Dear Families

As I am writing this I am looking out my window wondering “Will it or won’t it rain tonight? It may surprise some that our track record over recent years for our “Fish ‘n’ Chip” night has been quite good and I am prepared to go out on a limb and say that tonight there will be no rain and conditions will be just right for a fun time for all who can make it. At the very worst it might be a little cooler but even so, a nice feed of hot fish and chips will be a perfect fit. Our Fish ‘n’ Chip nights are always a great start to the year so I hope I get a chance to see you all here.

In our last newsletter I made mention of the presentation of our Senior Six caps to our year six students. It was a big moment for these children who have been waiting a long time to take on those responsibilities as leaders of the school. As well as the responsibilities associated with our Senior Six program all our grade six students will be given the opportunity to take on the various captaincy roles that are on offer. These children take on the added responsibility as School, Class and House Captains and will be called upon at various stages throughout the term to help the teachers and students in matters related to sport, class and school activities. I have already had dealings with most of our captains and commend them on the manner in which they have taken on and gone about their “captains” business. I look forward to working closely with them all for the remainder of the term.

FAMILY COMMUNITY GARDEN PROJECT

With many classes having their own planter boxes closer to their rooms and others moving towards, that we have been left with some unused garden beds, four to be exact, in our garden enclosure. The idea of establishing a community garden has been on my agenda for a little while now and I see the current situation as an ideal opportunity to test the waters as to whether there is enough interest from families to move ahead with the concept. My idea is a simple one. If any family is interested in taking control of a garden bed or part of a garden bed, you might like to share your plot with one or two other families, just register your interest with me and I will assign it to you. From then on you can come up with the kids and plant whatever you like, nurture your crop and cultivate when ready. The children can access their family plot to weed and water at play time and lunch times, before or after school and families are free to come up on the weekends to work their plots if they want. I see this as a great opportunity for families who may not have gardens at home to create some really worthwhile family time. Depending on the amount of interest we may need to rotate through interested families on a seasonal basis. Please let me know if you are interested. Grab me on the yard in the mornings or pop into the office at any time. “First In, First Served!”

NUDE FOOD

Thank you everyone for taking up the challenge of reducing the amount of wrappings and waste in our school lunches. I have noticed a significant reduction in the amount of rubbish and food waste in the bins and am most grateful, as are our current Senior Six bin monitors whose job is made so much easier not having to empty the bins as often as they have done in the past. Keep up the great work. Our environment will be better for your effort.

God Bless you all and have a nice week, Mark.
ENHANCING OUR CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Ash Wednesday – Lenten Preparation

Ash Wednesday, today, 18th February, marks the beginning of the Season of Lent, the forty days of preparation for Easter. It is a season of penance, reflection, and fasting which prepares us for Christ's Resurrection on Easter Sunday, through which we attain redemption. It mirrors Jesus’ preparation for his ministry, while in the desert, he spent 40 days in prayer and fasting. As Catholics, we are called to experience our own desert, in which we also enter into a period of prayer and fasting while we reflect on how we can be more Christ-like.

Following the example of the Ninevites, who did penance in sackcloth and ashes, our foreheads are marked with ashes to humble our hearts and remind us that life passes away on Earth. We remember this when we are told: "Remember, Man is dust, and unto dust you shall return." Ashes are a symbol of penance made sacramental by the blessing of the Church, and they help us develop a spirit of humility and sacrifice. The ashes are made from the blessed palms used in the Palm Sunday celebration of the previous year. The ashes are christened with Holy Water and are scented by exposure to incense. While the ashes symbolize penance and contrition, they are also a reminder that God is gracious and merciful to those who call on Him with repentant hearts. His Divine mercy is of utmost importance during the season of Lent, and the Church calls on us to seek that mercy during the entire Lenten season with reflection, prayer and penance. Through receiving the ashes we acknowledge we are part of the community of Jesus and a community that is called to bring life to others.

PROJECT COMPASSION

Project Compassion 2015 will commence on Wednesday 18th February 2015- Ash Wednesday. This year the focus is on Food for Life and it looks at the world’s global food issues. Each class has their own Project Compassion collection box and we ask that you please bring along your spare change. The boxes will be emptied at the end of each week. We invite you to google Project Compassion 2015 and as a family, watch some short presentations. We will also keep you informed of our weekly totals. Thank you- Grades 1JB and 1YE.

TERM 1 SCHOOL FEE ACCOUNTS

School Fee accounts are distributed in the fifth week of term in terms 1, 2 & 3. Whilst there are two billings in Term 1 there is no billing in Term 4. The second account for Term 1 will come home next Wednesday and payment is due by 27th March 2015.

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).

HEALTH ALERT

We have received notification of an outbreak of impetigo (school sores) in the Junior grades. If your child has any suspicious looking sores that do not seem to be healing, it is highly likely that they have contracted ‘school sores’. Treatment is available from doctors and pharmacies. Children may attend school as soon as treatment has commenced, providing every school sore is covered with a dressing. The sores are often to be found on legs, arms and hands. We ask all families to be vigilant, and treat any signs of impetigo promptly – they are considered highly contagious!
EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE
From 1st January 2015, the government will provide extra financial support directly to Victoria’s neediest schools instead of providing the Education Maintenance Allowance directly to parents. Parents will not be able to apply for the Education Maintenance Allowance in 2015. The money will be allocated to eligible schools through schools’ core operational funding mechanism, with the neediest schools receiving the most funding. Not all schools will be receiving funding in 2015. This change to how the money is distributed was required by the funding agreement with the Commonwealth Government to make sure Victorian schools receive increased funding that will benefit all students and, in particular, those from schools with concentrated disadvantage.

PARENTS & FRIENDS ASSOCIATION UPDATE
The P&F would like to thank those families who have returned their expression of interest form to be included in the St Robert’s Business Directory. This form will be sent home with students this week for the benefit of new families and anyone who may have missed out on receiving the information at the end of last year. If you have any questions please contact Donna Carroll on 0408 476 276 or Jackie Caracella on 0411 716 009.

A reminder that the next P&F meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 24th February at 7.30pm in the school staffroom – All welcome.

SHROVE TUESDAY – GRADE TWO
Yesterday it was Shrove Tuesday. Henri cooked us pancakes and we ate them, they were delicious. I had a pancake, it was plain. In the olden days on Shrove Tuesday, people gave up all their rich foods like flour, butter and baking mixture. Henri flew all the way from France to Victoria to cook our pancakes they were so yum and scrumptious. By Emily Matthews

Tuesday was Pancake Tuesday. Henri, who is Mr Soldani’s cousin, came all the way from France just to make pancakes. They were delicious. I love pancakes, thank you for my pancakes. By Monteya Criscione

STUDENT AWARDS
Congratulations to the following students who have received certificates this week for outstanding work.

Gr 3NF Lachlan Jaques
Gr 3NF Chloe Bryant
Gr 4MA Emily Brooks
Gr 4MA Livi Favre
Gr 4MM Mark Kim
Gr 4MM Olivia Bryant
Gr 5/6DB Byron Cosic
Gr 5/6DB Scarlett Sinclair
Gr 5/6PB Eleanor Maskell
Gr 5/6PB Phoebe Markovic
Gr 5/6PB Oliver Baric
Gr 5/6LO Millie Watson
Gr 5/6LO Paddy Harris
Gr 5/6SP Meg Courtney
Gr 5/6SP Seamus Ryan

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

19th February
- Jakob Kristiansen
- Hannah Kristiansen
- Sara Kristiansen

20th February
- Eliza Hannagan

21st February
- Elizabeth Afford
- Maya Lazzaro
- Summer Madden
- Laura Sanigorski

22nd February
- Benjamin Costa

HOCKEY PLAYERS WANTED
Players wanted for Newtown Hockey Club, season starting April. Teams for junior and senior players aged 4 to 70 - boys & girls, men & women. All welcome. No experience necessary.
Enquiries - Claire Barnes, 0417 015130, email abarnes@pipeline.com.au, www.newtownhockeyclub.com.au

JUNIOR FOOTBALL AND NETBALL REGISTRATION DAY FOR SEASON 2015
Sunday 22nd February 2015
10am to 2pm at the clubrooms
For further details please contact:

Football:
- Heather Harris : 0438 393 599
  hdnharris@bigpond.com.au
- Brian Mudge : 0447 770 648
  club@newtownchilwell.com.au

Netball:
- Wendy Castle: wendy.e.castle@hotmail.com.au

Friday Night U9 & U11 Netball Coordinator -
Lee Doherty 0430 636 600 or
lee.doherty@bigpond.com

Auskick: Greg Wood 0412 026 477

DATES TO REMEMBER
FEBRUARY
Wed 18th Fish ‘N’ Chip Night 5pm to 7pm
Fri 20th & Excursion to Parliament House
& Mon 23rd Grades 5 & 6 (Please note change
of date to Monday 23rd)
Fri 27th St Robert’s Athletic Trials Gr 4 -6
Landy field, all students

MARCH
Fri 6th Division Swimming Qualifying
students
Mon 9th Labor Day-Public Holiday
Tues 10th Sacramental Enrolment Evening 1
Fri 13th St Robert’s Cross Country, Gr 4-6
Eastern Gardens, all students
Thurs 19th Sacramental Enrolment Evening 2
Fri 27th Term 1 concludes

APRIL
Frid 3rd Good Friday
Sat 4th Easter Saturday
Sun 5th Easter Sunday
Mon 13th Term 2 commences

Details of training commencement for both Junior Football and Netball are available on our club website
www.newtownchilwellfc.sportingpulse.net

St Joseph’s Registration Day is Sunday 22nd February for Junior Football, Little League, Auskick and Netball is on at our Clubrooms; Drew Reserve, Hilltop Street, Herne Hill from 10am until 3pm. Apparel will also be able to be ordered on this day. This option may be easier for families.
Alternatively you are now able to register online for all football, if you played last year you will receive an email from AFL Barwon with a link.
Netball contact Fiona 0417.485.545
Football contact Ann-Marie 0413.906.399

School Advisory Board Committee Members
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frkd@stmarysgeelong.com.au

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