



MARIST BROTHERS

# BERNE EDUCATION CENTRE

## Newsletter

Number 12 • 2007

*Dear Parents, Students & Friends,*

2007 is screeching to a close; the school year has already ended; and my time as Principal of Berne is nearly complete. A list of endings!! Yes, but each of them herald the beginning of something as well. This is generally the way it is with us humans: endings and beginnings are two sides of the coin that represents our lives. Sometimes when something ends it's hard to see how anything can begin from it; but it inevitably does. I name this, of course, as the operation of God's amazing grace in our lives; no door is ever shut that He does not open a window.

As I reflect on my time at Berne I have a mix of emotions, a myriad of memories and a sense that something good has been achieved, and its all been worthwhile. There is the inevitable sadness and apprehension of finishing; the sense that I will miss all the people and the interactions that characterise Berne. However, I know its good to finish and that its good to hand the school over to new leadership and a new, exciting era. I can remember forever the ups and downs, the adrenalin rushes, the solid work, the problems that we solved and the ones that resisted every attempt at resolution. I see the faces of our students – some that did well, those that fell by the wayside; the good, the bad and the ugly!! But, I know that we loved them all and in the long run that's all that mattered.

I see and remember all those wonderful members of staff who made it all happen. It's easy being the fat admiral on the bridge; its hard when you're in the engine room, the kitchen, the war room, etc. The truth is we were all united in this special mission of the Marist Brothers; all inspired by the life and work of St. Marcellin Champagnat; and all encouraged by the indestructible presence of God's love in our lives and in the lives of the kids he sent to us. (There was never a shortage of these modern day John Bernes!)



I want to say a very sincere thank you to all associated with Berne these last ten years, especially those who have supported me, and for those who have appreciated our work here: teachers, counsellors, teachers' aides, volunteers, ancillary and secretarial staff, parents and carers, students, school principals and their staffs, Board members, the dozens of Brothers who encouraged us and worked with and for us, the Principals of Marist owned colleges, Br. Kelvin and the people in the CEO, Sydney that helped us, the offices of the Catholic Education Commission/NSW, Fr. Michael of the Lewisham Parish. The list could go on – but I am very grateful to all these and many others for the great support given.

Am I satisfied with what has been done? Yes, very much so. Yet it would be a lie to say its all been peaches and cream. There have been very hard days; difficult moments; I have seen the best and worst in human beings; there has been light and dark; great goodness, frightening evil. In fact, just exactly the same as everyone's life is; but there is always more good in the end, and evil never overcomes goodness.

2008 will see me living at the Brothers' House in Lidcombe in Sydney, and I will be responsible for some young men who are thinking seriously about becoming Brothers. I will also be helping our Ministries Office in a variety of ways working with schools and school staffs, etc. I am not retiring; but things will be at a slower pace for a while and this will also give me a chance to concentrate on health related issues.

Goodbye, good luck and God bless you all.

I loved every minute of it!!

**Br. Michael Flanagan fms, Principal**

### Diary ~ 2008

**January 29 & 30**

Staff Days

**January 31**

Students' First Day Term 1

**February 19**

Parenting in Practice (1)

**February 20**

Ash Wednesday

**February 21**

Parent/Staff Night

**February 26**

Parenting in Practice (2)

**March 3 – 7**

Work Experience (Yr. 9 & 10)

**March 4**

Parenting in Practice (3)

**March 21**

Good Friday

**March 23**

Easter Sunday

**March 24**

Easter Monday

**March 25 – 28**

School Camps

**April 01**

Parenting in Practice (4)

**April 07**

World Youth Day Cross Icon

Display

**April 11**

Student's Last Day Term 1

**April 28**

Staff Day

**April 29**

Students' First Day Term 2



Raja bowls them over

## Brother John Taylor Award

For excellence in Catholic Education



The Catholic Education Commission, NSW sponsors, on an annual basis, an Award honouring the contribution to Catholic education of Brother John Taylor, 1929 - 1993. The Award is known as the Brother John Taylor Award for Excellence in Catholic Education.

The 2007 Brother John Taylor Award has awarded to **Br Michael Flanagan fms**, Principal of the Berne Education Centre. The award was made in acknowledgement of the wonderful work that has been done with young people at the Berne Centre who have been able to access quality education and intervention programs that would have otherwise have been denied them and who have been given skills and the confidence to pursue careers after leaving the Centre.

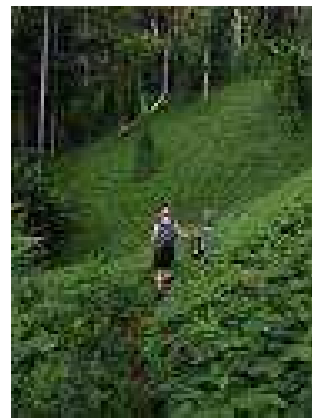
## Expedition to Kokoda

Some staff are planning to undertake a guided expedition along the Kokoda Track in Papua New Guinea next year, leaving Sydney on 27<sup>th</sup> September and returning 7<sup>th</sup> October (during term 3 school holidays).

The reasons for undertaking such an expensive and difficult trip include setting and achieving goals, teamwork, adventure, cultural and geographical experience, to gain insight into an important episode of Australian history and to walk where Australian soldiers walked during the Second World War. Although this type of experience is not suitable for everyone it is hoped that some Year 10

Students in 2008 might be interested in taking part. Also, some former students of Berne may be interested in being involved. Spaces are limited.

Expressions of interested should be directed to Michael Muranty or James Le Huray.



## Berne School Certificate Results 2007

### Band

	6	5	4	3	2	1
<b>English - literacy</b>	1	6	6	3	0	0
<b>Mathematics</b>	0	0	5	8	3	0
<b>Science</b>	0	2	8	6	0	0
<b>Australian History</b>	0	4	6	4	2	0
<b>Australian Geography</b>	0	6	6	3	1	0
<b>Total</b>	1	18	31	24	6	0
<b>Computing Skills</b>	<i>Highly Competent</i>		4	<i>Competent</i>		12



## Thankyou

The Berne community gratefully acknowledges the generosity of Lakemba Services Memorial Club for donating a grant this year to support our Outdoor Education Program. Their generosity and faith in the good work of the Berne Education Centre is very much appreciated.

## Picnic Day Report

Despite the many protestations and wails of disappointment it was decided by a greater power than Brother Mick that Picnic Day at Berne would change this year. The sunny climes of Clifton Gardens were exchanged for some subtropical thunderstorm action in the form of sheeting rain which meant that a change of venue was necessary.

After a brief but memorable morning assembly everyone was more than ready for some physical exertion. Time was given for the mental preparation necessary and the compulsory intake of the sustenance needed to sustain us.

Students and staff travelled to North Strathfield for a terrific day exercising their bowling prowess. Stunned onlookers were amazed at the impressive scores and strikes that were achieved by such luminaries as Brett and Jon from year 8. Year 9 were also a powerful presence to be reckoned with. It is fair to say that Leum and Toby are no strangers to the premier League in this sport.

Having exerted themselves fully at Bowling, most people were in dire need of more sustenance and so we repaired to Berne where a fantastic feast of chicken a la Marist was waiting for us with lashings of chips. Many agreed that our lunch was indeed a highlight of the day and everyone was both well fed and well exercised by the end of the day.

*Stephen Smith*



Bowling

Mel offers sustenance



**Congratulations** to Joe and Jenny Degeling on the birth of their son, William James – a little brother for Leo. A very big welcome from the whole Berne community.

## Christmas Giving Appeal

Thank you to all the families, staff and friends who donated gifts for the Berne Christmas Giving Appeal. Donations of food, toys and other gifts were distributed during the last week of term to those less fortunate.



## The Power of a Candle

In South Africa, prior to the abolition of apartheid, people used to light candles and place them in their windows as a sign of hope, a sign that one day this injustice would be overcome. At one point, the authorities began to crack down on this. It became illegal to have a lit candle in your window, as illegal as carrying a firearm. The irony of this was not missed by the children. They soon had a joke among themselves: "The government is afraid of candles!"

Eventually, as we know, apartheid was overcome. Reflecting upon the forces that helped overthrow it, it is fairly evident that candles, lit religious candles, were more powerful, ultimately, than were firearms. Hope is more powerful than any army.

But what is hope? Many of us mistake wishing for hope. They are not at all the same. Wishing is fantasy, pure and simple. Thus, for example, I can wish that I might win a million dollars, but that is not connected to any reality. It is simple daydreaming. You do not light a candle for a daydream.

Hope is based upon a promise, the promise of God, a promise that says that – human sin and power notwithstanding – justice, peace, love, harmony, gentleness, and graciousness will, eventually, become reality. To light a candle, then, is to say that gentleness and graciousness are ultimately more powerful than threats, torture, and guns. To light a candle is to proclaim to the world that our real allegiance is given to something and to someone beyond them.

In retrospect, the government's paranoia about candles was well-founded. A lit candle is a powerful statement of hope.

**Hope is more powerful than any army**

# Br. Michael's Farewell Luncheon



## *A Creed to Live By ....*

Don't undermine your worth by comparing yourself with others.  
It is because we are different that each of us is special.

Don't set your goals by what other people deem important.  
Only you know what is best for you.

Don't take for granted the things closest to your heart.  
Cling to them as you would your life, for without them life is meaningless.

Don't let your life slip through your fingers by living in the past or for the future,  
instead live your life one day at a time.

Don't give up when you still have something to give.  
Nothing is really over until the moment you stop trying.

Don't be afraid to admit that you are less than perfect.  
It is a fragile thread that binds each of us to each other.

Don't be afraid to encounter risks, it is by taking chances that we  
learn how to be brave.

Don't shut love out of your life by saying it's impossible to find.  
The quickest way to receive love is to give love.  
The fastest way to lose love is to hold it too tightly.  
And the best way to keep love is to give it wings.

Don't dismiss your dreams.  
To be without dreams is to be without hope.  
To be without hope is to be without purpose.

Don't run through life so fast that you forget not only where you  
have been but also where you are going.  
Life is not a race, but a journey to be savoured each step of the way.  
Anon



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*Donations to the Berne Education Centre of \$2 or more are tax deductible*

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