Dear Families

Last Sunday the 11am Mass at St Mary’s was dedicated to two significant acknowledgements. The first was the commissioning of all the teachers and staff from all four primary schools in the Parish and the second being a dedication and tribute to Father Dillon in recognition of his reception of the Order of Australia Medal. Father spoke of the dedication of all staff and teachers from all his schools and recognised the important role each of us has in the formation of the mind, body and faith development of our children. All our teachers work hard to ensure that the children in our care get the best that is available to them and are thankful for the blessings that Father bestowed upon us all at Sunday’s commissioning ceremony.

Sunday’s celebration was also an opportunity to acknowledge the fantastic work Father Dillon does for not only the people of the parish, but also the wider community. A number of people representing a range of community groups spoke of the enormous contributions Father gives on a daily basis. I had the pleasure to speak on behalf of the Principals and school communities.

For those who were unable to make it to Sunday’s celebration what follows is a small extract of what I had to say on your behalf:

...Father’s trust and belief in the principals and the staff of his four primary schools has allowed us all the freedom to build wonderful spirit filled communities each with their own uniqueness, needs and challenges and each with Father’s unwavering encouragement and support. As principals we value his trust in us and his capacity to appreciate the different challenges each of our school’s face. He has never wavered in his commitment to be there for us and with us every step of the way...

...I don’t know if anyone has ever done the maths but Father, in his role as Parish Priest and Parish School Employer x 4, attends near enough to 162 school related meetings in the course of any year. When we think in terms of 40 odd weeks of school per year that’s an average of just over 4 meetings per week most at night and most averaging 2 hours. For each of his schools this includes Board Meetings, Parents and Friends Meetings, Sacramental Program Meetings, Religious Education Coordinators Meetings, Fete Meetings and Parish Council meetings. And that’s just for his primary schools. Only God and Father knows how many other meetings he attends and how many countless hours he spends preparing for them...

... So Father Dillon, on behalf of all the communities from all your schools, I say thank you for being the person you are and for the inspirational service and priceless care you so generously give to all of us. God Bless you Father Dillon.

God Bless,       Mark

ADVISORY BOARD NOMINATIONS

Thanks everybody, nominations have now closed. The school should be able to confirm these in the coming days and will then notify parents of the results. The date for the next meeting of the Advisory Board is yet to be confirmed however I am anticipating it will be Thursday 13th March.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Encountering Christ this Lent

Next Wednesday is Ash Wednesday and marks the beginning of Lent. Each year the Lenten Season begins with the same stories: Ash Wednesday cites the Sermon on the Mount urging us to pray, fast and give alms. The first Sunday of Lent narrates Jesus’ time spent in the wilderness, a place of trial, temptation and encounter with the depths of His vocation. The second Sunday of Lent celebrates the Transfiguration of Christ on the mountain top, with the message from the Father endorsing His beloved Son.
The other three gospels for Lent this year come from John’s account and are riveting stories: the woman at the well, the man born blind and the raising of Lazarus. These gospels have multiple layers of meaning we can explore. One question for each story is, how do they enable us to encounter Christ this Lent?

The Woman of Samaria is the person who encounters Christ at the well. The water that the tired traveller, Jesus, requests for the woman expands in imagery to encompass the living eternal water that Christ will offer her. Here Christ reveals Himself as living water, where can we make time to drink of the living water this Lent – to spend time in encounter with Christ.

The story of the man born blind is not merely a simple healing story; it is a challenge to all of us who are narrow-minded in any way. Both the disciples and the Pharisees are oblivious to the misery of the suffering man. When Jesus cures and opens his eyes everyone else is called to reflect on their own blindness. What suffering in our world are we blind to? What personal failing or prejudices do we always excuse or fail to see?

The Raising of Lazarus is where Jesus meets a family tragedy and reveals himself as the ‘resurrection of life’. Here we see the powerful love of Jesus, who prays to the Father for his friend who has died, His love for Lazarus brings him back to life. Jesus’ compassion for those who mourn and those who have died elicits his healing love, He can repair and renew. Which people in our lives need healing love? For whom shall we pray to the Father?

Our prayer and commitment to Project Compassion are powerful examples of love modelled on Jesus’ ministry. They deepen our relationship with Christ and strengthen us for mission in these 40 pre-Easter days.

Joe Doolan CEOM

SHROVE TUESDAY
Next Tuesday is Shrove Tuesday and we will once again have our world renowned chef Henri here at St Robert’s preparing his famous pancakes for each class. Children are asked to bring a gold coin donation which will go to our Partner Parish St Mary Immaculate, Viqueque.

SCHOOL PHOTO DAYS AT ST ROBERT’S
This year we will have two days on which School Photos will be taken at St Robert’s. The first session will be held on Thursday 6th March and will be for our Foundation students and staff. MSP Photography will provide all Foundation students with a complementary Bonus Starting School package that will commemorate and welcome our new 2014 students.

On Wednesday 26th March our usual School Photo Day will be held. This is the day when all class photos, individual and family photos will be taken. Every student has received their own personalised pre-paid envelope, these were sent home last Thursday. If you would like a family photo these envelopes can be collected at the office. Please return all envelopes to the office as soon as possible.

WELLBEING - MEDICAL ALERT
There have been several cases of gastroenteritis throughout the school recently. Following a bout of gastro parents are asked to keep their children home for at least 24 hours. If you suspect that your child may be unwell please do not send them to school.

TERM 1 SCHOOL FEE ACCOUNTS
School Fee accounts have been sent home today payment is due by 28th March 2014.

Payment can be made by; cash, cheque EFTPOS or internet banking (banking details below).

St Robert’s General Account, National Bank, Melbourne
BSB Number 083 347
Account Number: 647 110 294, (Please remember to enter your family code or surname).

PRIVATE SINGING LESSONS WITH REBECCA HAY – BELLA VOCE
An expression of interest for private singing lesson with Rebecca Hay was attached to last week’s newsletter. If you are interested in your child participating in these lessons please complete the form and return to the school office. Spare forms are also available at the office.
E.M.A.(EDUCATIONAL MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE)

The Education Maintenance Allowance provides assistance to low-income families by helping with the costs associated with the education of their children. EMA applications are made by parents/guardians and submitted to schools. Schools have the responsibility to enter all EMA applications by the application close date onto the EMA Web System.

Who is eligible for the EMA?
The EMA provides financial assistance to families on a low income to help with the cost of essential educational items such as textbooks, stationery, uniforms and excursions. EMA is a means-tested payment - parents must hold a Centrelink/Veterans Affairs concession card to be eligible.

In 2014, the EMA amount is $200 for parents of eligible Prep students, $150 for parents of all other eligible primary school students, $300 for parents of eligible Year 7 students and $250 for parents of all other eligible secondary school students up to the age of 16. Children turning 16 years during the year, are paid on a pro rata basis until their birth month. An EMA application form must be completed by eligible parents/guardians and submitted annually to schools. Schools have the responsibility to enter all EMA applications by the application close date onto EMA Web System (secure site).

Parents should contact their child’s school for information about their EMA payments. Information for parents is also available: Education Maintenance Allowance.

EMA Website For Parents For information directed at parents/guardians about the Education Maintenance Allowance, see: Education Maintenance Allowance

Instalment One Eligibility day – 28 January 2014 and Parent applications close – 28 February 2014

Instalment Two Eligibility day – 14 July 2014 and Parent applications close – 1 August 2014

Application forms can be collected from the office.

Please note: Applications close this Friday

LATE CLAIMS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED

Chilwell P.S. Outside School Hours Care, Term 1 – February 2014
To book or cancel care please call Olivia/Laune on 0417 014 973

EFTPOS facility is available – for payments over $10.00. Forms available at the office or from the OSHC. Just a reminder to all those who have a permanent after school booking. If unable to attend please cancel before 2.30pm, to assist staff and avoid session fee. Thanks – OOSH Staff.

Sacred Heart College Open Day

Sacred Heart College Open Day will be held on Tuesday 25th March 2014

Option 1 – Tour 1: 3:45pm – 4:45pm
Followed by information session 5:00pm – 5:30pm

Option 2 – Tour 2: 5:30pm – 6:30pm
Followed by information session 7:00pm – 7:30pm

For more information, please contact our Registrar, Judy Smith on 5222 0490

Closing date for enrolments is Friday 23rd May 2014
STUDENT AWARDS
Congratulations to the following students who have received certificates this week for outstanding work.

Gr F CC  Zara Massey
Gr F CC  Alexander Pitman
Gr F JP  Xavier Bourke
Gr F JP  Silas Kanellos
Gr 1MC  Ollie Erhardt
Gr 1MC  Zara Goodall-Wilson
Gr 1YE  Daniel Lazzaro
Gr 1YE  Xavier Walker
Gr 2 KT  Zachary Berger
Gr 2KT  Nicholas Anglin
Gr 2LO  Renny Bowden
Gr 2LO  Louis Layton
Gr 3KH  Tadhg O’Sullivan
Gr 3KH  Sophia van den Berg
Gr 3JS  Dibdin Fitzgerald
Gr 3JS  Morrissey Roth
Gr 4MA  Mimosa Gillespie
Gr 4MA  James Gard
Gr 4MM  Jonas Seecamp
Gr 4MM  Indigo Irving
Gr 5NF  Freyja Tew
Gr 5NF  Paddy Harris
Gr 5SP  Oliver Stevens
Gr 5SP  Savannah Cook
Gr 6DB  Madison Antonac
Gr 6DB  James Lappin
Gr 6PB  Charlie Borracci
Gr 6PB  Jessica Lazzaro

BIRTHDAYS
The St Robert’s School community wish to congratulate the following children on the celebration of their birthday this week Happy Birthday to:

26th February  Sophia van den Berg
27th February  Patrick Sinnott
1st March  Xavier Paatsch
2nd March  Jayde Morissy

DATES TO REMEMBER

FEBRUARY
Wed 26th Grade 5 Information Evening 6pm to 7pm
Fri 28th Bellarine Division Swimming

MARCH
Tues 4th Shrove Tuesday
Wed 5th Ash Wednesday
Thur 6th Foundation and Staff Photos
Fri 7th St Robert’s Athletics, Grades 4 to 6, Landy Field
Mon 10th Labour Day – Public Holiday
Tues 11th Grade 6 Interviews 3:40pm to 6pm
Fri 14th World of Maths incursion
Mon 17th Whole School Assembly, 3pm
Tues 18th Grade 6 Interviews 3:40pm to 6pm

Wed 19th Sacramental Enrolment Night (1)
               7:30pm, Pioneer Room, above St Mary’s Parish Office (Parents only – no children)
Fri 21st GDCSSA District Cross Country
Tue 25th Region Swimming
Wed 26th Sacramental Enrolment Night (2)
               7:30pm, Pioneer Room, above St Mary’s Parish Office (Parents only – no children)

Fri 28th Division Tennis
Mon 31st Whole School Assembly, 3pm

APRIL
Wed 2nd Term 1 concludes 3:30pm
Fri 18th Good Friday
Sun 20th Easter Sunday
Tue 22nd Term 2 commences
Fri 25th Anzac Day Public Holiday
Mon 28th Whole School Assembly, 3pm

Eucharist Family Night, 6:30pm–7:30pm
( Parent/s and Sacramental Candidates)

Tue 29th State Swimming

School Advisory Board Committee Members

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