Dear Parents and Carers,

Staff News - Wedding Bells
On behalf of the school community I would like to wish Miss Emily Henderson and her fiancé Adam all the best for their wedding over the Canberra Day long weekend. This is an exciting time for them both and I wish them a lifetime of happiness together. For your information, Miss Henderson will keep her current surname. If members of the community would like to wish Emily good luck, please note she will be on leave from Wednesday 4 March to prepare for her wedding.

Staff News - Continued Prayers Please
Recently I informed you that Ms Jo Dignan is at home caring for her sister Cecily Dignan who is terminally ill. I spoke with Ms Dignan yesterday and she informed me that Cecily is very weak now. She wanted me to pass on her thanks to everyone in the community for praying for her family and Cecily at this extremely difficult time. Ms Dignan will be on leave for two more weeks and I will keep you updated on the situation.

Ash Wednesday and Opening School Mass
Last week we gathered for two important liturgical celebrations. The Ash Wednesday Liturgy marked the beginning of the 40 days of Lent. The opening school mass was held on Friday and Father Lachlan gave his blessing for the 2015 school year. The students were very reverent during both liturgies and engaged with the responses, songs and rituals. Thank you to Mrs Orla Rutledge for preparing both liturgies.

Year 5 Class Mass
This Thursday the Year 5 students will walk to the parish Church for their class mass at 10am. Parents are most welcome to attend mass with the students.

Parents and Friends’ AGM and First Meeting
You are all warmly invited to attend the first meeting for 2015 and which will include the 2014 AGM and then a General Meeting.

Tonight Wednesday 25 February 7.00pm in School Library
- Come along to hear about the P&F Association achievements in 2014.
- Come along to hear about current and future school events and news.
- Come along to hear how you can contribute to the school in a variety of ways as a parent/carer.
- Come along to participate in electing members of the P&F Executive for 2015. These roles include President, Vice-president, Treasurer and secretary.
- Come along to share ideas about how the P&F can support and engage with the larger parent body and wider community in 2015 and beyond.
2015 promises to be a very successful and rewarding year for the students and the school community as a whole. Many learning experiences, great events, initiatives and projects are planned.

St Anthony’s school benefits greatly by the generosity of volunteers and the students themselves benefit enormously when you are engaged in the life of the school.

Please consider attending the meeting on Wednesday evening and I look forward to working with you all in 2015.

School Starts by 9.00am

I would like to remind you of the official start time for school and other morning procedures each day.

I have reviewed the morning procedures and believe the current supervision and routines do not encourage students to attend school at the official starting time. I have observed a large number of students arriving late for school and missing morning assembly and often the start of their first session in class. Having staff on duty until 9.10am at the front of the school also sends the unintentional message that school is yet to start.

You are reminded that school starts each day with a bell at 8.55am for students to line up on the asphalt for morning assembly that starts by 9.00am. You would be aware that once students’ line up morning assembly follows with messages, birthdays and the school prayer. Students move to class straight after morning assembly to begin classes.

Therefore I would like to reinforce to you that students are expected to attend morning assembly as this is the start of the school day. Therefore staff supervision at the front of the school will begin at 8.30am as usual but now cease at 9.00am to allow students to get to morning assembly and also for staff to join their class and the community for morning assembly. **This effectively means that morning drop off will now cease at 9.00am. There will no longer be a staff member on the crossing duty after 9.00am.**

Students arriving after 9.00am are late for school parents/carers will be required to sign them in at the front office and accompany them to class if necessary (i.e. Kindergarten to Year 2 students). **Therefore, from 9am, five-minute parking will now be permitted in the two front driveway lanes for you to park and come to the office to sign your children into school.** The last morning school bus enters the driveway at approximately 8.45am. The bus zone signs at the front of the school will be adjusted to permit parking as described above.

Students arriving after 9am and not signed in will be marked on the school roll as late without permission. The sign in and out slips for parents to complete have a space for recording the reason for the student’s short absence. Late attendance, early school pick-ups and also short absences are recorded for legal purposes and patterns of student attendance monitored.

**St Anthony’s staff are continually looking for ways to improve each student’s academic achievement and also their social skills and wellbeing. Attending school for full days contributes to these goals being achieved.** Thank you in anticipation of your support of these important measures. If you have any queries you are more than welcome to contact me at school.

**Toilet Cleanliness**

Unfortunately the school toilets are often messy during the school day and some students are not thinking of how they leave the state of the toilets for other students. There have been a number of reminders and pleas given to the students but at times the toilets are still left in a disgraceful and unusable state. Understandably, I have also received emails and messages from parents about the concerns they have with the toilets. Can I assure you that the toilets are being cleaned daily and on weekends and that our cleaner has to often clean up ‘matters’ that are unacceptable.

Teachers are going to talk to all of their classes again today and try to educate them on appropriate toileting routines and hygiene practices. The staff are also going to implement some
other measures to reduce the chance of toilets being misused which will hopefully lead to cleaner toilets for all students to use, all day long.

These measures include:

- Teachers having a monitoring system in place for each class which record students attending the toilets each session of the day.
- Students attending the toilets individually and not with a friend (reducing the immediate audience and possible play factors).
- Students will be required to enter the toilets in class time from the internal doors located in Block and Block 2.
- Teachers in each block will be more able to monitor the entrance to the toilet and noise etc.
- Each toilet block will be inspected for cleanliness at 9am, 11am 1pm and 3.20pm.
- Teachers coming in from duty during the day will check the condition of toilets at the end of each play period.
- In the event that the toilets are not in a satisfactory condition staff have the option to review their lists of students that attended the toilet in this period. They also have the option to immediately take time off the preceding play period as a consequence.
- Students will still be able to access the toilets from the external doors on the walkway before school, at recess, at lunch and after school.

I am disappointed that these measures need to be in place but students have the right to be able to use toilets that are clean and safe. I thank the students that already use the toilets appropriately and I hope through these more focused measures our student toilets become cleaner and to an acceptable standard of cleanliness.

God Bless,

Greg Walker
Principal

‘INTO THE DESERT’

Into the Desert has been written by Shane Dwyer, the Senior Coordinator for Faith Formation & Spirituality for the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn. He has 25 years’ experience as a formator in the Catholic faith, and as a program writer, spiritual director and seminar presenter. He holds a postgraduate degree in Catholic theology with a specialisation in Spirituality.

The heart of this program is the readings provided by the Church for Lent and Easter. An extract from the readings for the day is provided (normally the Gospel) with a reference to the full reading provided. If all you do is to allow yourself to encounter this word on a daily basis throughout Lent — to contemplate it, think about how to live it, and pray in response to it, then you will have fulfilled the program’s primary purpose.

Tuesday Week 1 of Lent [February 24]

**Encountering the Word**

“When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” [Full text: Matthew 6:7-15]
Contemplating the Word
Reading Jesus’ words today I am reminded of the battle between Elijah and the prophets of Baal (see 1Kings 17). There we see the prophets seeking to attract Baal’s attention with extended chanting and an elaborate dance. Elijah taunts them: ‘chant louder, dance harder…perhaps your god is asleep.’ Nothing happens. Whereas when Elijah prays he just whispers a simple prayer…and the fire falls from the sky and consumes the sacrifice.

The teaching of Jesus and the account of this event in the life of Elijah are both premised on a conviction concerning where God resides. God is as close as your breath. He is everywhere and he is within you. Words don’t attract his attention, love does. If our words are an expression of love, be they ever so humble, God hears and responds.

Words can be a problem for those on the Christian spiritual quest. Words are easy and can become a substitute for action. Words can lull us into a false sense of security: we can articulate what we believe and we might imagine that that is enough. Jesus did not witness to the presence of God with words alone. He did this, in the first instance, through who he was (his very being), which then flowed into what he did. It began with being, which then flowed naturally into doing. Words come last. Jesus used his words only to communicate his experience of being and doing. This is what evangelisation is.

Words that are not backed up by being and doing are of very limited value. If people see that we say one thing and yet do another, they rightfully become suspicious. If they sense that we are deliberately trying to present ourselves in one way and yet the reality is that we are another, they can become angry. On the other hand, if they see that what we say is reflected in our own lives, our words have authority.

I can’t help but think that a big part of why the Catholic Church is attracting particular attention, in light of the Royal Commission into sexual abuse, is because our words are so lofty (love, peace, forgiveness, healing, salvation), but our behaviour has not always incarnated those words. Words designed to paper over actions have no place in the lives of those who are called to live the Gospel.

Being the Word
There are many reasons why we delay setting out on the journey to become the word of God for the world. One reason can be disenchantment with the Church. We can wonder why we should try to live the life God is calling us to, if we are feeling let down by those whose role is to help us on that journey. The fact that others struggle and fail can become our excuse to not take God’s call seriously. The problem with this approach is that we all struggle and fail. That doesn’t exonerate us from the need to pick ourselves up again and get going. We are responsible for the choices we make and for our failure to act.

Ultimately you and I are responsible for whether or not we live in response to the invitation God has made to us. Yes, we appreciate (and perhaps expect) the support of others – particularly our leaders. If we feel we have lost confidence in the Church we can feel justified in walking away from our faith altogether. Many have done precisely that. However, in the end it will be you standing alone before the One who has called you into being. I’m not sure whether excuses about how unimpressed we were with what other people may or may not have been doing is going to cut it.

There is nothing going on in the Church at the moment that is preventing me (or you) from living in response to Jesus Christ. I may alternate between being pleased or disappointed by what I experience in the Church, but in the end I alone am responsible for the response I make to Christ. The fact is, no matter how bleak things can appear to be, there is nothing preventing you and me from living in accord with the life into which we have been baptised. No matter the circumstances, each of us is responsible for the choices we make.
Speaking to the Word
Spend a few minutes in prayer to the God who is as close to you as your breath. Ponder the reality of God’s presence and contemplate the thought that God has something for you – a plan that is as unique as you are. Don’t worry about what that plan is, nor about what you are to do. Your role is simple: sit in God’s presence and wait for him.

Remain silently in God’s presence for as long as you feel inclined, or opportunity will allow. Then bring before God any sincere prayers of intercession that you have. Instead of asking God to do things for you, ask that he might achieve whatever he wishes through you.

Finish by praying the great yet simple prayer of praise to the Blessed Trinity: Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

More information and daily reflections can be found on the website http://intothedesert.org.au/

Year 5 Class Mass
Year 5 will be walking down to the Church this Thursday 26th February to celebrate Mass with Father Lachlan. All are invited to attend 😊

Community Prayer
Please join us for Community Prayer Thursday 26th February straight after the bell. 2 Lisbon will be leading prayer in Block 1, 1 Assisi will be leading community prayer in Block 2

Confirmation
 Confirmation Candidates will be receiving an enrolment note this Friday 27th February

“In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you.” (Matthew 7:12)

Orla Rutledge, Religious Education Coordinator.

Prayers and Thoughts
Please keep Jaharn 3L in your thoughts and in your prayers, Jaharn’s father passed away last week unexpectedly. Our condolences go to Jaharn and his family especially Selena during this sad and difficult time.

Happy Birthday to:

Thank you from Nikki Napier
At morning assembly last Friday the St Anthony's community farewelled Nikki Napier who has worked at OOSCA for the last seven years. Below is a thank you from Nikki.

Thank you to everybody that has been involved with OOSCA. I was fortunate enough to get to work with some amazing people. I have loved getting to know all of the beautiful families especially the children who attended OOSCA throughout my time here. Some have been there nearly the entire 7 years. I know Necta taking on the role of Director along with the wonderful educators the centre will continue to grow and provide quality care to the children and families of the school community.

I would like to say a huge Thank you to Necta, Mary, Mrs Waller, Mr Walker and Mr Bradley for all their support and guidance throughout my time as Director.

It has been an absolute pleasure to work at OOSCA, to watch your children grow and share that journey with you. I will miss OOSCA very much.

Thank you, Nikki Napier
Student of the Week Certificates

Congratulations to the following students who receive this week’s certificate. Students will be presented with their certificate at Friday morning Assembly:


Certificates are awarded at Friday morning assembly at 9am.

Library News

Positions Available - Reading Buddies

Do you have a preloved stuffed toy that is clean and in good condition? We are looking for stuffed toys for our ‘Reading Buddies Group’ each morning. These toys will hold a special position in the library. They will have the task of keeping children company and listening to them read. They need to be durable, clean and willing to be hugged. If you have a possible candidate at home that would like to apply for this position, could you please see Mrs Richardson in the library?

ST ANTHONY’S - NETBALL

Well done to all the St Anthony’s netballers who trialled for Tuggeranong Netball Association (TNA) representative teams late last year and earlier this month. It was great to see so many St Anthony’s uniforms at the trials and the players clearly enjoying the experience. Congratulations to Leila, Kaycie and Jayda who have been chosen to represent TNA in under 11’s. They started training on Monday night and have their first carnival on Sunday.

Thank you to everyone who attended the come and try sessions. They were a HUGE success with over 80 boys and girls participating. We are currently looking at entering 7 teams into the Saturday netball competition at TNA. A huge growth from 4 teams last year. Thank you to Mrs Spackman and Mrs Louise Patton for arranging and running these sessions and generating so much interest.

REGISTRATIONS EXTENDED FOR YRS 2 and 6

We need more Year 2 players to make a team. Please call Fiona Hempstead on 0402 152 288 if you would like to find out more about getting into netball at St Anthony’s. Year 6 have a team but it is not yet full. A limited number of spaces are still available. Get in quick before they fill up! New players always welcome.

Registration forms are available on the school website under Notes for Parents. Registration fees can be paid via flexischools.