Dear Parents, Staff and Students

Last week I attended the Annual Archdiocesan Principals’ Conference in Canberra and we were presented with a range of challenging and engaging speakers throughout the three days. One particular speaker was Dr Paul Sharkey, the Director of the CEO in Adelaide. Dr Sharkey’s presentation explored the development of the Catholic identity in schools and a particular statement resonated with many: “God is at the centre of everything that happens in a Catholic school. This is an easy sentence to write, a harder concept to draw and very interesting to put into practice”. This is a recurring theme throughout the many enrolment interviews I have done over recent months. Many of the parents interviewed indicate they want a “Catholic education for their child” whether they are Catholic or not and in explaining what this means in practice it is obvious that “God is at the centre of everything that happens at our school”, either through the faith instruction, the values emphasised or the relationships that are promoted, as just some examples.

Another speaker, Mrs Danielle Cronin, is the Executive Director of the Council of Catholic School Parents (CCSP). She spoke on the importance of schools partnering with parents to support learning and a report released in December 2012 reinforced this. The report was entitled Parental Engagement in Learning and Schooling: Lessons from Research and it examined the available evidence on the relative influence of home (and other non-school influences) and school on learning outcomes. It confirmed that positive parental engagement can and does significantly influence student academic attainment. A website developed by the CCSP for teachers and parents to support effective family, school and community partnerships is www.partners4learning.edu.au - well worth a visit. Another recommended site is www.schoolatoz.com.au which certainly provides lots of practical advice for primary and high school parents.

Kinderstart in full swing

Our Kindergarten 2014 students have been fully engaged in becoming familiar with basic school routines, both last week and this, as part of our Kinderstart program. Their enthusiasm has been infectious and in many cases it is a matter of “How many sleeps before I start at big school?” Our thanks go to Mrs Angie Introna and the many staff members who have facilitated this important adjustment to school life. The program certainly reduces a lot of the angst that is anticipated at the beginning of next year by the students and their parents.

School Camps for Year 9 and Stage 3

Our school camps program happens at this time of year for Year 9 and our Stage 3 students. Last week the Year 9 students spent 3 days in the Mimosa Rocks National Park facing challenges that developed teamwork, resilience and perseverance. These involved carrying packs, sleeping under the stars, building seaworthy rafts and trudging across many kilometers of coastal terrain. Congratulations to our students on the very positive reports that have come in from the accompanying staff and thanks to Mr Tim Lawley for organising such a unique experience.

By all accounts the Stage 3 students had a wonderful, but tiring, time at Birrigai and we look forward to a full account of their adventures in next week’s newsletter.

Well done Stage 3!

Visit to St Patrick’s by our Director, Mrs Moira Najdecki

Next Tuesday the Director of Catholic Education in the Canberra Goulburn Archdiocese, Mrs Moira Najdecki, will be visiting our school and we warmly welcome her to the school community. Mrs Najdecki will have the opportunity to tour the school, meet with staff and students and participate in a whole-school liturgy.

The Bazaar Fair is only a couple of sleeps away!

The tireless work of the organisers will come to fruition this Saturday with our Bazaar Fair being held in Centennial Park from 10 am. Come along and bring your family and friends to what promises to be a major highlight of the school calendar.

Don’t forget the Kinderstart BBQ tomorrow evening at 5 pm on the K-2 Campus.

Phil Stubbs
Principal
Year 9 Camp

Last week Year 9 travelled to Mimosa Rocks National Park north of Tathra for the annual Year 9 Expedition. This camp, in its third year, is a 'light' expedition where students are required to carry only their clothes, sleeping bags and some food and water each day. Tents, breakfast, dinner and equipment for the various activities are left at drop off points along the route so students don’t have to carry everything with them.

This year students experienced all four seasons, with sun, wind, cold, rain, thunder and hail during the three days. Students were required to cook all of their own meals, set up tents and bivvies (a tarp hung between two poles) to sleep in, build a raft and cross a river on it, swim across a lagoon and hike 21 kilometres over three days.

Students were also responsible for navigating, first aid and hygiene throughout the camp. All students who attended performed exceptionally well and worked brilliantly together. Respect and resiliency were two words that were spoken about before and during the camp and all students have demonstrated greater respect for one another and the environment, as well as showing resiliency to get through some very challenging situations. Congratulations Year 9 and well done. A very big thank you goes to Coastlife instructors Sven and Tom, teachers Mrs Moxon, Mrs Knott and Mr Suridge and to all of the students and parents who supported the camp.

Mr Lawley

ACT Netball Carnival

A team of young enthusiastic netball players travelled to Canberra on Sunday to compete in a carnival.

The weather was ideal for playing netball. We played 6 games which improved the skill level of all players. We won 4 games and lost 2. The last two games were the hardest as our team played older and stronger boys and girls. The team comprising of Oliver H, Zara, Amber, Leah, Tristan, Lachlan, Josie, Ivy and Miranda should be proud of how they played and their good sportsmanship.

Thank you to the parents for transporting us, scoring, managing, umpiring and spectating. Thank you to Mr Rogers for the ice blocks and to Mrs Moxon for organising everything. We had fun!

Lachlan and Ivy

Cooma Relay for Life

Thanks to the many St Patrick’s staff and students who supported the ‘Cancer Council’s Relay for Life’ over the past weekend. It was wonderful to have so much community support for such an important cause. Special thanks go to Emma Burt for organising the secondary students and to Mrs Hulley and Mrs Stacey for the supervision of students. A special mention goes to Stage 3 student Ursula Ronan, who was the youngest committee member for ‘Relay for Life’ and to Kindergarten student Ethan Stacey, for his encouragement of others to participate and for making a great effort over the 24 hour period. All those who participated will receive House points. If you would still like to make a donation, visit http://relay.cancercouncil.com.au/2013/cooma_2013/St-Patrick--s-Parish-School/371157 or send it to the office in an envelope marked ‘Cooma Relay for Life’ by Friday 1 November. Donations of $2 or more will be issued with a tax receipt, so please include your name, address and phone number.

Let’s all do what we can to fight back against cancer!

Mrs Fraser

Children’s Mission Mass

Last week, our Secondary and Primary school captains accompanied Mrs Mackay to the annual Children’s Mission Mass at St Christopher’s Cathedral in Canberra. The theme of the Mass was ‘I will build my Church’, and the point of gathering students from all over the Archdiocese was to encourage students to think more about those in need throughout the world, to take an active part in being global citizens who care about others and to support the work of mission through the solidarity of prayer. Students were encouraged to look around them and see Christ in others and to put prayer into action by being compassionate and generous with the gifts and talents they each have - not just for themselves, but also for the good of others.
Liturgy and Music Workshops

Last week, our Secondary students and our Primary choir participated in several music workshops led by a young singer/song-writer, Genevieve Bryant. Genevieve comes from Melbourne and is in our Archdiocese for five weeks, sharing her musical talent with many schools and Parishes.

Our school managed to have an extra helping of her as she was with the staff at the beginning of the term facilitating the Staff Spirituality Day. Genevieve has a degree in Music and post grad qualifications in Liturgy. She sings and plays piano and guitar and her experience in leading choirs, choral groups and organising ‘big events’ (like the coming Youth festival in Melbourne) is vast. Genevieve came with the NET team and so it was good to be able to re-kindle our association with them as well. Our students seemed to really enjoy the workshops, and by the end of Genevieve’s time with us, most were able to sing strongly and heartily. A greater understanding of the use and place of Liturgical music was also gained.

A Parish workshop on the last night demonstrated the breadth of Genevieve’s talents and as well as the diversity of her audiences.

Our Annual Awards Day

Our Annual Awards Day presentations are fast approaching with the K-6 Awards Day scheduled for Thursday 5 December and the 7-10 for Thursday 12 December. If you would like to make a donation toward either or both of these days, please forward to the school office. A receipt will be issued and all donors are acknowledged in the Award Day booklets. Thank you in anticipation of your support.

Non-uniform Day

On Friday 1 November, we will be having a non-uniform day. This is to support the organisation called Catholic Mission as they focus this year on the plight of those in the impoverished Church of Mongolia. Mongolia is the newest Christian Church in the world and the need is great, particularly amongst the children who endure severe extremes of cold, poverty and abandonment. It is part of the mission of the Church, which we as a Catholic school are immersed in, to support those in need. This support helps to raise amongst our students a global awareness of others as well as develop understanding, compassion and empathy. Our students are asked to support this cause with a gold coin donation.

BAZAAR FAIR

HELPERS NEEDED!

We are in desperate need of some more adult helpers for this weekend’s Bazaar Fair. This is one of the biggest fundraising events for our school. If you can spare an hour or so, please phone Erika on 0400 787 398.

Chook Lotto

Infants Chook Lotto Week 3

• Lucy Pope KG: for beautiful manners at swimming lessons.
• Bridget Stott 1P: for super work during French!
• Molly Norris1O: for effort during Numeracy Groups!

SCHOOL BOARD

Our School Board is seeking a new Board Member from our parental school community. The Board’s objectives are to provide an enhanced level of advice and support to the Principal, particularly in areas of positioning and decision making in areas of marketing and growing the school, along with enhancing the Board’s role, function and profile. If you would like to join a proactive, dynamic and innovative team please direct your interest via the School Office to Chairperson of the School Board, Erika Statham.

P&F NEWS

Welcome BBQ for 2014 Kinder Families

The P&F is hosting a BBQ tomorrow afternoon between 5.00 and 7.00pm at the infant campus to welcome our new kinder families. We would love to see lots of existing school families in attendance - so come along for a relaxed social evening. All you need to bring is a chair or picnic blanket.

Donations for BBQ - if you can donate any of the following please contact Marjorie on 0418 485229 - eggs, packets of dry coleslaw, frozen onion.

Bazaar Fair

Come along this Saturday for another great family day out at our bi annual Bazaar Fair. The committee has been working hard to organise a fun filled day. If you can spare an hour or two to assist on one of the stalls it would be appreciated. Please contact Erika on 0400787398. Thank you to all members of the committee for their hard work.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Bazaar Fair!
P&F Executive
Thursday 31 October
Kinderstart 1.30pm - 3pm

Friday 1 November
K-6 Swimming Program
‘Socktober’ uniform free day
Yr 10 White Card Course

Saturday 2 November
St Patrick’s Bazaar Fair 10am - 2pm

Tuesday 5 November
CEO Director’s Visit

Wednesday 6 November
Secondary Exams

Thursday 7 November
2P Parish Mass 10.00 am
K - 6 Sports Awards
Secondary Exams
School Board meeting 6.30pm

Friday 8 November
Secondary Exams
K-6 Swimming Program

Monday 11 November
Yr 10 RFS Cadet Program
Musica Viva – Kinder & Yr 8 Drama Students

Tuesday 12 November
Yr 7 SPOT Day 9 - 11am

Wednesday 13 November
MacKillop College Information Meeting
for parents of Yr 9 Students 5.30pm

Thursday 14 November
P&F Meeting 5pm

Friday 15 November
K-6 Swimming Program

Please refer to School website for more information
www.stpatscooma.nsw.edu.au

Canteen News

VOLUNTEERS
A special thank you to Katrina Joyce, Kim Kleven and Janine Hopkins for all your help with mini canteen at the Super 8s cricket. It could not have happened without you all!

Thursday 31 October
Tania Thornton

Friday 1 November
Grant Pascoe

Wednesday 6 November
VOLUNTEER NEEDED PLEASE (10.30am to 11.30am)

MEAL DEAL FRIDAY....2 NUGGETS/2 PARTY PIES/SAUCE and DRINK $5.00 OR VEGETABLE SUSHI/PLAIN CHOCOLATE FREDDO and DRINK FOR $5.00.THIS IS THE ONLY CHOICE AVAILABLE TO PRIMARY AND INFANTS, DUE TO FRIDAY TIMETABLE. If you have any queries regarding these choices please contact me through school before Friday.

Thank you for your continued support
Carolyn Hely
Canteen Manager

Around Town

* Cooma Little theatre is going to be performing “Once Upon a Witch”, a family pantomime which some of our students are involved in. It will be on the first 3 weekends in November and tickets are available for the Cooma Visitors Centre. A brilliant family show!

* Little Athletics Disco: Friday 1 November, theme Halloween. To be held at the Cooma Ex-services club from 6.00-8.30pm downstairs. Age is for K-6, cost is $5. Snacks & drinks available. Fully supervised. Any queries call Eileen on 0408216256 or 64525154.

* Cooma Feast of Festivals Weekend 1 - 3 November
Snowy Ride, Harmonies for Hope Concert, Australian National Busking championships, Cooma-Monaro Railways High Tea, Busking & Train Rides, Monaro Stitcher’s Quilt and Craft Fair, Motorfest, A Feast of Poetry, St Patricks Parish School Bazaar Fair, St Paul’s Anglican Church Garden Day, Cooma Combined Churches Men’s Breakfast, Beccy Cole Live in Concert and an evening at Roses Restaurant - dinner and dessert, and local artist, Vendulka Wichta, will perform. For more information on any of these events contact Cooma Visitors Centre or visit their website; www.visitcooma.com.au