



**ST MARY'S**  
**COLLEGE**

**20**  
**25**

**LIBERATIONS**  
**MAGAZINE**

SEMESTER ONE

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**ST MARY'S  
COLLEGE**

**DARREN  
ATKINSON**



# REFLECTION

## College Principal

Edmund Rice is often depicted by artists looking out through a window. What he sees, according to the anecdote, is the poverty of 19th century Ireland and young people deprived of the opportunity for education. Having recently lost his wife of just three years, his response is to convert a stable into a classroom and, in 1802, inspired by the work of Nano Nagle and the Presentation Sisters, an Edmund Rice school commenced in Waterford. Over 200 years later and on the other side of the earth, Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) is the largest national non-government provider of secondary education with 55 schools covering each state.

The evolution of EREA schools continues and, at our recent annual conference, it is apparent that Edmund Rice schools look very different to yesteryear. While the education of boys remains a priority for many, there are also co-educational schools like St Mary's College, and a rapidly growing number of flexi schools, offering both on-campus and blended learning programs to students who have found it difficult to access mainstream settings. There are EREA schools in diverse socio-economic communities and some with many cultures including those who have strong relationship with aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

What all EREA schools have in common is our Charter and the four Touchstones:

- Liberating Education
- Inclusive Community
- Justice and Solidarity
- Gospel Spirituality

In the new charter, there is a Call to Faithfulness and Transformation. We were provoked at the conference to consider whether "improvement", for which we all strive, is "transformative"? The presenter challenged us: "it is a butterfly that emerges from the cocoon, not a better caterpillar."

In committing to this charter, each EREA school is asked to undergo renewal every five years and it is our turn in 2025. Renewal is an opportunity to reflect as a community on how we are living the touchstones, to undertake evaluation from a panel of external assessors, and present a report that identifies commendations and recommendations. These recommendations serve to underpin the strategic plan that guides St Mary's College through the next five years. Our renewal process commenced, and over the following weeks teachers and students completed a survey, the "Principal's Report" was submitted, and preparations were made for the visit of the School Renewal Panel in May.

I trust that this edition of Liberations showcases St Mary's College as both faithful and transformative, as we are called to live by our charter. Witnessing our young people flourish is a privilege and my thanks is extended to all who have contributed to this publication.

Please enjoy.





# TOUCHSTONES

*At St Mary's College, the EREA Touchstones are central to our identity and purpose. They guide our commitment to creating a community that is inclusive, just, compassionate, and focused on excellence in learning. These values shape every aspect of College life and inspire us to form young people who will make a positive difference in the world.*

## Inclusive Community

We welcome and celebrate diversity in our local, national and global communities, responsive to each person's aspirations and needs, and committed to the common good.



## Liberating Education



Empowered by liberating teaching and learning experiences, we open our hearts and minds, so that we are hope-filled and free to build a better world for all.

## Justice & Solidarity



We are committed to local and global justice and peace, grounded in a spirituality of action and reflection, inspiring us to listen to, walk with and learn from all creation, especially those who experience powerlessness.

## Gospel Spirituality

Jesus' invitation to love, justice, compassion, peace and faith, calls us to life-giving relationships within our communities and the wider world.





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# OPENING AND BLESSING OF MCCARTNEY WING

We were thrilled to announce the official opening of our newly refurbished McCartney Building at St Mary's College!

The event was made even more special with the presence of Mr Josh Burns MP, Federal Member for Macnamara, who joined us for the celebrations, and Most Reverend Anthony (Tony) Ireland, Auxiliary Bishop of Melbourne, who blessed the new spaces, marking this significant milestone in our College's journey.

The refurbishment has transformed the McCartney Building into a hub of modern learning, featuring dynamic classrooms, a dedicated Year 12 Study Hub, a state-of-the-art Food Technology area, and new facilities for Textiles and Design Technology.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to this project and to our wonderful community for their ongoing support. We look forward to seeing our students thrive in these inspiring new spaces!





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# BASKETBALL SUCCESS

We're proud to share the outstanding achievements of our CGSAV basketball teams in Division 3. Our Senior Girls team were crowned champions, securing strong wins over Mercy and Killester Colleges. A special congratulations to Charlotte Ogier for being named Best Grand Final Player.

We also commend our Intermediate and Junior teams, who both made it through to the grand final and represented St Mary's College with pride, determination and excellent sportsmanship. These results are a testament to the growing strength of girls' sport at our College and the spirit of participation, teamwork and confidence we encourage in all our students.



# CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE: TERM 1 ACADEMIC AWARDS ASSEMBLY

In Term 1, we proudly gathered as a community to celebrate student achievement at our Academic Awards Assembly. This important event recognises the dedication, perseverance and academic excellence of students across all year levels at St Mary's College. The assembly provided a moment to pause and acknowledge the outstanding efforts of those who consistently strive for excellence in their studies, demonstrating a strong commitment to learning and personal growth. Awards were presented for high academic achievement, growth and improvement, as well as for excellence in individual subjects. Our College Principal, alongside key staff members, presented the awards and congratulated recipients not only on their results but also on their work ethic, curiosity, and contribution to our academic culture. The event was a reminder that academic success comes in many forms – from top marks to significant personal progress – and that every student's journey is worth celebrating.





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# VCE PSYCHOLOGY

During Year 12 Psychology, students spend time understanding different approaches to learning. To develop more in depth and practical understanding, we were fortunate to have Melbourne Dog Training bring in some dogs to show how types of learning change and develop behaviours. Plus - who doesn't want to hang out with dogs!



# GRAND PRIX 2025

Whether we like it or not, Technology is all around us and shaping the way we live, learn and work. Students sometimes think a career in IT is just them typing code in front of a computer screen, but this is far from the truth. Studying Information Technology is an exciting pathway which opens up many doors for our students. To ensure students know the importance of studying Information Technology, our Year 10, 11 and 12 Digital Technology students were invited to see the real world impact of the crucial role that IT plays. And what better way to experience technology first hand than by attending one of Melbourne's premier sporting events - The Grand Prix.

Each year, students who study Digital Technologies attend the Innovation Hub held at the Grand Prix. Here they visit exhibits from a range of universities such as RMIT and organisations promoting further study of Information Technology. Students gained valuable insights into the the new innovations driving the racing industry and were able to see how far a career in Digital Technologies can take them. As part of the event, students participated in a range of hands-on activities, including VR racing simulations, e-sport car simulations, interactive workshops, Tech talks and behind-the-scenes insights into the world of motorsport.





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# REFLECTING TOGETHER: ASH WEDNESDAY AT ST MARY'S COLLEGE



Gospel Spirituality

The St Mary's College community gathered in solemn reflection to mark Ash Wednesday – a significant day in the Catholic calendar that marks the beginning of Lent. In a reverent liturgy, students and staff paused to reflect on the themes of repentance, renewal, and hope.

At St Mary's, Ash Wednesday is more than a tradition – it's an opportunity to centre ourselves spiritually as a community and to live out the values of compassion and justice. Receiving the ashes serves as a symbol of humility and a reminder of our shared responsibility to care for one another and for those on the margins.

During our Lenten journey we were called to look inward, act outward, and commit to being people of hope and service. It is moments like these that affirm our identity as a faith-filled and inclusive Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition.



## THE LEGACY OF ST MARY AND ITS IMPORTANCE TO ST MARY'S COLLEGE

*St Mary's College proudly carries the name of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, as a beacon of inspiration for our community. Mary's life is a testament to selflessness, courage, and unconditional love. Her willingness to give of herself for others embodies the values we hold dear—compassion, humility, and service to the greater good.*

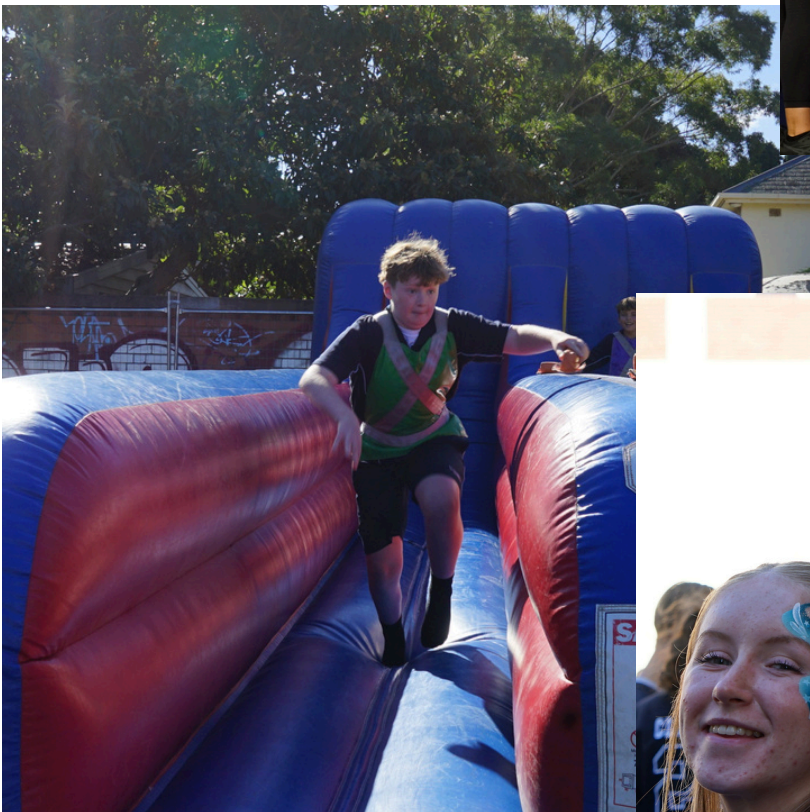


ST MARY'S  
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# FEAST OF BLESSED EDMUND RICE: FAITH, SOLIDARITY & CELEBRATION

St Mary's College proudly marked the Feast Day of Blessed Edmund Rice with a day full of meaning, action, and joy. We began with a beautiful liturgy, reflecting on Edmund's mission to serve the marginalised and inspire through education. As a community, we then walked together around Albert Park – a powerful act of solidarity with those in need – before gathering back at school for an afternoon of celebration. With rides, games, music and more, students and staff alike shared in the joy of community spirit. Thanks to the generosity of our families and friends, we also raised important funds to support those on the margins, continuing the legacy of Blessed Edmund through both word and action. It was a day that reminded us all of the power of compassion, unity and joyful service.





# YEAR 7 CAMP LAUNCHES THE YEAR WITH FUN AND FRIENDSHIP

## MERRICKS VICTORIA

Early in Term 1, our Year 7 students headed off to camp on the Mornington Peninsula for three days of team-building, adventure and connection. From beach walks to high-energy activities and evening games, students had the chance to bond with new friends and build confidence as they began their journey at St Mary's College.

It was the perfect way to kick off the year—fun-filled, memorable, and full of St Mary's spirit.







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# A NIGHT TO REMEMBER: CELEBRATING WITH PURPOSE AT THE ST MARY'S FORMAL

At St Mary's College, we believe that education extends beyond the classroom. It's about forming confident, respectful, and well-rounded young people who know how to carry themselves with pride, dignity, and joy. One of the most cherished milestones in a student's journey is our annual formal—a celebration that brings these values to life in a meaningful and memorable way.

The formal is more than just a glamorous evening. It is a rite of passage and a symbol of growth. It gives our senior students the opportunity to pause, reflect, and celebrate their shared achievements as they approach the final stages of their time at the College. It's a time to acknowledge friendships, personal progress, and the unique spirit of our school community.

Importantly, the formal is also an occasion to teach and model the importance of presentation and preparation. We speak often at St Mary's about rising to meet moments that matter—and the formal is one such moment. Students are encouraged to dress with care and elegance, not out of vanity, but as a gesture of self-respect and celebration. Learning how to dress appropriately for different occasions is a life skill, and one that we intentionally nurture. The event itself is a beautiful balance of tradition and fun, with attention given to every detail—from the venue and music to the speeches and photos. Our staff join the evening in celebration, reinforcing the strong relationships that exist between students and the wider school community.

For many, it's an unforgettable evening filled with laughter, dancing, and pride. For us, it's yet another way we help our students grow into capable, confident young adults who understand what it means to celebrate with integrity and grace.





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# RAISE: A MODEL FOR LIFELONG LEARNING AT ST MARY'S COLLEGE

At St Mary's College, learning is more than just acquiring knowledge—it's a journey of growth, character formation, and purpose. Central to this vision is the RAISE Learning Model, a whole-school approach that underpins the way we teach, learn, and grow together.

RAISE—an acronym for Ready to Learn, Active Learners, Intent on Success, Seeking Understanding, and Engaged in Creative and Critical Thinking—is both a philosophy and a framework. It provides our students, staff, and families with a shared language and pathway for learning that is grounded in our Catholic values and informed by contemporary research.

From their earliest years at the College, students are encouraged to develop strong learning habits, independence, and resilience. Each phase of the RAISE model builds on the last, guiding students to become curious thinkers, purposeful learners, and responsible contributors to the world around them.

This model doesn't just live in the classroom—it animates all facets of College life. Whether it's our distinctive Year 9 Magnificat Program, which uses Melbourne as an extended learning environment, or the ASTRA Badges, which recognise excellence through real-world projects, RAISE offers meaningful opportunities for students to apply their learning in authentic contexts.

Inspired by the Assumption of Mary and the liberating education philosophy of the Edmund Rice tradition, RAISE challenges students to rise—academically, ethically, and spiritually. It invites them to not only discover who they are, but who they are called to become.

As students move from Belonging in Years 7-8, to Broadening Horizons in Years 9-10, and ultimately to Becoming in their final years, RAISE helps shape confident graduates who are intellectually engaged, spiritually grounded, and prepared to make a positive impact in a rapidly evolving world.

At St Mary's, we don't just prepare students for the future—we form young people who will help shape it.



# RAISE LEARNING MODEL

STUDENTS

## READY TO LEARN

I arrive on time with the relevant learning materials, manage distractions, and organise my home study so I can fully engage in each lesson

## ACTIVE LEARNERS

I listen actively, contribute to class discussions, work with others, and connect new learning to what I already know



## ENGAGED IN CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING

I apply my thinking to create, respond or solve with authenticity and attention to detail, reviewing and refining my work to continually improve

## INTENT ON SUCCESS

I set learning goals, refer to success criteria, and take steps to improve by responding to feedback and reflecting on my growth.

## SEEKING UNDERSTANDING

I focus during instruction, take clear notes, practice skills with support, and complete independent tasks to build my understanding

# RAISE LEARNING MODEL

PARENTS

## READY TO LEARN

Parents support students to be well rested, organised, attired and prepared for each school day

## ACTIVE LEARNERS

Parents encourage students to develop study habits and a positive mindset towards learning



## ENGAGED IN CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING

Parents encourage students to think deeply, ask questions and develop skills

## INTENT ON SUCCESS

Parents encourage students to do their individual best, set goals and be focused

## SEEKING UNDERSTANDING

Parents encourage students to develop constructive relationships with teachers and engage in learning habits that support understanding



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# MAMMA MIA! WHAT A SHOW!

Our College production of Mamma Mia! was nothing short of spectacular. With infectious energy, dazzling costumes, and a soundtrack that had audiences dancing in their seats, the show was a joyful celebration of student talent and community spirit.

From lead roles to backstage crew, our students brought passion, professionalism, and teamwork to every rehearsal and performance. The result? A truly memorable experience that showcased not only their creativity, but also the power of the performing arts at St Mary's.

A heartfelt thank you to our dedicated staff, families, and volunteers who helped make it all happen. Mamma Mia! wasn't just a hit—it was a shining example of what makes our school community so special.



# PATHWAYS TO PURPOSE

## THE VOCATIONAL MAJOR AT ST MARY'S COLLEGE

At St Mary's College, we believe every student deserves a pathway that reflects their strengths, interests and future aspirations. The Vocational Major (VM) provides just that – a flexible and hands-on approach to learning that empowers students to build real-world skills and take control of their futures.

The Vocational Major is an alternative to the traditional VCE, designed for students who thrive through applied learning. It allows students to complete a senior secondary certificate while gaining valuable industry experience, engaging in practical projects, and developing essential skills in teamwork, communication, and problem-solving.

Students undertaking the VM have the opportunity to complete VET (Vocational Education and Training) subjects and Structured Workplace Learning, preparing them for careers in a range of industries including trades, hospitality, health, and more. The program is supported by passionate staff who understand the importance of building confidence and independence in our young people.

At St Mary's, the Vocational Major is more than just an educational pathway – it's a launchpad for students to discover their purpose, build connections, and find pride in their work.



## Liberating Education



# HOUSE ATHLETICS





# A Pathway for Every Passion



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