



St Mary's Rydalmere Newsletter

Term 1 Week 4
17th February 2010
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DIARY DATES

TERM 1 2010

Friday 19th Feb	STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY "Pupil Free"
Friday 26th Feb	Zone Swimming Carnival
Friday 5th Mar	Clean Up School Day
Friday 5th Mar	Year 4 Assembly 2:30pm
Friday 5th Mar	Diocesan Swimming Carnival
Wednesday 10th Mar	Year 6 Leadership Day at Homebush
Tuesday 16th Mar	OPEN DAY 9:15–10:45AM
Wednesday 17th Mar	School Photos
Thursday 18th Mar	Peer Support Training Year 5
Friday 19th Mar	Peer Support Training Year 5

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT
DAY**
FRIDAY 19TH FEBRUARY
"PUPIL FREE DAY"

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE...

Dear Parents,

Today we celebrate Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. During this time of renewal and preparation we are invited to enter into the penitential spirit of the Lenten Season and its traditional disciplines of prayer, fasting and good works. This liturgical season invites a more radical personal and communal renewal, an entering into the Paschal Mystery, the dying and rising of Christ that culminates in our celebration of Holy Week and Easter. May the next few weeks be a time of repentance and reflection, a time of sacrifice in "doing things" for others and making a difference in their lives.

Thank you to the many parents who attended our information evening regarding our building programme and new learning spaces last night. It was great to see so many parents attend and engaged in our discussion around 21st Century learning and how it will impact on our school community and new spaces. If you have any concerns or questions regarding the new spaces, our teaching pedagogy, scope of work etc please feel free to contact me [ahughes@parra.catholic.edu.au].

Congratulations to our new Kindergarten children on settling into school over the last few weeks. Thank you to their teachers and support staff who have assisted in making their transition into a new phase of their education a happy experience. Credit also must be given to our Year 5 children who have played a significant role as our kindergarten buddies in assisting our new student assimilate into school life at St Marys. Well done girls and boys.

Last Friday we celebrated our opening school mass for 2010. Thank you to Mr Stennett for co-ordinating our liturgy with the staff. During our Liturgy Fr Peter blessed our students, teachers and families asking God's blessing for the year ahead. Congratulations to the following children who were installed as our school leaders for the year:

School Captains

Alana Mastroianni and Brant Hird

Colour Captains

Tarrant
MacKillop
McCaffery
Mackinnon

Matthew Arciuli and Michelle Lee
Beth Clinton and Anastasia Paspalas
Justin Frain and Helaina Bayeh
Chelsea Loughrey and Georgina Gibson

Have a great fortnight!

Tony Hughes
PRINCIPAL



PICK UP AND KISS

We are still in urgent need of volunteers to assist us with the afternoon 'pick up and kiss' procedure. We need helpers on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. If you can assist, please see the office.

TOUCH FOOTBALL—STATE CUP

This weekend the Touch Football State Cup is being held at Wollongong. There are a number of students from our school heading down to represent their clubs. They are: Rebekah Blanchard, Brad Davoren-Whereat, Aiden Field, Jack Pettit, Matthew Arciuli, Brooke Moussa, Justin Frain and Chelsea Loughrey. We wish them all the best of luck!!



ASMTHA FORM REMINDER

Please remember to send in your child's Asthma Form to the office by the end of this week at the latest. Also, if you haven't yet sent in your child's allergy form, please do so ASAP.

PRAYER GROUPS

During the period of Lent, the Christ's Catholic Community group cordially invites everyone to come and pray the Stations of the Cross. The group will be held every Wednesday morning, after the 9:15am Mass, inside the church. For more details contact Irene on 0418 403 358.



BABY NEWS

Congratulations to the Homann family, Xavier in 1H/W, on the birth of their baby daughter Cecelia Jane. Our congratulations also go to the Cantrill family, Sarah in 3G, on the birth of their baby daughter Maddison.



LENTEN GROUP

Lenten groups will be held in the Parish Meeting room on Friday mornings at 10:00am from February 26 until Easter. All parents are welcome. For more information, call Anne-Louise on 9684 2854.

DOWNPOUR DRENCHES PARTY—BUT NOT PARTY SPIRIT!!



Friday night's 'Commencement Party' saw the die-hard party lovers kicking up their drenched heels as they boogied to the sounds of the decades. Whilst the bad weather kept numbers down this year, those in attendance had a good time as they reconnected with their 'school friends'. The evening ended with an impromptu Karaoke session—that will be long remembered! We would like to thank those people who helped with setting up and catering for the event—many of whom were unable to make it themselves—which makes their contribution all the more special! Stay tuned for the next P&F social event.



Lifehouse at RPA

LIFEHOUSE @ RPA
COMMUNITY OUTREACH
(Chris O'Brien Cancer Centre)



Lifehouse at RPA

The Lifehouse @ RPA was built so that cancer patients, families and carers can receive specialised care and support. Without the support and funding from the public, research can't continue to fight against cancer.

In memory of Colin Bruce (father of Ella 3S and Sophie 1C), who fought bravely against a brain tumor, we would like to hold a Cadbury Community Outreach appeal on the school grounds Monday 22nd and Tuesday 23rd February—both morning and afternoon.

A selection of chocolates, plain, caramello and top deck, will be available at a cost of \$2.50 each, with all funds going to the Lifehouse in memory of Colin.

Any questions, please call Belinda Bruce on 0407 351 973.

FAITH JOURNEY...



ASH WEDNESDAY / LENT

Thank you to all parents who were able to join us today at our parish Ash Wednesday mass. Today, Ash Wednesday, we are prompted to refocus on our humanity and the short-fallings that we all share. In doing so, we can see that through Christ we can aim to overcome our failures.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a season of preparation for Easter. During Lent we are invited to respond to Jesus' invitation in a real and practical way through prayer, fasting and works of charity that express our solidarity with Christ and with our neighbour.

Lent is sometimes treated as a Catholic "New Year's Eve" where overnight we "give up chocolate" or "give up TV" until Easter. Although giving up chocolate may be good for the waist-line, Lent is about focusing on changes that we can make in our lives to so we can become closer to Christ.



Through the term we will be encouraging the children to think of others through charity and praying to God so that they can become closer to him. It is a good time for all of us to

reflect on our actions and relationships with others. Please support the school over the next few weeks with these things at home, as well as at school with our charity appeals.

Don't give Up Chocolate for Lent When You Can Eat it for Others!

Next Monday and Tuesday, before and after school we will be hosting a chocolate drive to raise funds in support of LIFEHOUSE@RPA. On Monday we will launch our Lenten appeal, chocolates will be sold before and after school for \$2.50 as noted elsewhere in the newsletter. This is a great way to start Lent and to consider others in our community. Please support us in this.

Mr. Stennett
Religious Education Coordinator

SOCCER SIGN UP **PARRAMATTA CITY**

Registration for 2010

When: Wednesday 17th and Thursday
 18th February from 6:30—8:00pm

Where: Parramatta City Club House
 Eric Primrose Reserve,
 John Street, Rydalmere

For more information, please email
ndiacopoulos@bigpond.com



WEST RYDE ROVERS **NETBALL ASSOCIATION**

West Ryde Rovers have a few spaces available for the 2010 competition. They need:

2 x 8 year olds girls
 4 x 11 year olds girls

If you are interested, please email
 Sue Martin at
sdmartin35@hotmail.com.au



FACTS ABOUT FUNDING...

A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

Dear Families,

The Australian Education Union (AEU) recently published a report claiming that non-government schools, including Catholic schools, receive the majority share of federal school funding. Such claims are not new and continually misrepresent the facts about government funding of schools.

The reality is that state governments are the primary source of recurrent funding for schools and provide approximately 93% of public schools costs but only 17% of non-government schools costs. Accordingly, the federal government provides top up assistance of approximately 7% to public schools and about 53% to non-government schools resulting in the need for non-government schools to charge school fees to address the gap.*

In real terms, Catholic schools on average receive \$7,685 per student in government funding (both state and federal) per year. This is more than 30% less than the \$11,874 per student funding allocated to public schools by state and federal governments. **

The collection of school fees by non-government schools is commonly used as an argument against government funding.

In Catholic systemic schools, school fees are kept as low as possible to ensure Catholic education is affordable for our families, and as such, only partly contribute to the funding gap.

Tuition fees for 2010 range from \$1,110 per year for primary schooling to \$1,986 per year for upper secondary schooling. Catholic school families contribute to the building levy to assist with capital works and major refurbishment projects. School-based fees may also be charged for additional resources and school supplies.

Catholic schools offer substantial discounts for siblings attending Catholic schools. A 25% discount is offered for the second child attending; a 50% discount for the third child attending; and no fees are payable for the fourth and subsequent children attending.

Catholic schools rely heavily on government funding. Without the state and federal government's financial support, Catholic schools would simply not exist.

We are grateful for the support of both the Australian and New South Wales governments for their continuing support of Catholic schools, which is vital if we are to continue to serve the church's mission to provide quality Catholic education to our families, now and in the future.

Greg Whitby
Executive Director of Schools
Diocese of Parramatta

* Source: Dowling, A (2007) Australia's School Funding System, Camberwell: Australian Council for Educational Research.

** Source: Productivity Commission Figures (2009)