, those working to help heal women after abortion are realising that men too grieve the loss of their children. As Vincent Rue explains, ‘for men and women alike, the feeling of emptiness may last a lifetime, for parents are parents forever, even of a dead child.’

‘Men who have tried to prevent their partner’s abortion and found they have no legal right to protect their unborn child feel exacerbated and stripped of their protective and nurturing role as fathers. Men who insisted on the abortion, paid for it, or did nothing to dissuade their partner from engaging an abortionist to kill their child, may become overwhelmed by guilt, shame
and self-loathing. Both groups of men often become angry, anxious, distrustful of women, abuse alcohol and drugs, and despair of ever being the husbands and fathers they had hoped to be. There is some evidence that four in ten men experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, often around 15 years after the abortion.

**MEN AND RELATIONSHIPS**

Instead of being a quick solution, ‘abortion can unwittingly lead many – both men and women – into a harrowing and complex psychological journey of depression, anxiety, and other emotional disturbances that often lead to a series of broken relationships.’

Church teaching involved in an abortion ‘as an unforgiveable sin’.

When society doesn’t encourage them to grieve, their bitter tears are shed alone and can be self-destructive.

They need to know that help is available for them. Often God is drawing them towards him but they are also afraid of being judged.

**THE MERCY OF GOD**

Theologian Professor Jean Laffitte points out there are some who view a woman or man involved in an abortion ‘as an unforgiveable sinner, a person not entitled to the compassion and mercy of God or man.’ Church teaching on this is clear. Abortion is a ‘grave matter.’ However, we are called ‘to distinguish the sin from the sinner, to reject the sin, but not the sinner.’ Pope John XXIII said:

*It is always perfectly justifiable to distinguish between error as such and the person who falls into error ... A man who has fallen into error does not cease to be a man. He never forfeits his personal dignity; and that is something that must always be taken into account. Besides, there exists in man’s very nature an undying capacity to ... seek the road to truth. God in His great providence is ever present with His aid. Today, maybe, a man lacks faith and turns aside into error; tomorrow, perhaps, illuminated by God’s light, he may indeed embrace the truth.*

‘The Church feels the need and duty to intervene on abortion at this point in time and to do so according to the merciful example of God.’ The Church has always raised her prophetic voice on the question of human life and human dignity. As theologian Professor Livio Melina says, ‘now more than ever, on the question of the deep emotional trauma brought about by abortion ... we see that her prophetic voice is being matched by her concern for those who carry this sorrow.’

There is a growing awareness that ‘personal, relational, and societal effects of abortion ... have brought us to a point where something must be done.’

**BECOMING MORE LIKE THE GOOD SAMARITAN**

How might we go about reaching out to those affected by abortion, in our parishes, schools, families, and work places, who might still be grieving for lost children? How might we become bearers of grace in this special Year of Grace?

Both Pope Benedict XVI and Pope John Paul II call us to adopt the attitude of the Good Samaritan. Pope Benedict XVI insists that the Christian’s program – the program of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25 – 37), the program of Jesus – is ‘a heart which sees’ where love is needed and acts accordingly.

John Paul II explained that ‘our support and promotion of human life must be accomplished through the service of charity ... This is a particularly pressing need at the present time’.

Pope Benedict XVI says that love – caritas – will always prove necessary, as many people we encounter will be suffering from isolation, and a sense of not being loved, and a lack of solidarity.

Pope Benedict, addressing an international congress on abortion, *Oil on the Wounds,* said:

Yes, the men and women of our day sometimes truly find themselves stripped and wounded on the wayside of the routes we take, often without anyone listening to their cry for help or attending to them to alleviate and heal their suffering ... Only by assuming an attitude of merciful love is it possible to approach in order to bring help and enable victims to pick themselves up and resume their journey through life ... The Church’s first duty is to approach these people with love and consideration, with caring and motherly attention, to proclaim the merciful closeness of God in Jesus Christ. Indeed ... it is he who is the true Good Samaritan, who has made himself close to us, who pours oil and wine on our wounds and takes us to the inn, the Church, where he has us treated, entrusting us to her ministers and personally paying in advance for our recovery.

Yes, the Gospel of love and life is also always the Gospel of mercy, which is addressed to the actual person and sinner that we are, to help us up after any fall and to recover from any injury.

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**PRECIOUS ANGELS MEMORIAL GARDEN**

After discussion with families who have lost children, St Therese’s parish in Essendon has established a Precious Angels Memorial Garden. They hope it will enhance their “sacred space” providing families who have lost children – born and unborn – with a place to pray, remember, grieve and find hope. Some parents might find it helpful to have a memorial Mass celebrated for their unborn child(ren) and parishes are encouraged to include prayers for unborn children and their parents, especially around Respect Life Sunday, All Soul’s Day, Christmas, and Mother’s and Father’s Day.

St Therese’s Parish Essendon, Garden of the Angels
Phone: (03) 9379 2039 Website: www.saintthereses.com

The parishes of St Jude and St Thomas More have similar memorials. For further information or to list other memorials please contact the LMF Office.

Open Doors, Ringwood holds memorial services a few times each year for any pregnancy loss. Other shrines for unborn children include:

National Memorial for the Unborn
www.memorialfortheunborn.org

Shrine of the Holy Innocents, New York
www.innocents.com/shrine.asp
This is a beautiful image for us to keep in mind. Livio Melina explains this parable further, saying that it is humanity which lies at the edge of the road, stripped and wounded by sin, incapable of reaching the goal. It is Jesus who cures us, ‘paying in person ... bring [us] to the inn which is the Church ...’. 40 He says, ‘In our present day — indeed, perhaps now more than ever, the Church is called to be the “inn” we hear about in the parable of the Good Samaritan, a place where the wounded can be brought back to health ... Those who have suffered ... the trauma of abortion should experience the healing mercy of God in the embrace of the Church.’ 37

In the Year of Grace, the Church feels called to make her own the attitude of Jesus and the Good Samaritan. She feels, along with many men and women of good will, the call to approach the individuals who are suffering, to descend from her horse, and to stoop to cure their wounds. 38 Just as the Good Samaritan, ‘saw him, and had compassion on him, and bandaged his wounds, saying to himself, “I was a stranger and he took pity on me.” The Samaritan sees the suffering person, and without demanding to know the cause of the suffering, bends down to offer comfort. 40

As we make our way along paths of life, we are called to become bearers of grace. We are called to develop the attitude of the Good Samaritan, an attitude of mercy, of a love which does not condemn, but brings joy and hope. 41 We are called to welcome and console, to bring the healing power of Jesus to those who have suffered, and to show them that their tears are not in vain, that their suffering can have a purpose and a meaning. Their sorrow can be healed. Those who have lived through the experience of abortion are able to help others experience the healing mercy of God. 42 And in doing so they witness to the legacy and memory of John Paul II, who showed us so many years ago - both through his teaching and example - that “suffering is present in the world in order to release love, in order to give birth to works of love towards neighbour, in order to transform the whole of human civilization into a civilization of love.” 43

We pray that we might move one step closer to that new civilization in this Year of Grace.

RESOURCES
Miscarriage

Elizabth Ministry International
www.elizabethministry.com/Miscarriage_Child_Loss

Men and Abortion
Forgotten Fathers: Men and Abortion Trauma, Abortion Grief Australia

Men and Abortion: Finding Healing, Restoring Hope, Knights of Columbus

Reclaiming Fatherhood. General information on men and abortion. www.menandabortion.info

Men and Abortion. General information on men and abortion. www.menandabortion.net


Women and Abortion

Project Rachel. Catholic healing ministry to those involved in abortion. www.menafterabortion.com

Endnotes
2 ibid. p46
3 ibid. p2
4 ibid. p47
5 ibid. p48

10 op. cit. Joanne Angius p94
12 op. cit. Vincent Rue, “The Hollow Men”
17 ibid. p194
21 ibid. p194
22 ibid. p194
23 ibid. p194
24 op. cit. Vincent Rue, “The Hollow Men”
26 ibid.
27 ibid. p214 also see John XXIII, Pacem in Terris (1963) no158
28 ibid. p215
29 ibid. p216
30 op. cit. Livio Melina and Carl A. Anderson p22
31 ibid. p22
33 Pope John Paul II, The Gospel Of Life (Evangelium Vitae), 1st Ed (God is Love) (New York: Pauline Books, 1995) no587. Also see no95, no77, no41
34 Pope Benedict XVI, Dives Castris Est no28b, Castris In Vitravte, (St Paul’s Sydney) no53
35 op. cit. Pope Benedict XVI, Address to the Participants” p3
36 op. cit. Livio Melina and Carl A. Anderson p3
37 ibid. p3
38 ibid. p3
39 op. cit. Jean Laffitte p216
40 ibid. p216
41 ibid. p214-5 also op. cit. Livio Melina and Carl A. Anderson p3
42 op. cit. Livio Melina and Carl A. Anderson p3 also see Safiul Ismail n30

Organisations offering support for parents:
SANDS Victoria: Miscarriage, Stillborn & Newborn Death support
Phone: (03) 9899 0218 www.sandsvic.org.au

Open Doors Ringwood
Open Doors offers support to parents after miscarriage and abortion. Phone: (03) 9870 7044 or 1800 647 995 www.opendoors.com.au

CatholicCare Melbourne
CatholicCare offers support to parents after miscarriage and abortion. Phone: (03) 9287 5555 www.cmac.org.au

Rachel’s Vineyard Melbourne
Rachel’s Vineyard offer retreats for parents after abortion. Contact: anne@opendoors.com.au or (03) 9870 7044 or 1800 647 995

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Cardinal Knox Centre
PO BOX 146, East Melbourne, VIC 8002
Phone: (03) 9287 5587 e: lm1@cmac.org.au www.cmac.org.au/lifemarriagefamily
St. Agatha's Voice for Life are planning a special

"Mass of the Angels"

For all family members who have suffered
the loss of a child in the womb or in infancy

St. Agatha’s Church, Cranbourne
Friday 19th October, 2012
7.30pm

Followed by a light supper
St Peter’s College
Parents & Friends Association

YOU CHOOSE:
FAMILY OR INDIVIDUAL STUDENT NAME
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INDIVIDUAL PAVER
Your donation of $30.00 entitles YOU to have your name engraved into a paver as a lasting record of your families/years at St Peter’s College. The paver will be permanently installed in the St Peter’s Statue Memorial Garden in 2013

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Student Name: ................................................................. House Name: .................................................................

Address: ........................................................................................................................................

PLEASE NOTE: Paver Program for East Campus to be undertaken in 2013 once suitable area for installation has been identified within the current new building program.

Offer closes on the 1st November 2012 or Unless Sold Out Earlier
ST PETER’S COLLEGE PARENTS & FRIENDS ASSOCIATION
Thanks You For Your Support!