



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

2014 - Celebrating 35 years of Catholic Education

4th December 2014

DIARY DATES

Thursday 4 December
Celebration of Reconciliation 7.00-8.00pm

Monday 8 December
8.45 Celebration of Learning Award Assembly

Tuesday 9 December
Year 6 Farewell Mass, 7pm

Friday 12 December
9.15am End of Year School Mass and Morning Tea

ICE CREAM DAY
Year 6 Social Night, 7.00pm

Wednesday 17 December
Last day of Term
2nd Rite of Reconciliation for Advent. 7.30pm

Tues/Wed 27/28 January
STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAYS
Students in Yrs 1-6 to attend Mathematical Interview Assessment at appointed times.

Thursday 29 January
Years 1-6 Resume

Tues-Fri 29/30 January
Kinder testing - literacy & numeracy

Monday 2 February
Kinder commence 8.50am to 1.25pm

Monday 9 February
Kinder begin full time

Dear Parent, Carers, Students & Friends,

This is our final Newsletter for 2014. As we come to the end of our 35th year, we have much to be thankful for at Our Lady of the Way.



Thank you to our beautiful children. Each day the children at Our Lady of the Way bring great joy to one another and to their teachers. It is a privilege to work with children who are so enthusiastic about their learning, caring for one another and eager to give their very best.

Thank you to the staff. Here at Our Lady of the Way, we are blessed to have a great team of teachers, assistants and support staff. I wish parents were lucky enough to see 'behind the scenes' work that takes place each and every day – This group of people go above and beyond their duty and your children are lucky to be in the care of this special team. In a special way I would like to acknowledge the staff who are leaving this year –Miss Colyer, Mrs Morgan and Mr Harper. We thank them for their contributions to our school and we ask God to continue to guide them as they move to new ways of serving Him. We also send our best wishes to Mrs Walsh as she commences a period of maternity leave.

Thank you to Father Wim, Father P.J. and the OLOW Parish. The constant care, guidance and support we receive is a great source of encouragement for all the staff in what we do. Our school exists solely to support the parish in its mission of bringing Christ to His children.

Thank you to our Families – It is a great privilege to join with families in continuing their children's education here at Our Lady of the Way during their school years. We celebrate parents as the first educators of their children, and we thank you for entrusting your children's educational care to us. In a special way, I acknowledge those families who are leaving us this year. Thank you for the support you have given us.

As we close the 2014 school year, I offer my personal thanks to all who have assisted me throughout my first year at Our Lady of the Way. It is a great privilege to be the principal of this wonderful school, made all the easier by working within the great community that is OLOW, Emu Plains.

On behalf of all the staff, may I wish each family a peace filled Christmas and a safe holiday break. May the joy of the newborn Jesus bring you much happiness.

God Bless,

Mrs Sue Veling
Principal



ADVENT

Last weekend we celebrated the First Sunday of Advent, and in doing so we move into a new liturgical year. We give thanks for the blessings of the year just gone and begin with the joy of waiting and preparing for the coming of the Christ child.

Advent is preparation time for the coming of Christ at Christmas, when we are invited to accept Christ, not only into the world, but into our personal lives. Too often our preparations are tied up with getting the decorations ready, the presents, the food, the family's social calendar. Now let's look at this in another way:

Decorations – Let us decorate ourselves with thoughts for those around us; what can I decorate another's life with? What colour and light can I bring to others?

Presents – Let us be present to those around us. Can we give someone the gift of our presence – some time doing something for them, or just taking time to talk rather than rushing off to buy something else?

Food – Have we prepared ourselves for the life-giving eternal food of receiving Christ in the Eucharist this Christmas? This food has the cheapest cost we will spend – but the greatest nourishment.

Social Calendar – In amongst the family dinners and parties have we set aside time to party with Christ? Will we be attending Mass each Sunday of Advent to get ready for Christmas?

Journeying with Christ is a life-long journey that leads to joy and peace. And so, in these four weeks of Advent let us take this journey with Christ first, and worry about the consumerism second.

Christmas Concert

We had an amazing Christmas Concert on Monday night led by Andrew Chinn. Thank you to staff and students for your efforts to make our Christmas Concert a success! In particular, I want to mention Mrs Day who was instrumental in all the planning and preparation. Thank you to the great audience of parents, grandparents and friends. Another great example of our strong OLOW community. Merry Christmas!



End of Year Reports

Tomorrow your child will be bringing home their end of year report. In the envelope there is also a letter explaining the A-E grading system used in Years 1-6. Please take the time to read through the report with your child, discussing their successes and their goals for 2015.

Year 5 parents - You will need to keep these reports handy, as they are required for high school enrolments in 2015.

Year 4 & 6 parents - Included in the envelope is your child's *Religious Literacy Assessment* completed last term.

Teacher Interviews - Interviews are available for any parent who has concerns about any aspect of their child's report. Please make an appointment to see your child's class teacher.

Road Safety Reminder

We have a dedicated **drop off zone** before school in Troy Street.

The sign reads: **No Parking – 8:00am-9:30am SCHOOL DAYS**

It has been noted that parents are actually parking in this area and moving away from the car. A "No Parking" sign means you cannot park, but you can drop off or pick up passengers or goods without leaving your vehicle (i.e. you must be within three metres of your vehicle). You must attend to your business promptly (within two minutes of stopping your vehicle.) The fine for this offence is \$173 and loss of 2 demerit points.



School Captains for 2015

It is with great pleasure that we announce our school captains for 2015.

Dominic Sagun, Jessica Daley, Amber Dempsey, Noah Panczyk.

During our Thanksgiving Mass on Friday 12 December, Harrison McDonald and Erin Dargan will formally handover the 'keys' to our new leaders with a blessing from Father P.J.



New Bag Flaps for 2015

As part of our drive to keep students safe at all times, the P&F have introduced new bag flaps for our existing and new school bags. They will be fluoro yellow with the school's logo printed on them. This gives high visibility at all times. The new flaps just zip onto the school bags. More details to follow later.

Changes to Winter Uniform for Boys and Girls from 2015

As mentioned in previous newsletters, there have been some minor changes to the winter uniforms in consultation with the P&F.

For boys – long sleeved shirts and long pants are to be worn in winter with no option to wear shorts or short-sleeved shirts.

For the girls - black tights will be worn with the winter tunic with no option of white socks.

These changes will take effect in 2015.

School Survey

On Monday, the annual school survey will be sent home so you can help us evaluate the past year and plan for 2015. This will go out as a Google form. Please take the time to complete the survey and return it to school by Friday 12th December.

MONDAY - End of Year Awards

Just a reminder that the end of year awards will be distributed at the morning assembly on Monday 8th December using the following categories:

- ★ Love of Learning Award
- ★ Mary MacKillop Award
- ★ Most Improved Award
- ★ Positive Attitude Towards Learning Award
- ★ Music Award
- ★ Japanese Award

YEAR-END AWARDS

All parents and friends are warmly invited to attend this ceremony.

Individual Numeracy Assessments 2015 for Year 1-6

The first two days of school in 2015 will be **Staff Development Days** – Tuesday 27th and Wednesday 28th January. Staff will be using these days to assess children using a one-on-one numeracy interview. Each test goes for a minimum of 30 minutes.

An on-line booking form will be available next week. Students will come to school for their allocated time. They can wear casual clothes. Those students who miss out will be able to complete the test with a teacher at a later date.

School begins for * Years 1-6 students on Thursday 29th January 2015.

School begins for * Kindergarten students on Monday 2nd February 2015 8:45am – 1:25pm

*** Kindergarten students on Monday 9th February 2015 full day**

Please note: Children starting Kindergarten in 2015 have a different testing regime. Please refer to the information received at Orientation.

Afternoon Safety

In the afternoon, some children have started to wait on Forbes and Troy Street to be picked up by parents as they pass by. This has never been the practice at OLOW. All students must wait outside the office until their parent parks and comes into the grounds. This is to keep our children safe at all times. Please do not make any other arrangements with your child that puts them at risk of danger.

Executive Director's SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

Every year, the Executive Director of Schools, Greg Whitby, invites students all over the Diocese of Parramatta to participate in the Executive Director's Summer Reading Challenge.

An avid reader himself, Greg said reading provides students with the opportunity to explore their imaginations, develop literacy skills and have some fun during the school holidays.

"I'm a passionate reader and I read because it takes me to new worlds that I could never go outside of my imagination. It is a real joy to see our students' eyes light up when you talk to and relate to the printed words on the page", Greg said.

"It is the reason behind why we started the Summer Reading Challenge and I encourage all of our students to get involved in the joy and wonder that comes with reading," he said.

The Executive Director's Summer Reading Challenge is open to all students enrolled in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Parramatta. Students need to independently read 10 or more age-appropriate books during the summer holidays to go in to the draw to win one of four iPad Minis. To enter the competition, visit the [Executive Director's Summer Reading Challenge webpage](#).

Entries close on **Friday 6 February 2015** and winners will be announced on our website on Monday 16 February 2015.



Diocesan Works Fund Appeal – faith@work:



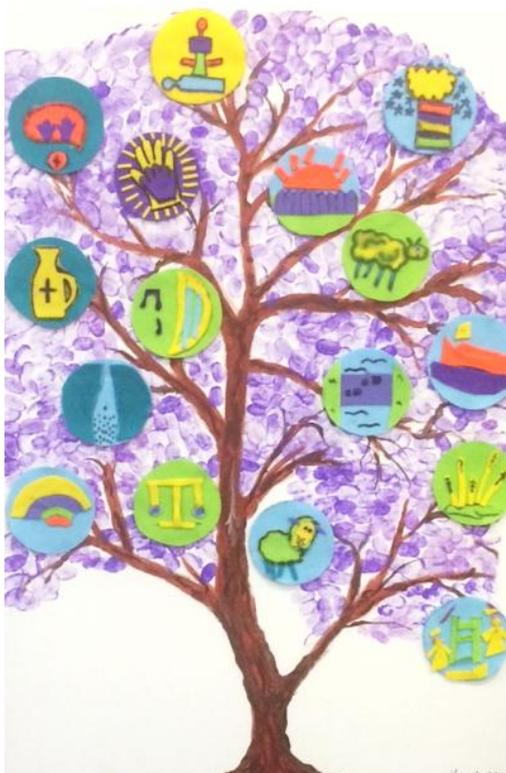
Thank you for helping our children to support the DWF Appeal.

We were able to raise just under \$600. This money will help support many organisations that help single mothers, those who are hearing impaired, catechists and people in need of counselling.

St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Hamper Appeal:

There has been a fantastic response from families for our St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Hamper Appeal. We will be concluding this appeal tomorrow so if you still have items, please send them in. We will be passing our donations on to members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society for packing next week.

Thank you so much for your generosity.



Jesse Tree

Jesse was the father of the great King David of the Old Testament. He is often looked upon as the first person in the genealogy of Jesus. The Jesse Tree is a leafless tree decorated with symbols portraying Jesus' spiritual heritage. It is like a family tree and comes from the Prophet Isaiah ch. 11 v 1: *A shoot will spring forth from the stump of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots.*

The Jesse Tree connects the Advent Season with the faithfulness of God across 4000 years of history. A branch is a biblical sign of hope from discouragement and is therefore a good symbol of Jesus Christ who is the revelation of God's grace and faithfulness.

The Jesse Tree and the people of our Christian tradition who waited patiently for the coming of the Saviour and were connected to Jesus in ancestry, have been the focus of our Year 6 students during their Advent unit.

They have read Scripture, made connections and created symbols of the many people who prepared the way for the coming of the Christ Child. Every morning the students have been sharing with the school community and it has been our prayer focus each day. Each day two new symbols are placed on the tree outside the print-room which can be seen from the Infants Playground.

Congratulations Year 6 and your teachers, for sharing your learning with us in such a rich and practical way.

Carole Day

Our Lady of the Way Church

Christmas Mass Times:

We encourage you all to come along and join the wider Parish community for the Christmas liturgies being held at this special time of year!

Wednesday 17th December

7.30pm 2nd Rite of Reconciliation for Advent
(combined with St Finbars and celebrated at OLOW)

Wednesday 24th December

7.00pm Vigil and Midnight Mass
(Half an hour before Vigil and Midnight Mass there will be carol singing in the church)

Thursday 25th December

9.30am Christmas morning
No evening Mass

Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining star and angel's song, for infant's cry in lowly manger. We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold His glory, and are bathed in its radiance.

***A safe and merry
Christmas to everyone!***



GENERAL INFORMATION

Student Achievements

Congratulations to Lucy Vinci who competed in the Women's National Gymnastics Championships 2014 in Geelong Victoria last month. Lucy was part of a team of eight competing in Level 4 and Level 5, for Nepean Gymnastics Academy. Out of 64 teams, the top 24 teams went through to the final on the second day; Lucy's team came in 31st place. A great achievement for their first national competition. Well done Lucy.



Changes to Parent Payments using credit cards with Scholastic Book Club next year.

As many large schools transition towards a cashless system for purchasing items from the Scholastic Book Club, there have been some significant changes made to the credit card payment system.



Starting next year, LOOP (Linked Online Ordering and Payment) will be available for parents to both *order and pay* for Book Club items in one transaction. This allows you to create one order for all your children attending Our Lady of the Way, from any or all brochures. There will be no need to return Book Club paperwork to the school if using this method; your order will simply be included with the rest of the school's order which will be submitted by the school book club volunteers and distributed on arrival at the school as per normal.

A short video of the new credit card payment system can be seen here:

<http://mybookclubs.scholastic.com.au/Parent/contentpageparent.aspx?code=505>

More information to follow in the New Year. Please note that Our Lady of the Way is fortunate enough to have volunteers to continue to run the Book Club, which means we will still accept cash and cheque transactions, as per the current set up.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Kids Can Act

Drama Studio
For Kids Of All Ages

Christmas Holiday

Drama Workshops

"Springwood Court" 133 Macquarie Road, Springwood.
(Next to Domino's Pizza)

Mon 19th - Thurs 22nd January. (9.30am - 2.30pm)

- ★ Puppets -Monday
- ★ Scenarios and Drama Games -Tuesday
- ★ Fairy tales and Make Believe -Wednesday
- ★ Storytelling -Thursday

Email Cathie about **EARLYBIRD DISCOUNTS**
& **DISCOUNTS** for siblings.

kidscanactstudio@gmail.com

After School, Evening & Saturday classes near you 2015.

Let us give your child the chance to **SHINE!**

www.kidscanact.com.au

Mob. 0414 475 158

Kids Can Act

Drama Studio
For Kids Of All Ages

Drama Classes 2015

- ★ Mummy/Daddy and Tots Drama & Music
- ★ Infants Kids ages 5 - 8
- ★ Primary Kids ages 9 - 12
- ★ Teen Kids ages 13 - 16
- ★ Big Kids ages 17 - 22
- ★ Grown Kids you know who you are!

Email Cathie to enquire about venues, times & costs.

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