Dear All,

Parent Night

As always it has been another busy week in our wonderful little school. I have seen Music, PE and Spanish lessons along with children being part of homework club, knitting and creative writing workshops. Children have been using our new surface pros in the upper years and 3/4 enjoyed an excursion to the Botanical Gardens today.

Thank you to the parents and friends who were able to come last Friday night for our Windsor Bowls Club social. Although the sport of Lawn Bowls was the real winner on the night, congratulations to Louisa Cameron, student, and Mark Jewell, parent, who were the winners of the Bowl Off. Thank you to Mrs Nicole Dwan (Clancy Yr1, Albie P) for her organisation and enthusiasm in bringing everyone together.

Staffing Announcement

We welcome back Mrs Deb Baratta in her role as finance secretary. Deb is a long serving member of staff who took some long service leave last year and announced her retirement. When Mrs Kirsten Carroll who was Deb’s replacement was able to secure a full time job in a college we were able to convince Deb that the best place for her would be back at St Mary of the Cross as our finance secretary. Deb will be in the office on Thursday and Friday if you wish to speak to her and Crystal Cooke will be our secretary across Monday to Thursday. Thank you for your understanding in the transition of staffing in our busy start to the year.

School Travel—The Survey Said...

As part of Council’s Active School Travel program, we have surveyed our students over a five day period to find out how they travel to school. The survey results are back and they show that 54% of students are currently driven to school. This year, our goal is to reduce this number and encourage more students to walk all or part of the way, cycle, scooter, carpool or take public transport to and from school. This will not only reduce traffic congestion at the school gate, but also improve road safety, create a cleaner environment, save money and improve our health and fitness!

How did you travel to school when you were a child? Nearly all of us would have walked, cycled or caught public transport. That trend has now reversed. Our goal for this year is to have many more students actively travelling to school – how can you actively travel this week?

Next Friday at the Windsor Park Carpark in Grafton Street, Cr David McLaughlin and some special guests will be walking with us for our first active school travel day. We will meet in the carpark at 8:15am to walk to school. Children who actively travel to school on the day will be able to get a stamp in their Active School Passport. As children walk to school more often on a Friday they can gain more stamps and gain prizes.

Planning on a Friday

Throughout Term One, you might find that there will be times when your child’s regular classroom teacher is out of class and working with an education consultant for a three hour block and there is an alternative teacher working with the class. As part of our efforts to enhance the learning progress of all of our students, teachers will be involved in collecting data about the current levels of our students and looking at best practice in planning and feedback. This planning time will allow us to plan more specifically for the learning needs of each of our students, and provide a baseline to measure student progress throughout the year. It is important to note that the normal learning program continues even when there is an alternative teacher in the classroom, as your child’s regular teacher plans the lessons that will take place during his/her absence from the whole group.

The BCE Learning and Teaching Framework provides us with a clear path to follow when organising learning opportunities for our students and we are very

Have a good week,
Matthew Beacroft
Dear Parents and Caregivers,

The Holy Door in St Peter’s Basilica (continued)

The new row of four panels highlight gospel stories of the mercy and forgiveness of God: First, the baptism of our Lord by St. John at the Jordan with the inscription, “You come to me?”. The second, the good shepherd finding of the list sheep: “To save what had been lost”. Third, the prodigal son asking forgiveness from his father: “Father I have sinned against Heaven and also you”. Forth, Jesus curing the paralytic, but first saying, “Your sins are forgiven”: “Take your mat and walk”.

The third row continues the same theme: First, the penitent woman washing the feet of Jesus in the home of Simon the Pharisee: “Her many sins are forgiven her”. Second, St Peter asking our Lord how many times must a person forgive and our Lord replying: “Seventy times seven”. Third, Peter weeping after he had just denied our Lord three times outside the home Caiphas the High Priest on Holy Thursday evening: “The Lord turned and looked at Peter”. Fourth, the crucifixion, with our Lord between the two thieves, and saying to the “good thief”, “Today you will be with me in paradise”.

The final row proclaims the Easter mystery and the birth of the Church: First St. Thomas inspecting the would marks of Jesus: “Happy are those who have believed”. Second, Jesus appearing to the apostles on Holy Thursday night, saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit”. Third, Jesus appearing to Saul (St. Paul) on the road to Damascus: “I am Jesus whom you are persecuting”. Finally, a picture of the Holy Father striking the Holy Door, “I stand at the door and knock”. In all, these scenes remind us of our call as pilgrims to enter the mystery of salvation and to pass from sin to grace, from separation to union with God, and from death to eternal life.

As we consider the holy door and particularly the recent Holy Year, our Lord stands at the door of our hearts knocking. We must open our hearts to Him and cross the threshold of hope, striving for holiness.

Have a peaceful week,
Dean Estreich
Assistant Principal Religious Education (APRE)
PASTORAL CARE CORNER
Sr Anne Cannon

Dear Parents,

We all know the value of friendship. As social beings, we can’t survive without it. Children who are able to form friendships when they start school are happier at school and also learn better. Friendships skills are generally developmental, but they don’t develop in isolation. Children acquire these skills when they play with their siblings and interact with children and adults outside their family. Parents can help children by teaching them sociable behaviours at home, being good role models and providing opportunities for children to play with each other in a variety of situations.

Michael Grose offers the following tips to help in this area.

1. Ask for what you want
Help children ask for what they want. It means they don’t throw tantrums, whinge, and sulk or expect parents to guess what’s on their minds. While we need to be patient with toddlers, we need also to give older children the chance and opportunity to ask for what they want, using the person’s name, eg “Mum, can I have a drink, please’. Don’t forget the ‘please’ and ‘thank you’, either. Learn to ignore shrugs and grunts and respond only when they ask properly. This is the basis of civil behaviour, as well as a basic human skill.

2. Sharing
Sharing is a basic social skill. Developmentally, very young children like to keep their possessions themselves. As they get older and move into Prep and beyond, the notion of sharing becomes a pre-requisite for playing with and forming relationships with others. Other children like to play and be with those who share their time, possessions and space with them. Sharing is the start of empathy as it shows sensitivity to other people’s feelings.

3. Holding a conversation
Holding conversations with others is a lifetime friendship skill. Conversations require self-disclosure, which can be challenging for some children. Good conversationalists give of themselves, but also take an interest in the person they are talking to. Many children forget that good conversations are two-way events, and tend to focus solely on themselves. Children within conversations need to learn to ask good or interesting questions; to take turns when speaking and to show you are listening by making eye contact and not interrupting. Again, remember to use the person’s name.

Parents often focus on the development of children’s academic skills and quite easily neglect the development of important social skills, which contribute so much to children’s happiness and wellbeing.

Mary MacKillop would say: “Be united in love, bear with one another, help one another and be generous with one another.”

Have a wonderful week, building love and friendship.

God bless
Sr Anne
School Pastoral Worker

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY is celebrated each year on 8 March, to highlight the value of women in our world. The theme this year is ‘Pledge for Parity’. We can all play our part by pledging to uphold the dignity and equality of women – from age 0 to 100 and beyond.

SISTERS OF ST JOSEPH CELEBRATIONS

The Sisters of St Joseph have been teaching in our school for 87 years. For about the first fifty years, they were the only teachers. Since then, we have had sisters involved in a variety of ways.

Currently, Sr Anne is our School Pastoral Worker. St Mary of the Cross MacKillop began the Sisters of St Joseph – the Josephites – in 1866 and on 19th March, at St Stephen’s Cathedral, at 10:30am, there will be a special Mass and celebration. Everyone is invited to attend. Please let the Office know if you are coming, for catering purposes.
HEALTHY LUNCHES
This is a much cheaper and more healthy option than the ‘ready-to-use’ version you can buy.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK - FLAVOURED POPCORN
Ingredients
I’m sure you could use ‘a pinch’ rather than try to measure ‘⅛ teaspoon’.

- ¼ cup unpopped corn
- ⅛ teaspoon cumin
- ⅛ teaspoon dried coriander
- ⅛ teaspoon curry powder

You can substitute for the flavours you like, eg delete all of the above and use ⅛ teaspoon each of chilli powder and grated lemon or lime zest, or replace all flavouring with 1 teaspoon sultanas or seeds, eg pepitas.

Method
1. Place the unpopped corn into a brown paper bag and fold the top of the bag over twice to seal in the corn.
2. Place in the microwave on high for 2½ to 3 minutes, or until you hear pauses of about 2 seconds between pops.
3. Allow to stand for 20 seconds and then carefully open the bag and pour into bowl.
4. Sprinkle with cumin, coriander and curry powder (or your own choice flavourings) and toss before serving.