



MASS TIMES: Saturday Vigil 6.00pm, Sunday 8.00am and 9.30am. All welcome!

2014 - Celebrating 35 years of Catholic Education

13th March 2014

DIARY DATES

Thurs/Friday 13-14 March

Year 6 Excursion to Canberra

Monday 17 March

PUPIL FREE DAY

Thursday 20 March

Munch & Crunch – Kinder

Friday 21 March

Cross Country Yrs 3-6

Tuesday 25 March

P & F Meeting, 7.30pm
All welcome

Stage 3 Girls Soccer Gala Day

Monday 7 April

School Photo Day

Tuesday 8 April

Yr 6 to attend
ANZAC Day ceremony

Thursday 10 April

Holy Week Liturgy
12.30pm

Friday 11 April

Last day of Term 1

Stage 3 Touch Gala Day
St Marys

Monday 28 April

Term 2 Commences

Sunday 1 June

School Fete

Thursday 11 September

Grandparents' Day

Mon/Tues 8 & 9 Sept

Creative Arts Expo

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff & Students,

Our Religious Education goal for 2014 is **“to better know the person of Jesus, by exploring scripture stories, and responding in a variety of ways.”** With this goal guiding us, our Religious Education Coordinator, Mrs Carole Day, includes reflections on scripture taken from curriculum units and the children’s learning. I invite you to take a few moments to read these reflections and discuss them with your children. Through the partnership of home and school, I pray that all children will come to know more about the scriptures and how they can provide guidance in their lives.



Last Sunday’s Gospel told us how Jesus was tested in the wilderness. Sin and temptation are the dominant themes of the readings for the first week of Lent. Indeed, they are a regular theme in the season of Lent. However, the scripture passages throughout the season allow us the opportunity to think again about these themes and perhaps reconsider some traditional understandings of them. The second reading from Paul ties the Genesis and Gospel readings together and injects the notion of sin. However, Paul makes it perfectly clear that the sin of Adam, though carrying great ramifications, pales in comparison to the extraordinary abundance of God’s LOVE that is expressed through Jesus Christ.

During this time of Lent, let us examine how we show love to help those less fortunate than ourselves. Is it in an action, through words or through prayer? I know there is at least one way in which we can help one another, and as Father Robert put it so well at the Ash Wednesday Mass...do it without boasting...as we walk humbly with our God.

God Bless,
Sue Veling
Principal



Working Bee

A big thankyou to everyone who turned up on Saturday for our first working bee of 2014, or who contributed in some way. So many families attended that all the jobs were completed before 12noon....and what a great job they did! Thank you to Melissa Moran (Isabella) for her plant advice and discounted plants from Flower Power; to Penrith City Council who provided 20 free native shrubs; to the P&F for providing the yummy morning tea (Kylie Newton); and to the following families & friends who helped transform the school grounds:



Kevin Houlihan (Bailey, Ethan, Amity); Brent Ruskin (Annabelle); Regina & Graham Hawkes (Alexander & Paige); Leanne & Peter Bennett (Olivia, Harrison, Jacob); Carly Eekman (Alyssa, Ava, Mason, Mia, Olivia); Julie, Steven & Jamiela Peksis; Glenn & Jessica Bradley-Labra (Isabella & Elijah); Eric Blazek (Keira & Mikayla); Mel Jones (Emma & Sophie); John McDonald (Alyssa); Gareth & Catherine Budge (Sarah, Kate, Erin); Kiery Pascoe and Isaac Lacey; Jeff & Fiona Boulous (Olivia); Troy Mathison; Julie Irvine, Michael Mifsud, and to any family who helped out but did not record their name.....

Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

Catholic Schools Week

Thank you to everyone who visited our OLOW Art Gallery & viewed the 30-second video clips prepared by Year 6 as part of Catholic Schools Week. The children enjoyed the activity and learnt lots about their selected Australian Artist and their art style. Maybe during the holidays a great excursion could be to the Art Gallery of NSW where the originals of all the paintings studied are displayed.

Quality Catholic Schools Survey

As in previous years, all Catholic schools in the Parramatta Diocese will participate in the Quality Catholic Schools Survey in 2014. This survey provides data from staff, parents and students about each school's cultural behaviour, relationships and learning community and assists to focus efforts for improvement by building on successes to date. From 18 March all OLOW staff, 60 randomly-selected parents and all Year 5 & 6 students will be asked to complete the on-line survey. Parents will have the choice of a paper or on-line survey. The survey will take about 20 minutes to complete.

A survey consultant, *Insight SRC*, manages the data collection. All survey data is kept strictly confidential and no individual can be identified by the school or the Catholic Education Office. Each school receives an information report at the end of May and uses the report to inform their future planning.

If you are selected to complete the survey, I would encourage your participation, as this will help our school to identify our strengths and areas in which we can focus our improvement. If you have any questions, please contact Mr Mifsud.

PUPIL FREE DAY - MONDAY 17 March /Extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU)

Our school numeracy goal is "to improve the learning for all students through an understanding of mathematical vocabulary and by engagement in rich tasks that stimulate thinking and reflection." For this to be achieved, as educators, we are continuously looking at ways to refine and improve our practice.

This year OLOW is embarking on a project called **Extending Mathematical Understanding** or **EMU** for short. The **EMU** Project is a research-based intervention program developed by senior lecturer in education at the Australian Catholic University, Dr Ann Gervasoni. The program draws upon learning from Dr Gervasoni's involvement in the Early Numeracy Research Project, a three-year research initiative commissioned by the Victorian Department of Education to develop a comprehensive program for improving numeracy levels in schools.

Assessment and data analysis is a key focus of the **EMU** program, which introduces a diagnostic assessment tool for schools to use, the **Mathematical Assessment Interview** or **MAI**. The **MAI** is a 30-40 minute one-on-one interview administered by each class teacher that features a number of numeracy-based activities. All Kindergarten and Year 1 students have now completed the interview and over the coming year, teachers will be conducting the interview on students in Years 2-6. The data from the **MAI** will help teachers identify exactly where the students are at and where they need to go. The project will also entail significant professional development for all teachers. This professional development will look intently at effective strategies to progress student learning in numeracy.



On Monday 17 March all teachers at OLOW will spend the day looking at the strategies needed to move students from one growth point to the next. This day is a pupil free day.

Creative Arts Expo

At the end of Term 3, OLOW will participate in a combined schools extravaganza staged at the Joan Sutherland Centre on 2 nights – 8 and 9 September. Our students will be part of a combined school choir and will also perform a school item based on the theme of "Journey". More information will follow once an audition and rehearsal schedule is organised.

ANZAC Day Service

Our school has been invited to participate in the Penrith City Council ANZAC Day service on Tuesday 8 April at the Penrith Paceway, Station Street, Penrith. The service commences at 10:45am and will conclude at 11:45am. All Year 6 students will attend this ceremony. OLOW has a proud tradition of participating in this event.

Grandparents' Day 2014

Please note in your diaries that Grandparents' Day this year will take place on Thursday 11 September 2014. All Grandparents and Grandparent figures are very welcome to join the students and staff for this very special celebration.

Punctuality

We ask families to appreciate that the morning learning session particularly between 8:45 and 10:45am is important in the context of the school day. This period is prime instructional time for teachers and is where important learning takes place. Please be mindful of student punctuality and its effect on learning.

School Attendance

Consistent attendance is vital in maintaining continuity in a child's education. If your child has to be absent from school due to sickness or pressing family circumstances, you are required to inform the school and state a reason for your child's absence. Families should send a note to the school on the child's return to school from leave. The teacher then records this absence in the class roll. The class roll is a legal register of student attendance for the year. If your child is unwell for a number of days (2 days or more) please notify the school by phone to inform of this situation. It is always necessary to send a note on the child's return to school.

The student school attendance legislation permits principals to grant leave for short periods relating to family travel. Families are required to make requests for such leave by writing to the Principal. Amazingly, if a child is absent from school for eight days each term for the extent of their seven years of Primary School they would have missed an entire year of school!

Parking

Parents, Carers & Friends are reminded NOT TO PARK in the staff/parish parking area off Troy Street. Children and parents access this area to walk to and from their parked cars. Children, as you know, are aware of cars reversing or maneuvering in that car park. We wish to avoid an accident so please obey the signs near the driveway. Also, please be considerate of each other when parking. Lengthy delays and traffic congestion in Troy Street is of great concern between 2:30-3:15pm. Drivers are asked to respect the shared use of the roads around the school to the benefit and safety of all.

Before School Supervision (Second notification)

At OLOW, supervision of students on the playground does not begin until 8:15am. We are still seeing a handful of students being dropped off at school before this time. You are asked to use the service provided by COSHC, which provides supervision for a small fee. **For the safety of students, all school gates will be unlocked at 8:15am from Term 2.**

Celebrations Of Learning OPEN CLASSROOMS

On Friday 28 March you are invited into the classrooms from 9:00-10:45am to join with your child/children and experience a morning of learning in a 21st century classroom.



School Photos

On Monday 7 April all students will have individual and grade photos taken as well as a 35th year celebration photo of all 380 children & staff. As in previous years, pre-paid envelopes will be sent home two-weeks prior to the date. Please ensure that the correct money is enclosed in the prepaid envelope, as no change will be given. Family photos are also available, and these envelopes will be available from the office. This year students will wear their **SPORTS UNIFORM** for the photos.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Scripture in the Classrooms:

Year 3 has just completed a Religious Education unit called 'Jesus Shares His Gifts'. Key to their learning is the Scripture passage where Jesus shares the parable of the talents. Many Scripture passages are shared with the students through the experience of 'story telling'. Below is the script of the story that was shared with the students as they reflected on the message being shared by Jesus.

Matthew 25: 14 – 30

This story comes from the Gospel according to Matthew. The Gospels are in the New Testament section of the Bible.

Jesus taught the people, not with books or computers, but with special stories, known as parables. This is one of them.

There was once a wealthy man who was about to go on a long journey.

Before leaving, the Master called his slaves and gave them responsibility for his riches.

To one slave, the Master gave five talents. In those days just one talent was worth a great deal of money.

To another slave he gave two talents.

And to the third slave he gave one talent.

Then the Master went away.

The slave who had received five talents immediately traded with them and made 5 more talents.

In the same way, the slave who had received two talents made two more talents.

But the slave who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

After a long time the master returned. He wanted to hear what the slaves had done with his money while he was away.

The one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master you gave me five talents, see I have made five more."

His master was delighted, "Well done, good slave; you have been very responsible with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things.

Come share your master's joy."

The one with the two talents also came forward saying, "Master you gave me two talents, see I have made two more."

His master was delighted, "Well done, good slave; you have been very responsible with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things.

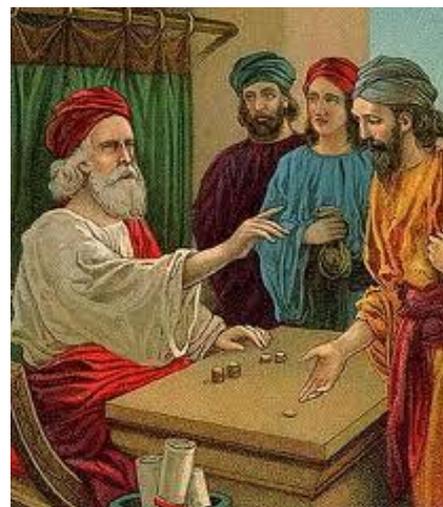
Come share your master's joy."

Then the one who had received one talent also came forward saying, "Master I knew you were a strict man, so I was afraid. I looked after your talent by hiding it in the ground.

Here it is.

But his master replied, "You lazy slave! You should have at least put my money in the bank!

Take the talent away from him; give it to the one with ten talents!"



The students reflected on the meaning of the parable and then reflected on their own talents. They created a mini sculpture of their talents. These are now on display in their learning space.

A beautiful job Year 3!



Project Compassion:

Last week the season of Lent began. It is a time of reflection and preparation for the joyful season of Easter. We prepare ourselves by reflecting on the changes we can make so we can be people who are life-giving...this is indeed the message Jesus has for us.

This theme of 'life' is the theme Caritas offers for Project Compassion this year...John 10:10 'I have come that you might have life and have it to the full'. We can all help to bring life and hope.

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." Over the coming weeks Project Compassion stories will be shared with you. The stories reflect on Caritas Australia's work towards making this desire for a full and beautiful life within the surroundings of home, a reality.



1st Week of Lent

Project Compassion, Week 1, brings you the story of Maristely.

An advocacy program in São Paulo, Brazil, enables *favela* (city slum) residents to gain legal deeds for their land, as well as securing access to basic services. A youth empowerment program is enabling young people from the *favelas*, like Maristely, to work for justice so that peace, rather than violence, rules the streets where they live.

Your donation to Caritas Australia's Project Compassion provides young people like Maristely with the opportunity to become leaders for justice. www.caritas.org.au



Photo: Erin Johnson



2nd Week of Lent

Project Compassion, Week 2, brings you the story of Deng.

For Deng in South Sudan, the cycle of poverty and disability was made worse with the civil war, which led him and his family to flee their village and live in the bush for many years. Deng and his family are rebuilding their lives through their participation in a Caritas Australia food security program.

Your donation to Project Compassion can help individuals like Deng to rebuild their lives post-conflict. www.caritas.org.au



Photo: Isabella Gomes

You are encouraged to visit the website and share with your children the many resources which are available. Last week the children were given a Project Compassion box to take home and visiting the website will help to make connections with giving to Project Compassion. Our school will be organising some activities that will assist in fundraising for Project Compassion.

Carole Day

Religious Education Coordinator

From Year 1

I strongly believe that all children should have a pet. Firstly, if it is the weekend you can play with them all day! For example, dogs can be playful and you can play fetch with them. Secondly, they can be so, so fun to play with. Also they can sleep on your bed with you! All children in the world should have an awesome pet.



By Leilahni

I strongly believe that all children should not have to own a pet. Firstly they can bite. For example snakes, dogs and cats can all bite. Secondly they can be ugly and they can scratch you. Also a spider can poison you, it's a very dangerous animal. Children should never own a pet.

By Heath

Who am I?



I have good eyesight. I catch my food in the night.
I live in a tree. I have big wings. I have big claws. I have a big beak to eat worms and other creepy crawlies. You might hear me go hoot in the night.
I am an owl!

By Scarlett

Who am I?

I have black, white and orange wings. I start with b. I also have three body parts. I love nectar but I do not like loud noises because I am very sensitive. Lots of the time you will see me in the sky or on a plant. I am a Monarch Butterfly.



By Keira

Year 1 Celebrate Pancake Tuesday



Brain Based Learning

Brain Based Learning or Education is the engagement of strategies based on how our brain works. It means that we can provide and give the best possible learning opportunities for each stage of a child's developing brain. Many believe that learning is all about achieving excellence in reading, writing and getting A's at school. However, to learn these skills, we may need to set a benchmark that our children must reach so that they can get ready to receive the necessary academic and extra-curricular skills.

The basic aspect of brain-based learning is linked to the basic structure of the brain and how it is connected or related to every possible domain of development, whether they are educational or creative. You may need to supply or develop suitable conditions early in the developmental stages of a child's life that eventually lead to a big window of opportunity.

Brain based learning is a lifelong process of utilising the most natural parameters of the brain and its natural choices or opportunities. To assist us in our understanding of Brain Based learning the following need to be considered:

Social Skills:

- *Making our children learn to be at ease with themselves and with others as well.*
- *Training them to interact and mix with other people in an easy going and sociable manner.*
- *Making them learn and understand the importance of contributing their time to socially important activities.*
- *Teaching our children the critical importance of communicating their emotions and feelings.*
- *Helping them to be friendly with other children.*
- *Train them to respect their time and how to allocate the available time for productive activities.*

Occupational Skills:

- *Training children to make them understand the basic relationship between what they learn today and how they can apply what they have learned to all future endeavours.*
- *Teaching specific skills and techniques that help them succeed in their life.*
- *Helping them build self-image, confidence and will power to get success in professional life.*
- *Training our children to identify opportunities and pursue them to reach important goals.*

Intellectual Skills:

- *Develop the character of self-initiation and self-actualisation to carry out all their assigned tasks and various activities.*
- *Teaching the power of listening and observation.*
- *Helping them to develop the skills of learning through experiences.*

Emotional Skills:

- *Training our children in the art of positive thinking.*
- *Making them understand the feelings and expressions of others and respect them.*
- *Help them cope and face stressful situations with courage.*
- *Teaching them the character of expectancy, optimism and vision.*
- *Teaching them to take responsibility for their own actions and behaviours.*

Brain based learning or education is a subtle mix of various parameters and attributes that gel together to make our children develop intellectual, academic, professional and personal skills.

Please contact me at mmifsud@parra.catholic.edu.au if you have any questions relating to the **OLOWCURRICULUMSPOT**.

Michael

SPORTS NEWS

Swimming News

Congratulations to the children who represented OLOW and the Nepean Zone at the Diocesan Swimming carnival on Friday, February 28th. Cheered on by a supportive band of family and friends, all members of our swim team gave their best and were wonderful representatives of our school.

Well done to Keisha, Alyssa, Shae, Laura, Abby, Olivia, Claire, Tully, Brock, Jake, Kenny and Jerry on your efforts and sportsmanship.

Brock, Alyssa and Keisha will compete in individual events at the MacKillop trials on March 28th at Homebush. Laura and Shae will join the girls in the senior relay as well. Congratulations to all of these swimmers and especially to Keisha Chilmaid who was the Senior Girls Runner-up.



NSWCPS Mackillop Softball Team

Congratulations to Aimee Wagner for making the NSWCPS MacKillop Softball team. Aimee will play at NSW PSSA state carnival later in the year. We wish you all the best and look forward to hearing how you went. Well done!

GENERAL INFORMATION AND REMINDERS

CANTEEN NEWS

Crunchy Munchy Café Meal Deals \$ 4.50

fortnight starting Monday 10th March

Meal Deal 1

Egg & Lettuce Sandwich, Water Buddies, Fresh Fruit Salad

Meal Deal 2

5 Chicken Nuggets, Water Buddies, Frozen Juice Cup

Both Meal Deals are \$ 4.50

OLOW Fete 2014

ATTENTION! **Market Stall Holders**

The OLOW School Fete
will be held on
Sunday 1st June.

If you are interested in
booking a Stall for this
event

Please contact Kylie Newton

The stall sites are 3m x 3m and will be
\$50 + a donated gift to the value of \$50 to be used
on our Chocolate Wheel.

COMMUNITY NEWS

McCARTHY CATHOLIC COLLEGE - Enrolling now for 2015

Open Day: Sunday 23rd March 2014

Time: 9.30am to 11.30am

Meet the Principal, staff and students Tours of the College facilities Trade Training Centre information Enrolment packages available

Enquiries: Mrs Sharon Clarke - 4735 3211 Website: www.mccarthyemuplains.catholic.edu.au 75 Mackellar Street, Emu Plains

Caroline Chisholm College, Glenmore Park provides Catholic Education for girls in Years 7 – 12

Enrolling now for 2015. Applications close 11 April, 2015.

For further information contact the College on 4737 5500.

Bereavement Support Program

CatholicCare Solo Parent Ministry is holding its second fortnightly Bereavement Support Group Session on Tuesday 18th March, for those whose spouse or long term partner has died. The topic for this Session is "Images and Frameworks for Understanding Grief". Venue: 51-59 Allawah St, Blacktown, from 10.00am – 12pm, cost \$5.00. This is an opportunity to gain some information about the grieving process and to support each other during this most difficult and painful time. Details and Registration: soloparentministry@ccss.org.au or Ph. 99330205.