



ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

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Date: 11th December, 2014

Term 4 Week 10B

Dear Parents, Students, Staff and Friends of St Joseph's Community,

As the 2014 academic year draws to a close, I would like to sincerely thank all who have contributed to the rich school life and spirit of the St Joseph's Catholic High School Community throughout the year. Our school community is fortunate to have so many loyal supporters which results in such a positive learning environment for your daughters and sons.

At the end of this year we say farewell and a sincere thank you to the following staff who will be leaving us: **Mr John Batten, Mrs Renate Dunkerley, Mrs Susanna Harris, Dr Teresa Harris, Mrs Therese Horley, Mrs Shannon Marecic and Ms Michelle Jenkins.** Best wishes to each and everyone as they take on new endeavours in 2015.

Also, best wishes to **Mrs Clare Musgrave, Mrs Leanne Gregory, Mrs Megan King and Mrs Jane Pitt** who will be on leave from the start of the 2015 school year.

On behalf of the St Joseph's Catholic High School Community, I extend to you all the joys and blessings of the Christmas season. Wishing you a holy and safe Christmas.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

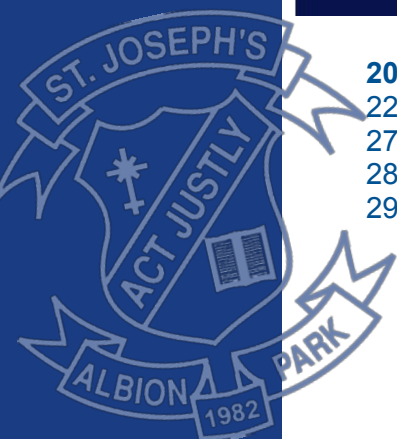


2015 Calendar

- 22 & 23 January - Uniform Shop Open (9-3pm)
- 27 January - Staff commence
- 28 January - Year 7 Students only commence
- 29 January - Students in Years 8-12 commence

Mr John Barrington,
Principal

Merry Christmas





You made it through another year! And hasn't it gone so quickly! Next year is going to be a productive one for the Pastoral Care of our students. Positive psychology is the latest in the psychology world and could work wonders for our students. It's all about gratitude, identifying our gifts and putting our energies into caring for others - this part of it, which we are focussing on, suits our Catholic ethos to the ground! This week's Michael Grose article explores some family attitudes around

Christmas and is in the same vein. Christmas is such a special family time, but it is also a time when family rifts can be felt the most. Christians and Catholics get free psychology, because if we work towards forgiveness and healing, we make great strides forward in helping ourselves. Grose suggests fostering gratitude and helping your children with a social script. Have a read if you get time and enjoy a happy and holy Christmas with your family, no matter what size or shape your family comes in.

Mrs Megan Schibeci, Pastoral Care Coordinator



E-Mail Addresses for Electronic Communication

A reminder, as per the letter posted home last week, that the School requires every parent to please supply an email address that your child's teachers can use to complete their correspondence with you via the e-diary next year. It is imperative that all parents please supply this email address no later than Wednesday 17th December to ensure your child's e-diary communication runs smoothly in the new year. If you have not already returned the slip indicating an email address, it would be greatly appreciated if you could please do so via email to penny.corradini@dow.catholic.edu.au.

Parent Teacher Interview Bookings and Access to Other Helpful Information

A reminder that parents were also informed in my recent letter of the personalised key code and instructions required for parents to register access to Sentral, through which appointments can be made for the upcoming Parent Teacher Interviews to be held next Monday 15th December, 2014 from 8:00-10:30am in the school hall.

It is important that all parents complete this registration process as soon as possible to facilitate access to the new parent portal on Sentral which allows you to view details of your child's attendance, merits and demerits. In 2015, parents will also be able to view additional information including your child's uniform infringements and digital device confiscations (e.g., mobile phones and iPods) via this portal.

Uniform Requirements for the New Year

A reminder to all parents that all students will be expected to present impeccably in their school uniform at the start of 2015. This includes the regulation black hard leather upper polished school shoes and non-fluro coloured joggers with white socks on sports days. Students are also not permitted to wear the school jumper with Sports Uniform. If parents could also please check the length of girls' skirts to ensure that these are just below the knee. A reminder too, that facial piercings are not acceptable at St Joseph's and earrings are not permitted to be worn by boys. Extreme hairstyles are not permitted at St Joseph's.

A letter outlining the school's uniform requirements was posted home last week to ensure that parents are fully informed of what is acceptable uniform at St Joseph's and to assist parents in this regard, before making required new purchases for the new year. A full uniform check will be conducted in the first week back next year and we look forward to a smooth start to the new academic year for everyone.

May I also take this opportunity to thank all families for your support in regards to our uniform requirements in 2014.

Mrs Jenny Bell, Assistant Principal

Merry Christmas

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Curriculum Update!!

Reading my Child's Report

Student reports are on their way home in the coming days with a summary of your child's progress and achievement for the second half of the year. It is an opportune time to revisit the report and A-E grading and how it is an indication of your child's achievements.

The A to E grade scale summarises the standard (or quality) of achievement associated with each grade. The scale describes:

- the depth of knowledge and understanding, and
- the range of skills that students working at that standard typically show.

Teachers make a professional judgement about grades by:

- discussing across grades and stages what are the characteristics of a piece of work that would demonstrate a level of understanding of an A-E
- using a combination of formal assessments, in class observations and everyday learning opportunities, examining how consistently a student demonstrates their knowledge, skills and understanding in a variety of contexts and learning situations

If a student receives the same grade at the end of the year as they did at the half yearly or if they got a B in the half yearly and received a C at the end of the year, does this mean they may have not progressed or they may have gone backwards?

NO.

Grades are awarded in reference to the level of achievement a child demonstrates consistently over time in regards to the level of demand of the work as well as the complexity of the work presented to the students. As the year progresses the level of demand increases as well as the level of complexity. A student who continues to maintain their level of achievement or slightly improves may have the above scenario with their report, this does not mean they have regressed or gone backwards with their learning or level of understanding.

It is important to look at the report in its entirety and not solely focus on the grades, the profile statements as well as the final comment provide great stimulus to discuss highlights with your child about their learning. It also provides the opportunity to perhaps set some goals for next year.

If you have any questions about your child's report or how to read and interpret the information displayed on the report please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

Merry Christmas

Paul Hughes, Curriculum Coordinator

Reports will be distributed at the completion of each Presentation Ceremony

Year 11 Presentation—Thursday 11th December
9:30-11:00am (Students have already received their reports)

Years 9 & 10 Presentation Ceremony
Thursday 11th December 11:30-1pm

Years 7 & 8 Presentation Ceremony
Friday 12th December 9:30-11:00am



Year 10 and Year 11 English

Students in Year 10 and 11 have been given work to complete over the holidays in preparation for the Preliminary HSC and HSC Courses. Year 10 students who have selected Standard or Advanced English are required to read the prescribed text "The Messenger" by Markus Zusak. Teachers will expect that this reading has been completed by their first English class for 2015. Students who have not been issued a copy of this text prior to the end of term are asked to make their own arrangements. They may borrow from a local library, purchase their own copy on ebay or download an e-copy of the book.

Year 11 students in Advanced and Standard are required to complete a practice HSC Paper One on the Area of Study: Discovery. The most effective way for students to complete this is to revise their work and set aside two hours and ten minutes reading time to do the paper under examination conditions. In addition to this, it is expected that students will read their prescribed texts. Standard students should read the short stories of Henry Lawson that they have been given in class and the play "Educating Rita" and Advanced students should be reading "1984" and "King Henry IV Part One".

Thank you parents, for your support in ensuring that students are ready to begin the 2015 school year in English in a manner conducive to success.

Year 11 HSC English Assessment Task

Year 11 students have completed their first HSC English Assessment Task. The task was complex and challenging with a variety of components allowing students to demonstrate in different ways their skills and understanding of the Area of Study: Discovery. *Jackson Webb* composed an excellent piece of creative writing for part of this task; the English teachers were impressed with the maturity, sensitivity and insight in his writing. We are pleased to share this with you. Enjoy!

Miss Francesca Gazzola, English Coordinator

Losing Touch

The movie flickers on the giant screen and is clearly part way through. The characters seem oddly familiar but I can't recall the plot so far. Fidgeting in my seat I stifle the crumpling noise of the chip packet and try to settle without disturbing the other movie goers who seem intent in their focus and strangely don't appear to have noticed my disruption.

The first character who speaks is a woman with a gentle face and soft smile, attractive but not beautiful. She looks to be about 30 and is addressing a man that I assume is her husband asking if he can pick up one of the kids on his way home. The man, tall and strong looking with thick, dark hair and an immaculate suit has a presence that exudes power and an air of patronising disinterest as he dismisses her request with an inadequate explanation. His smile is warm though, and you can tell he clearly loves her. Her eyes lower as and the corners of her mouth rise tentatively in reply. Again, you can tell she loves him but there is a resignation in her face that makes me think she knows there is no point pushing the issue. They must have played out this scene a thousand times before.

A song that seems very familiar begins playing, I can't recall the name of it but it feels comfortable listening to it. A montage of images set to the tune flashes on the screen as I see the woman growing more beautiful to me in each picture as she smiles and turns, getting on with the job of raising the children, running the household and holding together a busy life of family, work and socialising. Her aura of contentment implies a genuinely happy life but I can't help noticing that the man is a bit player in this scene. He appears in images smiling with friends, tenderly holding his wife and then in the next frame will be absent or more often present, but distracted. There is nothing shocking about this package but it is unsettling and I find myself shifting in the seat again, unable to become completely comfortable in the presence of this woman with the green eyes and freckle near the crease of her mouth that is mesmerising yet somehow lost on the man onscreen.

There is no clear story line, no climax, just a growing awareness of the dynamics in this relationship.

The children, like the wife, keep reaching out to the father who is in all the important scenes in their lives, Christmas, birthdays, even most evening meals, but his life is somehow separate. His consistency lies in that he is there but cannot be relied upon, participating but not engaging, funding but not organising and his children stop expecting. Occasionally there is disappointment on the face of his lovely wife but the man never seems to notice the hurt he is causing. He has it all. A rewarding but demanding job, gorgeous

children and a wife who supports every aspect of his life and yet he lacks the insight to appreciate it all. He is no monster but they deserve more.

I feel sad for him watching the screen. My heart is aching for both the man and his wife.

Suddenly the screen explodes with light. It's so bright it shocks me out of my melancholic trance. My eyes hurt. The song is gone and is replaced with the faint sounds of voices. The theatre grows louder and louder as the restless hum is replaced by clattering and clanging, people shifting in their seats, standing, talking, shouting. "Ben Martelli. Mr Martelli. Mr Martelli, do you have anything to say?"

It makes no sense and I feel pain. I wish they would sit still and stop talking so I could return to the safety of the screen. Why is the light so bright when my eyes are closed? The noise, the noise. It's getting louder and louder. A primal scream is reverberating through the theatre, through my body, caught in my throat. Again I hear my name being called "Mr Martelli, I am losing patience with you. Do you have anything to say in response?"

I am overloaded with stimulation. It's loud and bright and frightening. My skin prickles and I can feel the touch of what feels like a talon on my hand. Everything is raw. My senses assaulted like the crescendo of *Requiem For a Dream* until I feel a crushing weight on my chest, an explosion in my head and suddenly everything is still.

I slowly open my eyes and they are met by a familiar green gaze. I blink. When my eyes open again I see a small freckle and search for a smile at the corners of her mouth. Instead I am met by a hollow gaze. Her soft voice "Ben please. Answer the judge. This is the last time I will ever ask anything of you." With that she turns back to her solicitor. Her eyes drift to a man in the gallery and there it is. The faint smile.

By Jackson Webb, Year 11

Peer Support Leaders

A reminder to Year 9 Peer Support Leaders - you are not required to return to school until 29th January, 2015. Only Year 7 students will commence on 28th January, 2015 and Peer Support Leaders are not required on this day!!

Mrs Megan Schibeci, Pastoral Care Coordinator



Australian Red Cross BLOOD SERVICE

Recently we had a visit by the Red Cross Mobile Blood Bank to St Joseph's with over 31 blood donations. We had many students who had never donated before, step up and face their fear of needles and blood, and be part of a wonderful group of people who help those in the wider community who need our help. The majority of donated

blood goes to people with cancer, as well as people who have suffered traumatic accidents, burns or those undergoing surgery. Blood is vital to life and for many people blood donors are their lifeline. Currently only 1 in 30 people give blood, but 1 in 3 people will need blood in their lifetime.

The Red Cross Mobile Unit is visiting the Albion Park Village Shopping Centre on December 22nd, 23rd and 24th and they would love to see as many of the St Joseph's community over these days. The mobile van will also be returning to St Joseph's on 30th March, 2015, for staff and students over 16 years. For those who may not be aware, a new policy came into force in January 2014 which limits students aged 16 and 17 years to one donation every 12 months. Thank you to the staff and students (even those who made an attempt to donate) for your support with this life saving and rewarding cause.

Who knows, maybe it will be you or someone you know who will need it one day!!

Mrs Elise Burns, Year 8 Coordinator





Childcare Traineeship

A local Pre-School has rung asking for a position to be filled for a traineeship commencing in 2015. The applicants must be turning 18 at the commencement of the traineeship and have a passion to

work with children. They must show initiative and be prepared to study as well. If you know of anyone, or if you are interested, please contact Linda at Shell Cove Preschool on 4295 7888 or see me.

Blue Mountains International Hotel Management School Discovery Day 2015

Discover what a career in hospitality is like by attending classes and living with students as part of a three day residential program. Click [here](#) for further information.

International Film School Sydney - Open Day

Saturday 17th January at 41 Holt Street, Surry Hills. Get a taste of what it's like to study screen and media with an access all areas pass to the film school's studios. Click [here](#) for further details.

JMC Academy: Digital Conversations with Devotion Digital

JMC Academy visited Devotion Digital, a boutique digital agency located in Paddington, Sydney, to hear about what today's design professionals had to say about design as a career. Transcripts and a video of the interviews conducted with Devolution Digital are available on JMC's website. Click [here](#) .

The Stringybark Short Story Award 2015

Entries close Sunday 18th January, 2015. This is a writing competition where you produce a short story in 1500 words. The only restriction is that the story must have some link to Australia. Click [here](#).

MIGAS Vacancies

Visit [here](#) for vacancies for Traineeships and Apprenticeships.

Indigenous Students Career Paths

Often information comes to me about training, positions and career paths for Indigenous students. If you would like me to forward this type of information to you or your family, please email me and I will forward this valuable information to your email address each week.

AFL Sports Ready Traineeships

AFL SportsReady is an independent, not-for-profit company dedicated to helping young Australians develop careers through traineeships and educational opportunities. Click [here](#) to see more information.

Academy Hospitality Australia: Online RSA & RCG Courses

For further information regarding Responsible Service of Alcohol and Responsible Conduct of Gambling Courses Click [here](#) .

1300 Apprentice: Interview Preparation and Research

To view a blog which explains the interview preparation and research stage of finding an apprenticeship/traineeship click [here](#) .



Kiama Rotary Youth of the Year Contest

Last Thursday evening two Year 11 students represented our school community at this event. Bronte Willis and Davide Zanatta. Bronte entertained the Lion's Club audience with her speech entitled "DiCaprio versus The Academy", whilst Davide's speech, a personal glimpse on his aspiration to become a Civil Engineer based on growing up with a builder father, gave some members a walk down memory lane. Both Davide and Bronte were fine ambassadors for St Joseph's community - Congratulations.

Parenting *ideas*

INSIGHTS

Building parent-school partnerships

WORDS Michael Grose

Show some kindness and gratitude this festive season

The festive season provides the opportunity to develop a sense of other in your children and teach them some social graces.

My wife is a formidable person.

One Christmas, annoyed by the lack of gratitude shown by some of her young relatives when gifts were distributed, she put a cunning plan in action.

The following year, instead of toys, games and assorted gifts that were ungratefully received and promptly forgotten, each of her young relatives was given a card, thanking them for their generous donation of a goat, a well, or a vegetable plot to a family in need in a developing country. A seismic shift for many of these children!

Some years later, said children know exactly what to expect from their senior relative – the only surprise will be the nature of their donation. Chicken or goat? Hoe or bag of seeds?

They also know that they should thank their senior relative for their gift, and be grateful that somewhere in another part of the world someone is benefiting from their generosity. Some children may take more convincing than others, but so be it. They don't miss out on much!

A challenging time

It can be tricky for parents during the end of year festive and holiday season to guide children down a giving, let alone spiritual path. So much attention is placed on receiving that it can be difficult to develop a sense of 'other' in children. It helps to be proactive and put rituals of generosity in place, which will inevitably become part of your family's traditions.

Here are some ideas to get you thinking:

1 Develop an action of gratitude

Discuss with children the people who have been helpful, kind or gone out of their way for them during the year. Then they can write a note, make a gift or cook something that they can give to those people to say thank you. Make it personal and make it physical.

2 Make a family commitment of giving

Pick a cause that's close to your family's heart and make a commitment to do something or give something on a regular basis throughout the coming year. One-off events can lose meaning, whereas all-year volunteering or giving has greater impact on both the giver and the receiver.

3 Involve kids in personal giving

If gifts are shared as part of your tradition then do your best to involve children in the giving process. Discuss the choice of gifts: "So what do you think your cousin would like?". Even better, get your kids to accompany you on a shopping trip, if you dare. It would be a good learning experience for them.

4 Have a clean out

Approaching the festive season provides a great opportunity for kids to spring clean their toy, clothes and technology cupboards. Not only

does this make room for the new, (and perhaps unfairly lift their expectations), but it provides the chance for children to pass on unwanted items to siblings, friends or others who would probably appreciate and use them more than they would.

5 Give them a social script

Children usually operate on a script learnt from their parents. If you want them to be thankful for their gifts then give them the lines they should use. Be prepared for some gentle parental cueing if in all the festive excitement they forget to say thanks. And while you're at it, I suggest that you avert potential embarrassment and give them some lines to use when they open the inevitable weird present, or receive a gift they already have. "I've got two of those already!" is not the sound a beaming and generous relative needs to hear!

The festive and holiday season offers many social challenges for parents. In many ways, the biggest challenge is to instil in your kids some social graces and a generous spirit that will withstand the unique challenges that the festive season throws up. Good luck, be good and be grateful!

Michael Grose



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