Dear Parents and Friends of our School Community

We are proud to be a Catholic school. With our attention to developing the whole person, we know that we are preparing today’s children to tackle tomorrow's world with empathy and wisdom, with reflection and action. This is not just self-congratulatory. We know that the child is a whole being; a child's mind cannot be separated from his or her spirituality. To integrate the spiritual with the secular is the essence of our work.

When I was travelling and visiting schools in the north east of America two years ago, I saw a sign on a school’s entrance:

"Be it known to all who enter here that Christ is the reason for this school. He is the unseen but ever present teacher in its classrooms. He is the model of its faculty and the inspiration of its students."

In no uncertain terms, it tells students the prime reason for attending that school. It reminds parents and community members that they have chosen well. It allows teachers to integrate their faith in all that they do. Together, we are all walking on holy ground.

If we let a day go by without remembering this, without making it part of our daily lives- as students, teachers, parents, and staff members- we are missing out on Christ, “the reason for [our] hope” (1 Peter 3:15).

During Catholic Schools Week, we will be reflecting on these important parts of our work. We embrace the opportunities to connect with our partners, you, the parents. Last night there was a special Support Evening for Kindergarten parents. We rotated through three groups, listening and talking about the growing responsibilities and expectations of a Kindergarten students, understanding the ways that you can work with us to build reading and writing skills and being shown some important foundational numeracy skills. Thank you to Mrs Lovat, Mrs Introna and Mr Joyce for their presentations.

Tonight, we are gathering as a staff to meet new parents in the ‘secret garden’ between 5.30 and 6.30pm. Light refreshments will be shared after I introduce the staff. I am looking forward to the informal conversations, as I come to know this community better.

This week, we also have some special professional learning and reflection time for staff on understanding the joy of the Gospels, as shared by Pope Francis in his document, Evangelii Gaudium (“The Joy of the Gospel”). He calls on Catholics to go out into the world, sharing their faith "with enthusiasm and vitality" by being living examples of joy, love and charity. During Catholic Schools Week, it is a fitting time to re-energize our mission in this way.

Next Saturday evening, at St Patrick’s Parish Mass, the students will be actively participating as part of their celebration of being part of the St Patrick’s Parish. This is the prelude to our whole school celebration of St Patrick’s Day on Monday. A Liturgy, a shared picnic and ‘shamrock games’ are planned at the Rotary Oval. It will no doubt be a wonderful conclusion to a week of remembering who we are and what we stand for, and we’d love you to join us for the Liturgy at 11.15am in the Church.

Mrs Frances Robertson
Principal
Catholic Schools Week

Catholic schools, like St Patrick’s, are noted for their faith-based education, academic excellence, and commitment to service.

This week we celebrate these dimensions of our schools in many different ways.

The launch of the Little Boxes of Hope: an initiative of the Year 10 Student Leadership Team, where we are all encouraged to reach out to those who are down on their luck. These boxes will be in each Homeroom allowing all of us to contribute practical items for homeless people. Students have researched what is most practical for someone on the move and these include items such as: warm socks and gloves, small torches and small toiletries. All members of the St Patrick’s community are welcome to contribute. The filled boxes will go to the local St Vincent de Paul, and the homeless shelters in Canberra and Wagga.

This year’s musical Oliver! has been formally launched, with scripts now in students’ hands and rehearsals underway. There is singing in the hallways.

There has been the launch of the ‘thermometer’ for Project Compassion. Our aim is to get to the top of the thermometer by the end of Lent to support the work of Caritas.

Staff are attending the Catholic Schools Expo for the Canberra Goulburn Diocese.

Students are actively participating in the Parish/School Mass on Saturday evening.

First Kinder Support Evening has been held.

Year 7 Family Gathering was held with staff on Wednesday evening.

Participation in the National Action Day against Bullying and Violence with Healthy relationship workshops with Kinder and a presentation by Damian Kennedy from the NRL to share actions against bullying for students in each of the campuses. This is a return visit by Damian. He is an excellent role model and we welcome his presentations.

From the AP’s Desk: Communication with the school

Attached to this newsletter is our policy and procedures regarding parents and teachers communicating with each other via email. This document was developed in consultation with the CEO and staff. Comments from parents were also considered. I would like to draw your attention to a few points.

- In some situations a teacher may request an interview or phone call, rather than email. This depends on the nature of the inquiry.

- If you are receiving school correspondence at an email address that restricts such communication (SPAM) please provide us with a more suitable address.

- If you would like to send a group email to school parents, this can only be approved by the Principal. Normally such information is put in the newsletter.

- Staff do not have open access to the parent’s email list.

Teachers are encouraged to reply to communication within 24-48 hours. This may be as simple as saying "Thank you for your email...we are looking into the situation...".

I hope these procedures facilitate better communication between school and home.
World Day of Prayer

Last Friday, The World Day of Prayer was celebrated with a focus on Egypt. Year 9 students attended. Congratulations and thank you to Andreas Nassar, Laura Cooke, Meg Pearce, Grace Nesbitt, Sarah Milford, Ellie Bowe and Emily Mills who took a key role in the prayer service.

Mrs Rashida Nuradin, our Visual Arts teacher, was the guest speaker.

It was wonderful to gain an insight into the cultural and family background of Mrs Nuradin and have a local expert present to speak with us. With her diverse background, a key message shared was the great need for peace and acceptance in our world. It was a special occasion to realise that all around the world people were coming together in prayer and awareness of Egypt.

Paul Mackay
Religious Education Co-Ordinator

SWAG Awards

Students Who Achieve Greatness

Student Welfare Officer Role Report

Over the past two years a variety of programs have been conducted. One of the most important activities has been the Seasons for Growth Program. This program assists students who have suffered a loss in their lives through a death in the family or a divorce. Each program runs for 8 sessions with a final celebration session where parents and carers are invited. Last year the program involved twenty students coming from Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 4. It is hoped that this wonderful program will continue in 2014.

Another important aspect of the role has been as the facilitator of the secondary Student Representative Council (SRC). This body meets regularly to plan a variety of activities on behalf of the students. The Student Welfare Officer assists the SRC members to develop a plan of action for the school year and to oversee the implementation of the plan.

Another function for the Student Welfare Officer has been meeting with students or parents who have faced with illness or loss and to provide a bridge between the school and home to make communication more effective in these difficult situations. Some of these meetings are held in the home.

A new initiative last year was the formation of small groups in the primary department to offer extension activities in mathematical thinking for students. These groups were highly successful and students enjoyed the variety of problem solving challenges provided each session. The aim was to boost self esteem and confidence.

An iRead program was introduced in the secondary department where opportunities were given for selected students to improve their reading and literacy skills over a ten week period. The Student Welfare Officer was part of this program to enable students to have one-on-one contact with a tutor to develop these important skills. The iRead program will run again this year.

After two years in the role of Student Welfare Officer I have decided to relinquish the position and concentrate on my part-time teaching role in the school. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time in this role and have felt privileged to work with students to improve their personal and social skills in a variety of contexts. If you have any suggestions for ways to improve the chaplaincy role please let me or Mrs Robertson know as soon as possible.

Kevin Dunne
Student Welfare Officer

Food and Learning

Lately, I have been reading articles that look at the relationship between what teenagers eat and how they learn. Since their bodies are still growing and developing, good nutrition during the teen years is crucial. I know that coming up with healthy and interesting foods for adolescents to eat both at school and at home can be trying at times.

A website I have found useful is www.eatforhealth.gov.au. Teenagers typically eat only what tastes good or what's within reach. Tempt hungry children with healthy food choices. What they see is what they will eat. Some suggestions include: raw veggies like snow peas, mushrooms, raw beans, carrots and celery sticks, pikelets, cheese scones, cheese on toast, vegetable soup, low fat instant noodles, yoghurt and canned fruit, wholegrain cereal or milk, baked beans or spaghetti, warm air popped popcorn, ½ English muffin with ham, cheese and pineapple. Let’s aim for ‘brain food’!

Pam Fletcher
Secondary Coordinator

Snowy Mountains Interschool’s Equestrian Competition 2014

The Snowy Mountains Interschool’s Equestrian Competition is being held at the Station Resort, Jindabyne from 1 to 4 May 2014. The cost is $100 per rider for the whole event and $40 per rider single day. Entries opened 10 March 5pm and close Wednesday 23 April at 5pm. Spaces for each event are limited and are filling fast. Please visit the website:


Please note: St Patrick’s Parish School is not able to provide teacher supervision for this competition and parents must assume responsibility for their child for the days of the competition. Parents need to be aware that they must sign a waiver from the organisers of the event. This waiver means that parents take personal responsibility for any accident, illness and injury that may result from their child participating in this equestrian competition. The Catholic Education Office insurers do not provide cover for students who enter equestrian events.
Vale Sister Val McKenna

It was with some sadness that we were informed over the weekend that another former member of the St Patrick's family, Sister Val McKenna, died quietly.

In the booklet called *Brigidine Memories*, she recalled having an explosion of students as a result of the Snowy Mountains Scheme in 1954 and 1955, and in her second year here, she had 132 Year 3 and Year 4 students in the one class. She rather drolly explained that ‘the room was rather crowded’. In fact, she stood on the portable blackboard’s ledge as there was no floor space to stand. ESL was another challenge, as many of the students either did not speak English or were the children of migrants. Another of her classes was housed on the stage of the Hall.

The challenges continued after 1956 until 1958 when she taught Secondary across a range of subjects, often with an English/German dictionary in her hand in order to communicate.

We are indebted to these pioneering women and their commitment to Catholic education.

*Vale Sister Val McKenna.*

Year 6: Caring for their environment

Cooma show: THANK YOU

Former student, Geffrey Keighley was back in town for show day. He has just finished his medical degree and is working at Manley Hospital. He is still proud to be called a St Patrick's boy!

Thank you for the wonderful support for the P&F’s catering for the Cooma Show. There were boxes of scones, trays of cakes, plates of slices and bags of sliced up onions ready for the BBQ and Devonshire teas. It was fantastic to see so many parents and staff rolling up their sleeved for the benefit of the school. In the end, we ran out of cups and had sold all the food. It was a long, but very rewarding day. At the next P&F meeting the tally for the day will be announced.

A special thank you goes to Tammy Byrne who coordinated the day's activities and to Ruby Curtis for leading the cleaning team on Friday and Marjorie Revelant for organising all the food.

Former student, Geffrey Keighley was back in town for show day. He has just finished his medical degree and is working at Manley Hospital. He is still proud to be called a St Patrick's boy!

Thank you for the wonderful support for the P&F’s catering for the Cooma Show. There were boxes of scones, trays of cakes, plates of slices and bags of sliced up onions ready for the BBQ and Devonshire teas. It was fantastic to see so many parents and staff rolling up their sleeved for the benefit of the school. In the end, we ran out of cups and had sold all the food. It was a long, but very rewarding day. At the next P&F meeting the tally for the day will be announced.

A special thank you goes to Tammy Byrne who coordinated the day's activities and to Ruby Curtis for leading the cleaning team on Friday and Marjorie Revelant for organising all the food.
Cooma Rodeo

Jess Sergo, Keeley White, Bailey Rogers and Will Shingles were amongst a number of our St Patrick’s students competing in the Cooma Rodeo a few weeks ago.

Book Club
The next issue of Book Club orders are to be handed to the classroom teacher by Wednesday 19 March. If anyone is interested in taking over Book Club ordering, please contact Amanda Knott on mobile 0408 203 450.

Have you looked at the calendar on the school’s website?

and coming events....

**Thursday 13 March**
Year 3 Parish Mass 10.00 am
NRL Anti-bullying Talk 11.00 am

**Wednesday 19 March**
Fly the Flag Car Rally

**Monday 17 March**
St Patrick’s Day Liturgy 12.00 pm

**Thursday 20 March**
Parish Council Meeting 6.00 pm

**Friday 21 March**
Year 9/10 ArtExpress Excursion

St Patrick’s students’ success at 2014 Dalgety Show

St Patrick’s was well represented at the 2014 Dalgety Show on Sunday 2 March. Below is a summary of the results achieved by students from infants through to secondary (in alphabetical order) across a broad spectrum of events. Of particular merit was the students’ eagerness to enter a team in the children’s tug-o-war. Their organization to make this happen and their support and encouragement of each other was a true reflection of the St Pat’s school community. In addition to the below mentioned students, other participants in the tug-o-war were Grace Maxwell, Elle McGufficke, Olave Wilkinson, Jack Kleven, River Wilkinson, Hudson Laird and Kadee Laird.

Furthermore, ex St Pat’s student Daniel Rowson was named the 2014 Dalgety Show Rural Achiever, following on from the success of other ex St Pat’s students Brittany Jackson and Geoffrey Keighley.

James Cahill:
1st as a member of the Berridale cricket team in the Team’s Challenge

Abby Douch:
1st Rider 6 and under 9 years
Reserve Champion Rider under 11 years
2nd Show Hunter Pony 12hh and not exceeding 12.2hh
1st Show Hunter Pony 13.2hh and not exceeding 14hh
1st Childs Show Hunter Pony
Reserve Champion Show Hunter Pony
1st Ridden APSB Pony
1st Ridden Part Welsh pony
Reserve Champion All Breeds Pony
1st Team of Four Riders under 17 years

Harriet Greville:
1st Junior Novelty fruit/vegetable creation
2nd Junior Australian natives arrangement
2nd Iced cupcakes
1st 3D creation year 3 & 4
1st craft year 3 & 4
1st Publication, year 3
1st photography under 10 "Where I Live"
1st photography under 10 "My family"
2nd photography under 10 "My family"
2nd photography under 10 "My favourite animal"

Emily Quodling:
4th 45cm show jump
3rd Rider 9 & under 11 years
1st Pony Hack 12.2hh and not exceeding 13hh
3rd Child’s Pony Hack

Emmilee Reid
1st Carrots 3 Long Open Section
1st Strawberries ½ Doz Open Section
2nd Potatoes 4 White Skin Open Section
2nd Onions 3 White Open Section
2nd overall Junior Fruit and Vegetable Section
3rd in Rider Class for over 11 and under 13’s
1st in Team of 4 Riders

Brittany Zollinger:
1st Child’s Hack 15hh and not exceeding 16hh
2nd Novice Hack 15hh and not exceeding 16hh
3rd Hunter Hack 15hh and not exceeding 16hh

Results:

Emelia Greville:
1st Junior Australian natives arrangement
2nd Junior Novelty fruit/vegetable creation
1st decorated biscuits
1st 3D creation kindergarten
1st craft kindergarten
1st publication kindergarten
2nd original drawing kindergarten
2nd photography under 10 “My family”

Shelley Kleven:
2nd rider 9 yrs and under 11
3rd led ASSP pony
2nd ridden ASSP pony
2nd ridden pure Welsh
2nd Show Hunter Pony 13.0hh and not exceeding 13.2hh
4th Childs Show Hunter Pony

Molly Norris:
3rd Rider 7 & under 9 years
1st Novice Pony Hack
3rd Open pony Hack 12hh and not exceeding 12.2hh

Mitchell Reid:
1st Potatoes (Red Skin) Open Section
1st Carrots (3 Long) Junior Section
2nd Climbing Beans Open Section
2nd Sweet Corn 3 cobs Open Section
1st overall Junior Fruit and Vegetable Section

Maddy Stott:
3rd X rails show jump
3rd Ridden ANSA
3rd Open Galloway Hack
3rd Childs Galloway Hack

Also competing in the horse events were Jessie Norris and Maegan McGraw who just missed out on ribbons amongst strong classes.
Primary Environmental Garden Group
Welcome to the new year of 2014!

We are beginning the **Primary Environmental Garden Group**. We already have at least 24 members, over only 2 days.

However, we have no equipment to work with. If you have any spare or second-hand equipment that we can use, please give it to Mr Introna. It will make a big difference!

Here is a list of some of the things we need: garden gloves, digging forks or shovels, any seedlings, manure etc. It would be much appreciated!

Written by Georgia Manning and Nowell Utrush
Primary Environmental Group

---

St Patrick’s Day Celebrations:
Monday 17th March 2014

As part of our St Patrick’s Parish School tradition, we are having a whole school celebration on Monday 17th March which will involve a range of activities.

The plan for the day is as follows:

11:15am -12:00pm: K-10 Liturgy, all parents welcome

12:10 pm: Walk to Rotary oval for lunch. Lucky Shamrock draw

1:00pm: Students sorted into House groups and have a ‘round robin’ of activities

2:30pm: K-2 walk back to school

3:00pm: 3-10 walk back to school

**Student Requirements for the day**

Wear sports uniform…or go green… absolutely green if they wish!

Hat, water bottle and sunscreen

Own lunch, which will be eaten at Rotary oval

Ice blocks will be provided for all students at lunchtime

If it is wet weather we will still have the Liturgy, but will not go to Rotary Oval.
**Parent and Friends Association**

The recent P&F meeting was a very relaxed and informative hour. For the upcoming year we have the following events planned, and we encourage your participation at these events, as it is a great way to become involved with the school and meet new people.

- K-6 Student Disco - Friday 28 March – Uniting Church Hall – Soho Street 6.00 pm – 7.30 pm
- General Meeting - Tuesday 1 April – 7.00pm Primary Library
- Mothers Day & Fathers Day Stalls
- Catering at Cooma Races - 6 December

We are also intending on having a Winter Social Gathering, which in the past has always been a lot of fun.

Each week in the newsletter we have a section which informs of our upcoming events and contributions which are made to the school.

We have a very active executive team and are always open to new ideas and events for our school parental community. Please feel free to contact any one of them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Karen McGufficke</th>
<th><a href="mailto:mkmcgufficke@bigpond.com">mkmcgufficke@bigpond.com</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Tammy Byrne</td>
<td><a href="mailto:coldfact@bigpond.com">coldfact@bigpond.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Melinda Barrett</td>
<td><a href="mailto:melinda.barrett@cg.catholic.edu.au">melinda.barrett@cg.catholic.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Kris Laird</td>
<td><a href="mailto:krislaird@gmail.com">krislaird@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Upcoming events for your calendars;**

**K-6 Disco Friday 28 March**
Uniting Church Hall – Soho Street
6.00 pm – 7.30 pm

**P&F meeting**
Tuesday 1 April
7.00 pm Primary Library
Please come along to this meeting as it is a great opportunity to find out what is happening in our school.

**Oliver! is off and running!**
Head Lice

Head lice infestations are a common occurrence, particularly in primary schools. About 23% of primary students have head lice at any one time. One of the common myths about head lice is that they live in bedding. This is not true as they do not survive long when they are off the human head.

Head lice treatment involves more than just putting special conditioner on the hair. It is important to comb the hair, with a fine toothed comb, once treated so that all of the eggs/lice can be removed.

The following website provides a good guide to procedures for removing lice.


NSW Public Schools provide the following suggestions to reduce the spread of head lice:

- regularly check your children's hair
- teach older children to check their own hair
- tie back and braid long hair
- keep a fine tooth head lice comb in the bathroom and encourage all family members to use it when they wash their hair.

Reflection

1ST Week of Lent

“Men and women of all times and all places desire a full and beautiful life... a life... that can mature and grow to fullness.”

Pope Francis

Canteen News

Volunteers Thursday 13 March  Caroline Blyton
Friday 14 March  Grant Pascoe
Wednesday 19 March  Jackie Bitar

MEAL DEAL FRIDAY - Due to popular demand BUMPER BURGERS are offered again this week.

The choices are Chicken Schnitzel, fish fillet or chickpea and sunflower seeds burger with salad/mayo or humus, with a frozen fruit cup for $5.00.

A reminder: I have Sushi available on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday until sold out.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Carolyn Hely
Canteen Manager

2nd Hand Uniform Stall

Saturday 15 March 10.30 am to 12.00 pm. NB: the shed at the bottom of the Infant’s playing field can be accessed via the laneway beside/behind the Infants campus.
Getting kids to school ON TIME!

Missing a few minutes each day may not seem like a big deal but your child may be missing more than you realise if he or she is continually late.

“Come on Jack! Get a move on. School starts in ten minutes and you’re not even dressed yet!”

If this scenario sounds familiar then you are not alone. Anecdotal evidence suggests that getting children to school or pre school on time can be one of the most difficult tasks for parents. Missing a few minutes each day may not seem like a big deal but your child may be missing more than you realise if he or she is continually late. Current research shows that mornings for most children are the most productive time of the day with 10.00am the peak period for productivity. When children arrive late and take time to settle as they inevitably do precious minutes are lost. A child who is fifteen minutes late to school each day misses one week of school every year.

How can you get your dawdling kids out the door without yelling yourself hoarse? Here are a few techniques and ideas for you to try to get your punctually-challenged children to school on time:

✓ Establish a morning routine.

Make sure your children know what is expected of them in the morning, and also what you will do. Resist nagging but be willing to take them to school even if they haven’t fully prepared for the day.

✓ Identify and remove distractions such as television.

If the children are regular watchers before school change the routine and keep the TV off. It should only be turned on when children are completely ready for school.

✓ Teach some of the basics of time management.

The average adult underestimates by about 25 per cent the time it takes to do various jobs. Make sure you have realistic time estimates and stop packing so much into the time you allocate. Encourage older children to estimate how long it takes to do activities such as getting ready in the morning. Then they can measure the time taken to do these tasks and compare their estimates with real time.

✓ Arrive at school ten minutes early.

Plan to arrive at school early rather than be there on time. This idea works well for perpetual latecomers, whether young or old.

✓ Model a good routine.

It’s pointless expecting children to be organised in the morning if you are in a muddle yourself. Set a good example by being as methodical as possible and avoid sleeping in unless your children are so organised that they get you breakfast in bed. And pigs might fly as well!

Published by Michael Grose
Presentations. All rights reserved.
For more ideas, support and advice for all your parenting challenges visit: www.parentingideas.com.au

PO Box 167 Balnarring VIC 3926 P. 03 5983 1798 F. 03 5983 1722 E. office@parentingideas.com.au


FREE two day workshop and information sessions for PARENTS/CARERS of school age students on the autism spectrum

Workshop: 2014NSWPC3 Location: Cooma

The Positive Partnerships initiatives have been developed and delivered by Partnerships between Education and the Autism Community (PEAC) and funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, through the Helping Children with Autism package.

What will you learn?
As a result of participating in the workshops and information sessions as parents/carers you will gain:
- a greater understanding of the impact of autism on your child, both at school and at home
- knowledge about how to develop effective parent, school and teacher partnerships
- specific strategies on how to:
  - advocate for your child
  - support your child’s participation at school
  - develop an awareness of ongoing learning needs
- information about your local school system’s processes
- opportunities to network and share strategies with other parents/carers and key community members
- opportunities for discussion around a range of topics relevant to students with an ASD and their families

Some key community representatives that support families living with autism will be identified and invited to participate in the workshop with a view to supporting a community focus beyond the workshop.

Workshop details
Venue: Cooma Ex-Service Club
106 Vale Street, Cooma NSW 2630

When: Two day workshop – Tuesday 18 & Wednesday 19 March 2014
Day 1: 9.00 a.m - 4.30 p.m (Registration from 8.15am)
Day 2: 9.00 a.m - 3.30 p.m

Registration opens Wednesday 5 February 2014, and closes 2 days prior.

Registration may stay open until one day before the workshop if spaces are still available, but we strongly recommend that you register as soon as possible.
You will receive a confirmation of your registration.
Online registrations preferred: please go to the website www.positivepartnerships.com.au.

Only complete the following form if you do not have access to the Internet and fax or mail to:
Fax: 02 9451 9661; Mail: Positive Partnerships, ASPECT, PO Box 361, Forestville NSW 2087

Positive Partnerships Info Line number: 1300 881 971

“The Positive Partnerships initiative is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education through the Helping Children with Autism Package. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government or the Australian Government Department of Education.”

Caritas-Project Compassion and Giving in Lent

Lent, the period of forty days before Holy Week is a time of renewal, reflection, and growth. Catholics are urged during this time to make greater effort in prayer, to adopt acts of personal discipline and to give in some way to those who are in need. These three actions can be seen in all major world religions and their practice is an important part of spiritual growth.

Our new Pope- Francis has been noted for his very strong communication of the joy that is found in faith. The joy found, in the teachings of Jesus. This is a deep joy of the heart. It may seem unlikely but joy springs from prayer, self-denial and giving.

“Running through 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.” (Caritas website)

**Project Compassion 2014**

Project Compassion 2014 carries Jesus’ commitment for all for a life of abundance: “I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.”

When reflecting on this verse, Pope Francis said: “Men and women of all times and all places desire a full and beautiful life... a life that is not threatened by death but that can mature and grow to its fullness.”

Through Lent our school would like to encourage families and students alike to support Project Compassion with making a small donation each week. This donation would be given in classrooms or homerooms. Students will be informed about the work of Caritas and the support their contributions will make to communities around the world.

Full information and projects of Caritas can be found on line:
http://www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion/about

**To encourage our young to give and care for others is of vital importance. Please support our school effort during this time of Lent.**
Communication between Parents and the School

The purpose of this document is to serve as a general guide for ensuring effective communication from parents to teachers, staff and administrators. Communication refers to both the sending and receiving of information, such as email and notes, and verbal communications such as telephone conversations and face-to-face meetings. In order to ensure a successful exchange of information, it is important that all parties follow a few key principles.

Good communication between teachers and parents doesn't just happen. It requires special skills on our part; skills such as good listening techniques, tact, kindness, consideration, empathy, enthusiasm, and an understanding of parent-child relationships.

Our beliefs:
- All families have strengths.
- Parents are learners too.
- Parents have important perspectives about their children.
- Family members care about each other.
- Cultural differences are both valid and valuable.
- Many family forms exist and are legitimate.

Therefore, we endeavour to:
- Recognise that schools and homes have shared goals.
- Respect caregivers and communicate that respect.
- Be positive!

We have mutual responsibilities to:

Maintain respectful and open communication
- Always use a respectful and polite tone
- Request, don't demand
- Be ready not just to provide information, but to listen to observations and perspectives
- Enter the exchange with an open mind and assume a shared best interest for the child
- Be prepared to work collaboratively to solve problems

Maintain confidentiality
- Recognise that confidentiality may limit information that can be shared from school to parents, including consequences for other students' behaviours

Take time to respond to communications
- Make every effort to respond within 24-48 hours to parent communications, with the understanding that the teaching day sometimes precludes immediate responses
- Take the time to collect information before responding

Recognise that
- Parents provide the school with an email address that can be used for school communication (teacher correspondence, newsletter, notes...)
- Parents need to inform the school of any change to their email address. This can be done by emailing office.stpatscooma@cg.catholic.edu.au
- Parents can choose to email teachers if they wish. The teachers' cg email is a work email and as such is available to the community.
- Teachers can choose to have a meeting over sensitive issues that are raised in an email
- Parents can email absentee notes to teachers. These emails need to clearly identify the name of the child and the parent with the date/s and reasons for absences.
- Whilst email is a convenient form of communication excessive use of emails can reduce productivity, damage trust and become a form of harassment.
- Whatever is written in an email could potentially be used in legal proceedings.

NAPLAN

In 2014 the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 will be held during the 13-15 May. If your son or daughter has special needs, or requires special provisions during their classroom learning, these will be provided during the NAPLAN testing. If you have any concerns regarding the support provided, please contact the relevant Learning Support teacher, Melinda Barrett (Primary) or Amanda Knott (Secondary).

If you wish to withdraw your son or daughter from all or some aspects of the NAPLAN testing you may do so. All withdrawals require a signed Parent/Carer Choice to Withdraw form. These forms are available from myself as NAPLAN Coordinator.

The NSW Board of Studies has requested that these forms be completed and returned to the school NAPLAN Coordinator.

NAPLAN Testing dates for 2014 are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuesday 13 May</th>
<th>Wednesday 14 May</th>
<th>Thursday 15 May</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language Conventions (Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation)</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Numeracy (Number, Algebra, function and pattern; Measurement, chance and data; and Space)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further general information about NAPLAN is available at http://www.nap.edu.au/

Stephanie Lovat
Curriculum Coordinator

School Board
Launch of Catholic School Parents Canberra & Goulburn Archdiocese

On 21 and 22 February 2014 Frances Robertson and Erika Statham had the privilege in attending the launch of the newly formed Archdiocesan Parent Body – ‘Catholic School Parents Canberra & Goulburn’ (CSPCG). Principals and Chairpersons from throughout our Archdiocese, Catholic Education Commission, Catholic Education Office representatives and Archbishop Christopher were in attendance.

The purpose of the forum was to inform participants of the representative parent bodies with which CSPCG affiliated, and to discuss and workshop ways in which the new body can effectively enhance parental engagement in our Catholic schools across our Archdiocese. Much of this has come about from the recent reform in education from a Federal Government level.

Guest speakers over those two days were:
Mr Tony O’Bryne – Chair of ‘Catholic School Parents Australia’ (CCSPA).
Ms Danielle Cronin – Executive Director of ‘Council Catholic School Parents NSW’ (CCSP).
Representatives from the Catholic Education Commission (CEC) and Catholic Education Office (CEO).

Some of the key principles that came out of this forum:

· The importance of all three stakeholders (child, parents and teachers) helping your child to reach their full potential. This process needs to be a reciprocal arrangement between all three parties.
· The valuable essence of a parent and what they can bring to the table in terms of collaboration and sharing information.
· Parental power and how this can influence changes in on-going reforms in education. We have witnessed this in the last 12 months.
· Parents need to be fully involved in their child’s education.
· Teachers need to promote and engage with parents and give them the ‘educational tools’ to enable them to assist in their child to reach their full potential.
· Teachers roles are changing in education, roles of family values and beliefs are changing, this is placing pressure on both areas.

The new forum will be made up of parent representatives from across our archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn. In the coming months, you will hear more information from our School Board on how St Patrick’s Parish School, Cooma will have the opportunity to be involved in this important initiative. Stay tuned!