Dear Families,

Last week I was reminded via an email from a former student, currently Year 7 at Marcellin, of the great teaching that happens at St Martin’s. The email below has been edited to remove surnames for privacy.

I encourage you to read the email and be proud that your child/children at St Martin’s is/are provided with opportunities to grow as a student. A staff member advised me that in 2013 three other former St Martin’s boys had also been chosen to be part of this team, David, Julian and Hunter.

Hi Mrs. Stewart,

Hope you are doing okay without last year’s lovely grade 6’s :P.

Just wanted to let you know that from the results of the initial exams for Marcellin last year, Tim, James and myself have been selected to represent the Year 7’s of Marcellin for 2014 in an academic challenge in May, in a team of 8, the top 3% of the students at Marcellin in Year 7.

That means that out of the 240 Year 7’s enrolled at Marcellin, we three and 5 others have been chosen out of everyone to go to Camberwell grammar and verse other grammar schools and high academically achieving schools from the Melbourne area to compete for a chance to go to state, and thereafter nationals for a field of 10 academic events, including; math’s, problem solving, English, arts and poetry, and English. (Miss wasn’t quite clear on what other events there will be). In each field there will be a captain from each team that will have the final say in the answer submitted, (the whole team partakes in each question).

I have been selected to be captain of English and or Engineering.

This shows that the preparation and support from St. Martin’s in the lead up to secondary school is essential and really helpful and it really does pay off to pay attention in class.

A final thank-you now from me and on behalf of all the ‘Class of 2013’ Students from St Martin’s, wherever they might be.

Thank-you,

Caleb.
**Parent Friday night dinners**

Yr 2 parents have set high standards for attendance, social interaction and fine food for the first of the 2014 parent dinners. Thanks to Yr 3 parents for serving and cleaning.

Perhaps Yr 1 can follow in their steps on their night on 21st March.

**Pancake Tuesday**

Many thanks to all the parents who gave their time to prepare and set up for this annual school family social event, thanks to the parents who helped set up, cook, serve and pack up. Thanks to all the families who organised their lives to attend the picnic and build social connections with other families.

Special thanks to Leah and Issy for collecting all the rubbish, 3 black garbage bags each.

**Photos of school events on Social Media sites**

All parents are reminded that any photos of children, other than their own, taken at a school event cannot be displayed on any social media website without parent permission. All parents sign permission for their child/children to have their photo shown on school online sites. It is the school’s responsibility to ensure parent’s rights with privacy are respected.

School events include first day of school, end of term break up, class Masses, participation in piano / band / whole school concerts, swimming sports, play on yard, Yr. 6 sport etc.

**Issues about another child’s behaviour at school**

Thank you to the parents who contact the school about issues about another child’s behaviour.

It is not appropriate for any parent to contact another parent about their child. Relationships can be damaged by parents talking to another parent about their child.

Often incidents are spontaneous and not intentional. The school can discuss the issue and help the child/children to move forward and make suitable choices.

**Parking on bottom yard**

Parents have reported a lack of respect by some parents/ carers who park their cars on bottom yard for student pick-up. Cars need to be parked so that there is room for other cars to drive through the yard to exit at Dobson Ave.

All children need to be monitored by a parent/ carer when walking from the stairs near Junior adventure to their car.
Drivers need to be aware of children when leaving the school grounds. Some children use the footpath at the edge of the black gates in Dobson Ave to walk to their point of collection.

**Yr 6 Camp:**
Many thanks to Teachers who have provided supervision to Yr 6 students on camp; thanks to the parents for believing and trusting in their child’s ability to manage their time away from home; and thanks to the students for co-operating with camp leaders supporting their peers.

**Last week the Lenten journey to Easter commenced**
Lent is a time when we make a special effort in three areas: prayer, fasting and alms-giving. Project Compassion is our traditional focus for the giving of alms and I encourage you to once again support this Caritas Australia campaign. The Lenten call to fast is a reminder that we need to strengthen our self-discipline, refraining from eating or ‘fasting’ from other kinds of self-indulgence. Perhaps we could all make an effort to fast from criticising others.

“Lent is a time to renew our focus on and commitment to prayer, a desire for prayer. Prayer is born of desire: the desire for hopes to be fulfilled and wounds to be healed; for justice to be done and fairness to prevail; for the lowly and downtrodden to be raised up; for mercy and love to fill our hardened hearts; for blind eyes to see and deaf ears to hear; for wisdom to be granted us; for the fog of indecision to be replaced by clarity of thought and courageous and decisive action; for beauty and oneness to be made manifest.” Tony Byrne CEOM.

Use the youtube link below to reflect on the gift of today

[http://www.gratefulness.org/brotherdavid/a-good-day.htm](http://www.gratefulness.org/brotherdavid/a-good-day.htm)

**Book Reflection:**

Students discuss the expectations placed on them as being a key motivator in their education. High-performing schools challenged students, graded them on performance alone, allowed them to fail and supported them by developing a diligent work culture where students pushed each other. Academic achievement was highly valued and was clearly the focus of the school. Ripley contends that persistence and rigour are essential for academic success in today’s context. ‘All children must learn rigorous higher-order thinking ... the only way to do that is to create a serious intellectual culture’ (p. 199).
The students identify their teachers as having a key influence in their learning. By listening to their stories and observing a multitude of classrooms, Ripley contends that effective teachers have a strong academic background and that their professional development is characterised by in-school collaboration, observation and feedback. Being highly valued by society, as is the case in Finland, is a bonus!

Parenting is another strong influence. Ripley discusses different styles of parenting and acknowledges that many parents are time-poor, so need to adopt effective strategies to support their children’s learning. She encourages parents to discuss with their children ‘how school had gone, what they had learned, and what they had liked most’ (p. 114).

Amanda Ripley is optimistic in her conclusion. Students can learn to think, performance is dynamic and all schools and systems can improve. Mostly she highlights the importance of listening to our students.

*Teachers at St Martin’s strive to collaborate, observe and provide feedback to the children in their care. May we as parents and teachers set realistic and achievable expectations for the children in our care.*

*Regards*  
Trish Stewart  
Principal