Dear Families

What a wonderful start to the year it has been! In such a short space of time we have already had three opportunities to gather as a whole school. Two have been to celebrate Mass, the first to mark the beginning of the school year and this morning to celebrate Ash Wednesday. Both these Masses were very special thanks to the reverent and prayerful manner in which our children participated. The celebration of Mass is such an important aspect of our school and witnessing the way the teachers prepare the children and the way the children then respond in such a joyous and respectful way makes me very proud. The third of course was our whole school assembly on Monday afternoon a feature of which was the presentation of the ‘Senior Six’ caps to our grade six children. This was a very special moment for our grade six children who pledged to take on the responsibilities that come with such an important role. I am really looking forward to working closely with these children and their teachers as we move through the year and all indications are, even at this early stage, that they are going to be great leaders and a great team to work with. Congratulations to all our ‘Senior Sixes 2016’.

Over the coming weeks teachers will be conducting either Parent Information Evenings or Parent Teacher Interviews. As was the case last year the teachers will have the freedom to choose which of these two options to convey information regarding programs, practices and policies they have in planned for this year. These sessions are designed to inform parents of matters relative to class programs and practices and should not be seen as a forum to discuss school policy and organisation. I ask that parents who have concerns with such matters come and see me directly or they can make contact with their representative on the School Advisory Board. While on the subject of The School Advisory Board, nomination forms will be distributed to parents of children in Foundation, Grade One, Grade Three and Grade Five tomorrow, so please be on the lookout for this and the attached information. Representatives from Grades Two, Four and Six will remain on the Board to serve their second and final year of their current term.

Finally, don’t forget the Family Fish’n’Chip Night tonight from 5.00pm till about 8.00pm. It is always a great way to start the year with very little fuss required - just something to eat, something to drink and perhaps something to sit on. Too easy! Hope to see you all there.

CAPTAINS FOR TERM 1 2016

School Captain: Julia P and Marcus S
Vice Captains: Lucinda Ss and Jude R
House Captains: Mercy Milla D and Indigo I
Lourdes Abby C and Archie L
Jacob F and Trinity J
Mackillop Jonas S and Flynn W
Carmel Sam B and Mimosa Ge
Class Captains: Bonnie L, Grace P, Remi W and Maddie S

God Bless you all and have great week, Mark

ENHANCING OUR CATHOLIC IDENTITY

PROJECT COMPASSION

Running through the six weeks of Lent each year, Project Compassion is an extraordinary, ongoing demonstration of the faith, love and generosity of caring supporters, all in the name of justice and peace. It is the lifeblood of Caritas Australia; without it, we could not do the vital work we do. In Project Compassion millions are raised to help the world's poorest communities. Thank you to all our generous supporters who participate and showed they believe in a more just world.

The theme for Project Compassion 2016 is “Learning More Creating Change”
This year’s Project Compassion theme celebrates Caritas Australia’s work in bringing the power of education, training and shared knowledge to empower vulnerable communities to realise their hopes for peace, equality, dignity and justice.

See more at http://www.nd.edu/news/media-releases/2016/008#sthas.ONVv5hXA.dpuf

“Together we can empower the world’s poorest people with the opportunity to learn, grow and create change”

....Bishop Greg O’Kelly

LOURDES HOUSE FEAST DAY CELEBRATION
Lourdes House is named in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes. This week the Catholic Church honours the feast day of Our Lady of Lourdes. We remember when Mary the Mother of Jesus appeared to St Bernadotte in a grotto outside of the French town on Lourdes. This spot is now a holy place of pilgrimage.

To celebrate the feast day, children in Lourdes House are invited to wear an item of red clothing this Friday, and to have their House Photograph taken. They will have the opportunity to share some fruit platters together, and enjoy an extended recess break!

The house photo will be framed, and placed on display in the corridor outside Mr Soldani’s office.

SACRAMENTAL DATES FOR 2016
Below are the proposed Sacramental dates for 2016:
Sacramental Enrolment Evenings at St Mary’s Basilica; Tuesday 8th March at 7pm and Wednesday 16th March at 7pm. The guest Speaker will be Paul Spence.

First Eucharist:
- Saturday 21st May at 6:00pm
- Saturday 28th May at 6:00pm
First Reconciliation:
- Tuesday 9th August at 5:30pm
 Confirmation:
- Friday 14th October at 5:30pm
- Sunday 16th October at 11:00am

FISH ‘N’ CHIP NIGHT
Tonight, Wednesday, 10th February, our now famous Fish ‘N’ Chip Night will take place on our school oval starting at around 5pm. Despite the title please feel free to bring any type of food you like, however, be mindful that it is Ash Wednesday. This is a great way to start the year and a chance to catch up and meet other families in a fun and relaxed way. Hope to see you all there on Wednesday.

Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund (CSEF)
The CSEF will ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities. CSEF will be provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible for CSEF. The allowance will be paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions or sporting activities for the benefit of your child.

The annual CSEF amount per primary student is $125.

CSEF is applicable for all year levels not just those that attend a school camp. This can be used to cover items that are part of school fees such as Excursion Levy, Swimming Levy, sporting Activities and Camp.

Contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from www.education.vic.gov.au/csef. For more information about the CSEF visit www.education.vic.gov.au/csef or contact Nola at the school office.

SCHOOL CLOSURE DAY
Tuesday 23rd February will be a School Closure/Student Free Day. St Robert’s staff will join staff from other Catholic Primary Schools for a Professional Development Day - ‘The Big Write’.
BEGINNING OF THE YEAR CLAS INFORMATION EVENINGS/INTERVIEWS
At the beginning of each year, parents are offered opportunities to meet with class teachers to access and exchange further information about classrooms and students. This year a range of opportunities is on offer:
Grades 1, 2 & 3 teachers will be holding ‘Information Evenings’, for the parents of children in their classes. Please see ‘dates to remember’ section of this newsletter to confirm dates. A letter from your child’s teacher should also arrive in a timely manner, inviting you to the relevant meeting.
Grades 4, 5 & 6 will be offering ‘Parent/Teacher Conversations’ on Monday 15th February and Tuesday 16th February. Parents are able to book an interview time online, following the information sent home this week. Foundation teachers will be offering ‘Transition Interviews’ on Tuesday 15th March and Wednesday 16th March. Parents will be invited to meet with their child’s teacher, to review the transition-to-school process, and exchange any relevant information. Information about how to book interview times online will be sent home at a later date.

As always, we look forward to speaking to all parents about their children and the year ahead, and remain strongly committed to building the best possible home/school partnerships with the families in our school community.

SCHOOL BANKING 2016
Welcome back to another year of school banking and a big welcome to all our new bankers. The school banking day will again be Tuesday morning. If all students could place their books in the grey banking bag in their classroom by 9am please. Please remember to always fill in the deposit slip with name, student number and amount. School banking is a great contribution to the fundraising efforts of the school. New bankers always welcome – an account can easily be opened at your local CBA branch. Thanks again for your support – banking chicks Corinne and Michelle

NCFNC JUNIOR NETBALL UNDER 9 & UNDER 11 TEAMS
NCFNC is looking for any netball players who are wanting to play club level junior netball in Under 9 or Under 11 teams this 2016 Winter Season. Club netball is the next step for juniors who have basic netball skills from Net Set Go programs or playing in a school or friend team. Our Under 9 & Under 11 teams do not trial; players will be placed in squads that aim to offer not just the development of their netball skills, but also make their experience enjoyable. Attempts to place players with school friends and girls of similar skills will be made where possible. All games will be played in the GFNL Winter Season competition with games played on TUESDAY NIGHTS at Kardinia Park Netball Courts. Season runs from April to September including some of school holidays. First game will be TUESDAY 12 APRIL 2016. All training will commence WEDNESDAY 2 MARCH 2016 and every WEDNESDAY after that for duration of season; times to be confirmed and subject to court availability and coaches discretion. The first 2 weeks will be group training sessions by age group to see everyone’s skills and we will then finalise teams after 2 weeks.

IS COMING…
CareMonkey is an online program used to collect and maintain medical information, emergency contacts and permission forms from members and employees. The process of collecting the information is automated, enabling organisations to easily follow up and remind members, so administrators no longer have to do it manually.

More detailed information will be delivered shortly

56th BAY CITY SWIMMING CLUBS GEELONG ALL SCHOOLS CARNIVAL
SUNDAY 28th FEBRUARY 2016
Warm up from 11.00am - 11.45am Starts at 12 noon 50 metre outdoor pool. If you are in grade 3 or above, a highly skilled and proficient swimming looking for a challenge and great experience then this swimming carnival may be for you. If you are interested please contact Fiona Fitzgerald for more information on the listed email address. FionaF@ggs.vic.edu.au. If you require additional information then go to: http://vic.swimming.org.au/visageimages/Competitions/Flyers_for_meets/2016/Feb/Geelong/2016_Geelong_All_Schools_FINAL.pdf
STUDENT AWARDS
Congratulations to the following students who have received certificates this week for outstanding work.

Gr F CH  Ava and Sam
Gr F LM  Gisele and Matthew
Gr 1KH  Pearl and Jack
Gr 1YE  Douglas and Orla
Gr 2CC  Alice and Jaziah
Gr 2KT  Harrison and Charlie
Gr 3NF  Xavier and Meg
Gr 3JB  John and Isabella C
Gr 4MA  Zachary, Hugh and Amelia
Gr 4MM  Lachlan A and Zoe
Gr 5/6DB  Ben P and Abbey
Gr 5/6PB  Brandon and Nicholas D
Gr 5/6SP  Lucy W and Flynn
Gr 5/6LO  Georgia R and Marcus

BIRTHDAYS
The St Robert’s School community wish to congratulate the following children on the celebration of their birthday throughout January and this week. Happy Birthday to:
12th February  Cooper H
14th February  Charlotte D
16th February  Zachary B

UNIFORM SHOP
The Uniform Shop is looking for volunteers to help on Wednesday mornings from 8:45 to 9:30am.

DATES TO REMEMBER

MARCH
Fri 4th  Geelong Swimming Carnival, Kardinia Pool
Tues 8th  Sacramental Enrolment Evening 1, 7pm at St Mary’s Basilica
Wed 9th  District Swimming – Qualifying students
Fri 11th  St Robert’s Cross Country, Gr 4-6 East Gardens
Mon 14th  Labor Day Public Holiday
Tues 15th  Foundation Transition Interviews
Wed 16th  Sacramental Enrolment Evening 2, 7pm at St Mary’s Basilica
Foundation Transition Interviews
Thur 17th  St Patrick’s Day
Thur 24th  Holy Thursday, Last day of Term

UNIFORM SHOP
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DATES TO REMEMBER

FEBRUARY
Please check as some dates have changed
Wed 10th  Ash Wednesday, Mass 9:15am St Robert’s Chapel, Gr 1 to 6
Fish ‘N Chip Night
Mon 15th  Oval Resurfacing
Year 3 Information Evening 5:30pm
Gr 4-6 Parent Teacher Conversations 3:40pm to 6:00pm
Tues 16th  Gr 4-6 Parent Teacher Conversations 3:40pm to 6:00pm
Wed 17th  Grade 2 Information Session 6:00pm
Fri 19th  St Robert’s Athletic Trials Gr 4-6
Landy field, all students
Sun 21st  Staff Commissioning Mass, 11am
Tues 23rd  Staff In-service Day – The Big Write – School closure/Student Free Day

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