The Marian Celebration at St James Catholic College (The May Ball)
An Introduction to the May Ball

The Marian Celebration is very important in the life of our College; it draws together in a unique way, our community. We gather to pay homage to Mary as Mother of the Church and we take the opportunity also to honour all mothers.

All students are expected to attend the Marian Liturgy and the May Ball.

The structure of the liturgies and the Balls are described in more detail below but in summary:

The Primary students K – Yr 6 participate in a day-time liturgy in the Church and in the evening go directly to the Carmel Hall for the Ball
  - the Primary Ball in the Carmel Hall goes from 7pm - 10.00pm

Secondary students participate in a liturgy in the Church from 7pm until about 7.30pm followed by
  - the Secondary Ball in the Town Hall which concludes at 10.30pm.

The Liturgies

The two liturgies are held to honour and celebrate the importance of Mary in our Catholic tradition and the importance of all mothers. Parents and friends are most welcome to attend each of these liturgies.

The Primary liturgy is held during the day. Selected students do the readings and the younger students present flowers to symbolise the many qualities of Mary. Several Marian focused hymns are also joyously sung. Towards the end of the liturgy there is a prayerful blessing of all mothers and carers. The activities are focused on the Primary students preparing the Church for the evening liturgy.

The Secondary students attend an evening liturgy. The evening commences with the Year 10s processing into the Church. After some readings from Scripture and some music, the College captains encircle the statue of Mary with flowers. This is followed by a prayer to honour Mary, and the singing of one of the traditional Mary hymns, eg, Ave Maria.

One of the special parts of the evening Liturgy is the reading of the Opening Prayer. This is traditionally read by a former College Captain – hopefully someone who has a link to the current Year 10 class group.

Prep

The Prep students play a pivotal role during the early part of the Primary Ball held in the Carmel Hall. The Preps and their families are welcomed to St James Catholic College and presented to the College community by the Year 10 students. The Preps are assigned a Year 10 partner who will accompany them during the formal proceedings on the night. They will also have one dance together before the Year 10s move to the Secondary Ball in the Town Hall.

The Prep boys wear black or dark trousers and a white or lightly coloured shirt. A tie is optional and some boys wear a bow tie. Prep girls wear a formal dress. Some parents with older children may have these items to sell second hand.
Year 10
The Year 10s partner the Preps at the beginning of the Primary Ball in the Carmel Hall. The Year 10s are also assigned a partner from within their class group. After the presentation of the Preps and their dance, the Preps give a posy of flowers to their parents.

The Year 10s then move across to the Town Hall. Here they are presented (as partners) to the Official Party - which usually includes our Parish Priest and the Principal, Mrs Anne Foale. The Year 10s then dance together as a class group – the Palmers’ Waltz.

Year 10 boys are required to wear a formal dark suit. The hire of the suit is the family’s responsibility.

Year 10 girls are required to wear a formal ‘after five’ dress.

The Primary Ball
Each class has a set of dances it has learned during the weeks leading up to the Ball. The evening’s program ensures that all classes have equal time on the dance floor. For many of the dances, parents and families are encouraged to join in.

Each class goes to Supper where they have a drink, and a plate of food. Families are invited to Supper at the end of the night – they are asked not to join class groups earlier in the night.

A professional photographer is present on the night who takes photos in a room set up for this at the back of the Hall.

Boys are allowed to wear a pair of trousers (not denim jeans) and a neat open necked shirt and black shoes (school shoes would be fine). They may choose to wear a tie.

Girls may wear a formal dress, or skirt and blouse, shoes should be suitable for dancing.

The Secondary Ball
Again, each year group has a set of dances they have learnt for the Ball. Due to the lack of space there is not very much outside participation in the dancing here!

Each class goes to Supper upstairs, where they have a drink, and a plate of food. Families are invited to Supper at the end of the night – they are asked not to join class groups earlier in the night.

A professional photographer is present on the night in a room set up for this upstairs in the Hall. If time permits, there may be an opportunity to Year 10 families only to have their photos taken here.

Boys wear a pair of trousers (not denim jeans), a neat open-necked shirt and black shoes (school shoes would be fine). They may choose to wear a tie. Girls wear a formal dress, or skirt and blouse and shoes suitable for dancing.
Do Parents Attend?
We encourage parents/carers to attend as spectators at the Balls. Some seating is provided for this. Towards the end of the night there is an opportunity for parents to dance with their child/ren. The parent dress code is smart casual.

Supper
Every family is asked to supply small cakes/slices/finger food – or a cake ready for cutting. These are to be brought along the night of the Ball and delivered to one of the Halls.

We also seek volunteers to prepare the sandwiches on the morning of the Balls.

Parents are asked to volunteer for a timeslot on the Supper roster in either (or both!) of the halls.

Photographs
Photos taken on the night are available for viewing and/or purchase from the Cygnet Newsagency shortly after the Ball.

Flowers
Flowers are needed for decorating the Church and the Halls. If you have some in your garden, please bring them along on the Thursday morning prior to the Ball.

Cost
Tickets to the Ball are $5.00 per adult and are available for purchase from the College Office, or upon entry at the door of either of the Halls on the Friday night. Families are warmly encouraged to attend.

Decorating the Halls
Volunteers are always welcome to decorate the two halls in readiness for the Ball. We have access to the Carmel Hall from the Sunday prior to the Ball and to the Town Hall on pre-arranged dates.

The Year 10 parents take on the major responsibility of decorating the Town Hall.

Cleaning Up
After an exhausting night, each of the Halls need to cleaned up and returned to original condition. There is an urgency for the Town Hall, as this is usually booked for another function on the Saturday.

Any parents who could help with cleaning up after the Balls finishes on the Friday night would be most appreciated.

Anything else?
If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to give us a call here at the College.