The Bridge
The magazine of Brigidine College Indooroopilly
Semester Two 2015
**Principal’s Message**

In 2015, the Brigidine community welcomed Year 7 students. They joined our new Year 8 students, forming a Middle School for the first time. We also welcomed twelve new teachers to our expanding college where ‘sustainable care’ of creation enriches our mission.

The focus of our Brigidine community for 2015 was respectful relationships that provide dignity and care for others, where interdependence and reliance on the gifts we share work for the common good and where the experience of sharing empowers each person to achieve their goals.

In many ways, this can be directly attributed to the Brigidine Sisters of the past who lead and inspire us. They too felt the spirit of St Brigid of Kildare. Solas Bhride (or Brigid’s Spirit) touches us and binds us to our communities in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, as well as our forebears from Ireland.

In the Hebrew scriptures, the prophet Elijah finds that “the Lord is not in the wind, fire or earthquake, but in the still, small voice.” In a recent book by Frank Brennan SJ, he suggests that the church and the wider community need to “amplify the small voice, so that it is heard”.

Through educating and learning, schools are able to provide opportunities to deeply listen, to reflect quietly and to hear the inner voice. I think it is apt for a Catholic school community to listen to the voice of the spirit. The challenge for us is to listen...to listen and hear the small voice amongst the noise of the 21st century. Despite the 24 hour news cycle, the social media revolution or the pressure to be everything for everyone, schools must listen to the messages and the teachings of God.

As in Isaiah, “Morning by morning he awakens, wakens my ear to listen as those that are taught. The Lord God opened my ear.”

It is often said that, when a teacher is at their best, they open the hearts and minds of others so that they are ready; ready to listen and learn. In a similar way, Brigidine College invites students and teachers to hear God’s inner voice, so that they can also share this within our community.

Students and teachers at Brigidine can share their voice through the gift of service, the gift of outreach and inclusion, through knowledge and understanding and through the sharing of individual gifts and talents.

Previously, I had identified that Brigidine College was on the threshold of a new chapter, where girls from Years 7 to 12 would engage in 21st century learning. This year, through digital engagement, teachers and students have been courageous in expanding their understanding of learning to be interactive, integrated, collaborative and creative.

Teachers continue to model...
learning experiences and critical interpretative skills, so that students are able to shape their own learning into the future. The 21st century learner needs to be challenged in order to pose questions, provide opportunities to develop skills, solve problems, connect with each other and display resilience with dignity and respect.

I am particularly proud of the efforts of our teachers who have contributed to such an outstanding place of learning for young women. We have been extremely fortunate to build on a legacy rich in story and personal connection with so many families from the western suburbs of Brisbane.

Our Middle School inspires students to be energised and enthused through learning activities such as Robotics and Coding, Digital Design Technologies, One Note structures online, Video Conferencing, online forums and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) learning. Learning at Brigidine College will continue to provide what young women need to successfully live and achieve in today’s world.

Since our current Year 12 students arrived in 2011, the College has worked to provide buildings and infrastructure that allows the community to be a centre of learning for all. This journey continues as the changing student enrolment demands ongoing improvements and further resources. The College continues to plan and develop a school that is always looking for how we will do more and be more.

With our Strategic Plan and strong financial management, the College Board is in the process of developing a master plan that will see Brigidine College ensure its future well beyond 2020. Our Year 7 students will graduate in 2020 and it is hoped that, through enlightened planning and careful management, our college will be ready to embrace nearly 900 students in the near future.

Brigidine College will continue to respond to the critical needs of education for young women, where Catholic education is affordable for our families; where learning is valued and achieving excellence is the goal; where student wellbeing is at the core of what we do and where graduates of this College will be ready to find their voice in the digital world.

*Brendan Cahill*  
Principal
Mission and Justice

The weeks of Advent 2015 reminded us to set aside some of the hectic business of the school year ending and the shopping and holiday season and quietly reflect on the promise of the baby born in Bethlehem. Advent was marked by a spirit of expectation, anticipation, preparation and of longing.

In Brigidine College, Semester 2 welcomed in the long anticipated Red Earth Immersion Program. Students from across Years 10 to 12 experienced the extreme poverty and wealth of generosity and spirit, in the remote Indigenous communities of Cape York. Brigidine developed relationships with communities in Bana which will become part of our community engagement story over coming years. Our students experienced the wonders of the Great Barrier Reef, the importance of our role in stewardship and explored the effects of global warming first hand.

Following Sorry Day this year, we reciprocated with Ambrose Treacy College and were welcomed into their community for their NAIDOC Celebrations. As the ATC community grows, we hope to develop joint initiatives with Mission and Identity Deputy Principal, Conor Finn.

At the annual Awards and Acknowledgement Ceremony in October, the inaugural Bill McCarthy Award was presented to Year 12 student Madeleine Butler for her contribution to the spirit of social justice and mission at Brigidine over the course of her student life at the College. She is to be commended for her role modelling of strength and gentleness in our community.

The Brigid’s Women Group, ably led by 2012 Graduate and College Captain, Brigida Corte-Real, continued to live the mission and values of St Brigid through reflection and direct action in their lives. Around 30 students extended their commitment to the Eddies Van roster this year along with staff members Jennifer McNaught, Helen Paviotti, Berni Sligar, Shannon Metzeling, Erwin Cabucos and Jenifer Byrne sharing their time and presence and learning life lessons from patrons of the van. Brigid’s Women concluded the year
with an exploratory trip to Schoolies Week to see the Rosies (Friends on the Street) volunteers in action. Next year the girls will join the volunteer roster as part of their social justice outreach.

This year, the Year 12’s have donated their gift to the College to create the second prayer stone entitled, Brigid, Woman of the Hearth (Welcome) which will be tendered out to local sculptors. This will be part of a series of spiritual art projects reflecting the charism of Brigidine and Kildare Ministries throughout the College campus.

In 2016 we welcome in the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, opening the door to new hopes within the Catholic Church community. During the Year of Mercy, the Holy Door at St. Peter’s Basilica remains open from when the Year began on 8 December 2015, the Solemnity of the immaculate Conception until officially closing on 20 November 2016, the Solemnity of Christ the King.

The Year of Mercy, Pope Francis wrote, is also a way to keep the Second Vatican Council alive. “The walls which too long had made the Church a kind of fortress were torn down and the time had come to proclaim the Gospel in a new way,” he said.

We look forward to a refreshing year ahead of renewal and hope filled activity!

Andrew Beiers
Deputy Principal Mission

Madeleine Butler became the first recipient of the Fr Bill McCarthy Award

Brigid’s Women Group

EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE OF MERCY
Dec. 8, 2015 - Nov. 20, 2016

"IT WILL BE A HOLY YEAR OF MERCY."
-Pope Francis
It was a walk down Memory Lane to come back to Brigidine after graduating 18 years ago. I wasn’t exactly a star pupil in the traditional sense but I think I took advantage of a variety of things that I really enjoyed doing. Apart from all the school dances, formals and semi-formals, I remember taking part in Public Speaking, a Rock Eisteddfod and a fashion parade. Drama was the subject I enjoyed most and I remember playing lots and lots of sport. I was a Prefect and Athletics Captain back then, mainly because it was hoped these roles would keep me out of trouble!

When I told my family I was going to be Guest Speaker at Awards and Acknowledgement Evening, my brother piped up “Why you, it’s not like you’ve done anything!” That’s what it’s like being in a family of high achievers. But the truth is, upon reflection, I reckon I have achieved something; I get to do what I love every day: something that I’m passionate about, something that amazes and excites me and I get to help people along the way. I think that’s an achievement, don’t you?

When I was in Year 12, I had no idea what I really wanted to do. And that’s okay. Sometimes we need a bit of time. All I knew was that I liked sport and working with my hands. I certainly wasn’t interested in Medicine. I eliminated careers until I finally plumped for Physiotherapy and I’m so glad I did. It allowed me to travel, to get a good foundation and, when I did finally decide to go into Medicine, I was ready. It all just proves the point that there’s not just one way to finally end up where you want to be.

There are now many different facets to my life. I am about to finish my specialty in Obstetrics and Gynaecology with a special interest in minimally invasive surgery. I work at one of the largest maternity hospitals in Australia and I start my private practice in fertility and Gynaecological Surgery in February next year. I am a lecturer at the University of Queensland Medical School and I still have to study, present and do research, all the boring stuff that comes with my job. It’s certainly not for everyone, but it’s a great place to be - for me. The excitement of performing surgery, the thrill of delivering a baby when delivery is essential within minutes, far outweighs the few really, really hard times that you can imagine comes with such responsibility.

No matter at what stage of schooling you are at, I would like to give you something to think about:

**Embrace the simple and do it well:** For instance, when I was at University of Queensland, I got a job as a Physiotherapy Assistant. It was such an easy job, but I really liked my course and what being a Physiotherapist entailed so I embraced it. I worked hard at the really simple things like being organised, cleaning the clinic, making sure I gave good massages and basically contributing to the business as best I could. This, of course, led to an amazing job offer as soon as I graduated. I find this philosophy still true to this day. People notice and opportunities arise when you are seen to be passionate about what you do and how you do it.

**Explore the possibilities at school:** As most of you probably feel, school is only just the beginning. Don’t get me wrong, school is great fun but the world out there is even better if you are open to opportunities that come your way. Remember, the reason we put so much effort into our schooling is because it is the foundation - to everything! Whether it be arts or the sciences, take the opportunity at school. You never know - it might ignite an amazing passion!

**Be passionate about things that matter:** My hope is that you will all find something that you love to do, something that you embrace with all your heart, something that you invest your time and energy into. It just has to be something you love, because it’s an amazing feeling to get up each day and want to go to work. Unfortunately, women still have many battles to face. You may know that more than 50% of graduates from our medical schools, law schools, economics and arts are women but only a fraction of our leaders, CEOs and managers are females. As Brigidine women, you are being taught the foundations of how to function in society, whether it be as leaders or not. It’s still really hard in many professions, including mine. Obviously, we’ve come a long way and all of us are taught by our parents that we can achieve anything. And we can.

I know school seems like everything to you right now, but there’s so much more that awaits you. Just open your eyes, be open to opportunities, work hard and utilise your gifts. And, I promise you, the choice to one day do what you love to do, will await you.

Dr Devini Ameratunga

Senior Registrar Mater Hospital and Brigidine Graduate 1997
I first became aware of this quote in Year 8, my first year at Brigidine College. Although profound, the words of that quote seemed unrealistic; an ‘easier said than done’ type of sentiment.

However, during my time at Brigidine, I learned to appreciate strength, gentleness, persistence and resilience. I was encouraged to understand Brigidine’s rich history, the varied interests of my peers, and the many injustices in our world. I was constantly supported by my family, friends and teachers. Upon graduating in 2012, I realised that I could, in fact, follow Thoreau’s advice and live the life I had imagined.

These lessons and experiences resulted in my current decision to complete a Bachelors of Commerce and Laws at the University of Queensland. The workload is heavy and the students are competitive, but the content covered thus far has been so interesting and relevant to the world around us that I cannot wait to graduate and take my learnings to the next stage of my life.

Brigidine’s teachings cemented my understanding of faith and social justice. In 2013, I joined the Australian Student Christian Movement, an organisation that acts for justice in the world. The ASCM provided me with the opportunity to visit East Timor in 2013 and 2014, which allowed me to gain a first-hand understanding of the impacts of war and invasion on East Timor’s population and land. I also began to volunteer for the Eddies Van, an initiative of the St Joseph’s Gregory Terrace Old Boys Association, where a group of young adults regularly travel to Brisbane CBD to feed and develop strong bonds with the city’s homeless community.

Brigidine welcomed me back as a tutor to many students. At Study Hall, I am able to support the students with their academic struggles and ultimately rejoice in their triumphs as they progress through their senior schooling. Homework Club provides me with the opportunity to witness Indigenous students of the College combine their studies and culture to develop their personal growth in a welcoming environment.

Brigidine prepared me well to make decisions as an adult. Although I have not yet reached milestones such as securing a mortgage or raising a family, each experience so far has been a blessing and I am glad that I have been able to face them with confidence. As a Brigidine Woman, I am very grateful for the holistic education I received, and look forward to congratulating and conveying my best wishes to the future graduates of Brigidine.
Awards and Acknowledgement Evening

Past student Dr Devini Ameratunga delivered an inspiring keynote speech about achieving her career goals as Senior Registrar at Brisbane’s Mater Hospital in Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Flame of Brigid Award winners for left, De Porres and right, Damien. The Flame of Brigid Award recognises the special qualities of a student who contributes in a positive way to College activities and who conducts herself in an exemplary manner.

Chanel House Flame of Brigid recipients. A recipient may only win this award once in her time at the College.

The College Concert Band and Choir presented the opening song during the prayer liturgy called “Credo”

Urlabhra (Speech) Award winner Zoe Davidson

Amongst other awards on the night, Clara Smith (left) received the Pierre de Coubertin Award as well as Senior Sportswoman of the Year whilst Abbey O’Sullivan (right) was winner of the Junior Sportswoman of the Year and Sporting Excellence Awards

Cultural Excellence Award recipients

Chanel House Flame of Brigid recipients. A recipient may only win this award once in her time at the College.
Thursday 29 October 2015

The College’s Sapphires, Diamonds and Emeralds Dance Troupes entertained us with outstanding performances including a collaborative production “Dance Fusion”.

MacKillop House Flame of Brigid Award winners

Delany Flame of Brigid Awardees

Academic Excellence and Language Award winners from Year 12

Year 11 Academic Excellence Award Recipients

Foley House Flame of Brigid Awardees

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Celebrate all that is good with joy and gratitude
Jeans for Genes Day in August raised $798.70 for the Children's Medical Research Institute.

The Spirit Squad held their 24-hour Step by Step walkathon in October, clocking up 5.5 million steps and raising over $15,000 for research into Leukaemia, Ovarian and Breast cancers.
Cultural Cocurricular

In August, both our Cantare and College Choir did well at the Queensland Catholic Colleges Music Festival.

The Bridgettes shone at the Queensland Eisteddfod.

For the first time this year, students from both Brigidine St Ives and Indooroopilly came together in a cultural exchange. The Brigid Centre hosted a weekend of exciting performing arts, enjoyed by all.

The Staff vs Student Debate in Term 3 was a heated two-day event arguing “that we regret the decision by Triple J to exclude Taylor Swift from the Hottest 100!”

Attendees at the Awards and Acknowledgement Evening were well entertained by the College Orchestra.

Drama Club
The Open A Hockey team ended the season undefeated, winning 1-0 against Mount St Michael’s in the Grand Final.

The Open A Soccer team’s determination and team unity resulted in them becoming CaSSSA Cup Champions, whilst the Junior C team were Runners Up in their division.

Netball at Brigidine continues to grow each and every year. The Open C team were 2015 CaSSSA Premiers.

The 16 years Futsal team won the Champions of Champions competition.

In July, 22 Soccer and Netball players had a fantastic weekend in Sydney with Brigidine St Ives. Congratulations to the Soccer team on winning the trophy and well done to the Netball team for all their effort in a hard fought game.

The 14B Water Polo team kicking off the season with a splash.

Congratulations to Shelby Barney who, this year, played as a member of the Indigenous Budgies 15’s Netball team.
Exploring New Horizons

During the June/July holidays, a group of 16 students and 3 staff from Brigidine and Stuartholme took part in an unforgettable immersion experience on Cape York Peninsula. The group visited Wujal Wujal, a small community on the Bloomfield River, Weary Bay, Hope Vale, Thithaar-Warra, Cooktown and Bana. They were welcomed wherever they went by the indigenous elders and their communities and learned many new things including hand fishing, crab and pippie hunting, spear throwing and dune surfing. The students and staff returned to Brisbane exhausted yet exhilarated, with a new perspective on the lives of our indigenous brothers and sisters.

September saw 12 Year 10/11 students and 2 staff experiencing an adventure of a lifetime in Japan. The group stayed with homestay families and spent time at our sister school, Ootsumatama in Tokyo but enjoyed visits to Disneyland, Hiroshima, Kyoto, Miyajima and Universal Studios Osaka (home to Harry Potter World!). They were thoroughly shopped out when they returned home but loved every minute of this cultural experience.
At the Final Assembly, the Pastoral Leaders presented their graduates ... from Chanel House

... Damien House

Briana Tsang (left) won the Sr Patricia Whitby Award while Samantha Craven (right) became College Dux 2015

The theme for this year’s Graduation Mass was ‘Go Light Your Way’ and the Year 12s were presented with clay lamps which had been hand made by the staff throughout the year starting in January at the Staff Spirituality Day