Dear Parents, Staff and Students

This week (July 27th – Aug 2nd) has been Catholic Education Week. This is our annual opportunity as educators and students in the Catholic sector to celebrate the work of all of Queensland’s Catholic schools. The theme for this year’s Catholic Education Week has been ‘Come Live Life In All Its Fullness’.

Catholic schools aim to provide a high quality, faith-based education that is responsive to the needs of all learners and provides opportunities for them to reach their full potential. By working to engage the ‘heart’, ‘mind’ and ‘spirit’, Catholic schools strive to lead students to develop deeper understandings of the world and their place in it by encouraging them to live out the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

There are 296 Catholic schools in Queensland that educate 143,000 students and employ more than 17,000 teachers and staff and all are striving to nurture and educate their students in a faith-filled context. Mt St Michael’s strives to live according to these principles. In all aspects of our community life, our goal is always to excel educationally in all that we do with our students ensuring that this always takes place in a spiritually enriching Catholic community.

On Friday, we celebrate our own particular charism and spirituality through our annual Mary Aikenhead Day. Following the 175th anniversary celebrations of the arrival of the first five Sisters of Charity in Australia which took place at St Stephen’s Cathedral on May 31st, our focus for our celebration of Mary Aikenhead Day at the College on Friday, 01 August...
will be the recreation of many aspects of this celebration for all members of our community.

We are delighted to welcome a very large number of Sisters of Charity to the College on the day and privileged to have Sr Anne Taylor, Sr Karan Varker, Sr Jean Johnston, Sr Cate O’Brien and Sr Christine Henry addressing our various year groups and also playing a prominent role in our liturgical celebration. Our honoured guests will reflect upon questions such as:

1. What the 175th anniversary and celebrations meant for you?
2. What inspired you to become a Sister of Charity? Your formative years in the novitiate and significant influences upon you.
3. Events from the life of Mary Aikenhead or significant quotes from Mary Aikenhead that influence you.
4. Your personal journey as a Sister of Charity. Different ministries in which you have served and significant events which have shaped you.
5. Other Sisters of Charity that have influenced you.
6. The various ministries that you are still involved with today.
7. What inspires you about visiting a Sisters of Charity College, such as Mt St Michael’s College?

I know it will be really significant for our students to hear a Sister of Charity giving a personal reflection on her life in the Order and to share aspects of her story, with focus on her faith life and significant aspects that have shaped her.

Last week I accompanied Ms Ros Collier (DP Curriculum) and Mrs Donna Ahern (DP Students) in attending the inaugural Mary Aikenhead Ministries Education Symposium in Melbourne. The theme of the gathering was ‘We cannot become what we need to be by remaining what we are’.

The keynote speaker was Fr. Gerard Arbuckle and he spoke eloquently on many significant topics, reminding us that we belong to the foundational
story of our Catholic faith and tradition and the prophetic response of Mary Aikenhead to the life and example of Jesus and the values in the gospel. As part of the educational outreach of Mary Aikenhead Ministries, we must always ensure that we remain true to the legacy that we have inherited and continue to be enlivened by Gospel values. As a Catholic College, these values have to always shape our beliefs and our actions.

On Friday, July 25th we welcomed the Village Space Theatre Group to Mt St Michael’s. We witnessed another wonderful performance by this very talented group of actors. Our Year 8 students thoroughly enjoyed the interactive performance put on by the Village Space performers.

This presentation formed part of the Year 8’s retreat and this was built upon by Sr Cate O’Brien and Mr Peter Smith in a very effective reflection time that the year group shared during the second half of the day.

We welcome Ms Terrey back to MSM on Friday for Mary Aikenhead Day. We know that Ms Terrey will be rejuvenated and inspired by her period of study and reflection at Harvard University and Boston College, but we also know that she will be ready to be right back at the heart of our community for our Mary Aikenhead Day celebrations on Friday.