

Catholic Education

Today



CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
MELBOURNE



Moved by the
love of Christ

TERM 1, 2017

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EDUCATION

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CHILDREN

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Project Compassion prayer

God of all peoples and nations,
You accompany us on our Lenten journey.
Through the life and mission of Your son,
You give us the gift of mercy.
May we learn to walk Your way of mercy and
compassion with all Your people.
In a special way, we keep in mind our neighbours,
the men, women and children around the world,
who are most vulnerable to extreme poverty
and injustice.
Bless our prayers, our fasting and our Lenten gifts
to Project Compassion.
Through these actions, may our hearts be open to
receive Your grace to love our neighbours as ourselves.
We ask this in the name of Jesus.
Amen.



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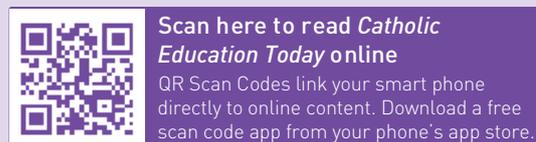
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Cover Image Students from Loyola College, Watsonia, celebrate
Catholic Education Week with Archbishop Denise Hart



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discussion designed for parents.



From the Executive Director



Stephen Elder
Executive Director

A few weeks ago, your children were among over 210,000 students who started the school year in a Catholic school in Victoria.

Many of you will be experiencing Catholic education for the first time. It might be a bit daunting at times, but remember there are teachers and parents in your school community always willing to lend a hand to help guide you through these early days in Catholic education. We all want your child to find that sense of belonging, purpose and connectedness in their lives, and to hope that they can be the best they can be.

Pope Francis has touched on this previously, asking Catholic educators to remember the contribution of education in 'sowing hope'.

'Man cannot live without hope,' he said, 'and education generates hope. In fact, education gives birth, it helps grow, it is part of the dynamics of giving life. A life that is born is the most gushing source of hope; it reaches out in search of beauty, truth and communion with others for a common growth.'

We trust that a Catholic education in Melbourne does just that.

Student wellbeing

Looking out for others and working towards the greater good are two of the most important values of a Catholic education. It also can help explain the difference in bullying at our schools and experienced in all sectors. The 2015 Household, Income and Labour Dynamics Australia (HILDA) survey found the prevalence of bullying (15%) is relatively low in Catholic secondary schools when compared to other sectors.

Pathways to higher learning

After accounting for socioeconomic background and prior achievement in 40,000 Victorian students, University of Melbourne researcher Dr Gary Marks has suggested differences in school and parental expectations, better teachers, stronger discipline and a more rigorous curriculum in the latter years of secondary school, as a reason for why a student completing Years 9-12 at a Catholic school will achieve a result on average six ATAR points higher than a comparable student at a government school.

Later life

Curtin University research has shown that a Catholic education pays real-world dividends, finding that Catholic school graduates have higher incomes than graduates of government schools. It also found that both men and women with a Catholic education report higher levels of life satisfaction than those who attended government schools.

As your family's journey with us in 2017 gets underway, I hope you will understand your school's partnership with you as your child's first and lifelong educators will help sow hope, keep them safe and lead to amazing results for your children that hold them in good stead in their later life. ✝

Getting to the root of STEM education

A group of primary students are huddled around a model car. It might sound like a scene from your own schooldays, but we're not talking about one of the Matchbox or Hot Wheels cars you played with at lunchtime. This is something different; something faster and more exciting than any Scalextric set. And it's not play. It's learning. Cutting-edge learning. Welcome to the wonderful world of STEM education.

STEM. This is one short acronym is revolutionising the school curriculum. STEM. It's on everybody's lips: politicians, business leaders, academics, educationalists and tech gurus – and rightly too, for behind that little word are some very big ideas; very big ideas with far-reaching consequences.

That means it's important to know just what STEM education is, why it matters and how it is being applied in Melbourne's Catholic schools.

STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and mathematics, but STEM education involves much more than traditional maths or science classes.

It's better seen as a new approach to problem solving; taking the ever-increasing set of tools technology is placing at our disposal and using them to do things better, faster and more efficiently – or even to tackle problems that we cannot solve today.

It's a form of collaborative learning, one that draws on and applies all the different dimensions of ingenuity and creativity students bring to projects – which takes us back to our model car.



Fastest ever F1 in Schools™ car, designed and built by Infinitude (p. 6)

Last year students from a group of Catholic schools across Melbourne took part in the Formula 1 Challenge, an international school STEM contest run with local support from Deakin University.

Their task was to create a model racer, powered by a carbon dioxide bulb, and send it speeding down a track.

'I said "Fast cars? Really? I'm not very interested in cars and stuff",' Mimosa, one of the students involved said, 'but then as we got on I said "This is really fun".'

'We had to create the engine, the chassis and the actual structure of the car,' Siovhon, another of the participants said.

And that was only part of the project. The students didn't only set out to design the fastest and best engineered cars. They created paint schemes for their vehicles, team logos and t-shirts. They wrote up what they were doing, put the details on posters and gave verbal presentations on their cars.

>> CONTINUED PAGE 4



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First Lego League champs



Eight Year 5 and 6 students from Christ the King, Newcomb, participated in the First Lego League Competition at Swinburne University. The students had been working on a project 'Animal Allies' for eight weeks and presented their innovative work to the judges.

There are two main components to the competition with the first challenge of programming an EV3

machine to complete a series of missions related to animals. This section required the students to not only learn programming, but also redesign the EV3 machine. The second part of the challenge related to a research project and the students had to identify a problem in the community that they could solve. It had to be based on an animal, so the students contacted Phil at the

Queenscliff Marine Biology Centre who discussed the problem of the Northern Pacific Seastar being brought into Corio Bay from Japan by cargo ships.

As a result of all their hard work, they were presented with the 'Research Award'. If this wasn't enough of a thrill, they were one of only three teams selected to represent Victoria at the National Championships in Sydney on 10 December. †

'I've learned about the science, but I've also learned about the organisation,' another participant, Noah, said.

It's this broad range of skills that STEM education involves that makes it so valuable.

The Committee for the Economic Development of Australia estimates that nearly 40 per cent of Australian jobs will be automated within the next 10 to 15 years.

Business leaders say that as machines and artificial intelligence increasingly take over the more mundane and repetitive tasks they will be looking for employees with a new skill set, creative workers able to think strategically.

They will be demanding active learning skills, complex problem-solving abilities, critical thinking skills and strong logical reasoning.

STEM education develops all of these abilities, which is why governments and school systems are placing a new emphasis on STEM subjects.

Over recent budgets the federal government has put over \$15 million into STEM programs for primary and secondary schools.

The new Victorian state curriculum being implemented in government and Catholic schools this year includes a strong STEM focus, with dedicated digital technology and coding components.

When the staff and students at Holy Spirit School in Thornbury East, who have already studied coding, talk about their experiences with STEM education they explain its practical application across all fields.

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[Business leaders] will be demanding active learning skills, complex problem-solving abilities, critical thinking skills and strong logical reasoning.

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Caleb Neyenhuis from St Joseph's College, Newtown, at Space Camp USA

'Kids who were frustrated early on are now persisting,' teacher Allison said, 'They can find solutions to their problems.'

Student Ashley explains, 'When I'm coding I think about the procedure and the things you have to do to get it right. You use that thinking in maths and lots of different places because you have the larger problems and you can break it up into lots of easier pieces so it's easier to do, step by step.'

Children are natural scientists. From the moment they are born, they are constantly exploring the world around them – exploring and seeking answers.

Just like their older colleagues working in laboratories, these child-scientists form their own hypotheses. They test them with their own experiments.

HASSE Senior School Space Program



Twenty students from Loreto Mandeville Hall in Toorak were granted the life-changing opportunity to travel to Houston, Texas, in December to participate in the Houston Association for Space and Science Education (HASSE) Senior School Space Program.

The girls had the opportunity to meet with NASA engineers, project managers and scientists, as well as engage in problem-based learning

opportunities that sought to encourage goal-setting, teamwork, project management, critical and creative thinking skills and crisis management.

In a fascinating opportunity, the students were able to manage a simulated space mission worth \$400 million, and participated in projects on NASA's Mars mission program, simulating the launch and landing of a

robotic rover on Mars. Besides understanding the engineering involved in the landing, students were given a budget and were required to use their risk-assessment and managerial skills to plan the mission.

Student Emily Liang said the camp 'encouraged in me the skills and inspiration to truly solidify my decision for my future as an Engineer'. †

Bridgette's invention wins her trip to NASA

Bridgette Veneris, Grade 3, St Joseph's School, Chelsea, had a brilliant idea. While undergoing treatment for leukaemia, she watched her mum and nurses struggle with opening the many adhesive plasters (otherwise known as Band-Aids) she required.

'I thought, if no-one is going to do something about it, then this problem is just going to go on forever,' Bridgette said. So the 10-year-old invented an easy-to-use adhesive bandage dispenser she calls 'Faster Aid'.

As part of her idea, the adhesive plasters would be a long roll similar to sticky tape, with perforated edges every 4cm, padding in the middle, and a protective plastic layer to keep them sterile. Users would simply pull the dispenser to the next perforated edge like sticky tape and tear off the adhesive plaster. The dispenser would close to keep them sterile.

Bridgette entered her invention in Origin's littleBIGidea competition

for young inventors in which it was judged along with 950 other entries for its originality, creativity, practicality and imagination. Her idea was selected as the winner. Bridgette's prize includes an innovation adventure to the USA featuring visits to NASA Kennedy Space Centre, Epcot Theme Park at Disneyworld and Ripley's *Believe It or Not*.

When asked about her invention Bridgette said 'I definitely do hope that it does change lives.'



STEM education aims to harness this sense of innate curiosity to keep them asking questions, to keep them exploring and experimenting.

This helps in two ways.

Science, technology, engineering and maths skills are essential to solving problems in the real world.

With STEM skills, we can build things stronger, faster and better. We can find new solutions, new ways of doing things. These new ideas translate into new opportunities, new businesses, new industries and new jobs.

And while not every child will go on to become a scientist, work on the cutting edge of technology, or as an engineer or a mathematician, all children can benefit from the principles of STEM learning.

A STEM-literate child can understand their world in a logical way. A STEM-literate child will be able to think for themselves, ask questions, form hypotheses and seek out the information to confirm or deny these.

It's at this point that it becomes clear how STEM education complements the values at the heart of Catholic education.

'The attributes of a great STEM student are creativity, engagement, inquiry, academic risk-taking and leadership,' Mary Farah, the principal of St Aloysius College in North Melbourne, explained.

A Catholic education, Mary says, prepares young people to lead lives of confidence, leadership and compassion.

'It's one that provides both a personal focus and a global perspective, it's one where students find their

voices and discover their unique gifts. It challenges them to think anew, it demands them to find solutions to help others and it supports them in turning dreams into reality.'

STEM, Mary says, is about the real world – just like a Catholic education. STEM is about making a difference in the lives of others – a fundamental value of Catholic education. And STEM is about working together, combining ingenuity and celebrating success – as Catholic schools do daily.

Catholic schools have always aimed to give students the knowledge and faith that will enable them to make a difference in their lives and the lives of others.

STEM education helps students with this task by creating opportunities to place what they learn in context, draw on all the different skills and knowledge they acquire, and apply it in real world settings.'

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STEM is about making a difference in the lives of others – a fundamental value of Catholic education.

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MARY FARAH
PRINCIPAL
ST ALOYSIUS COLLEGE,
NORTH MELBOURNE



Read about team Infitude (pictured) overleaf



(L-R) Will Clifton, Joel Bright and Peter Russell from St Bede's College, Mentone

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It was vindication that what we had been working so hard for was indeed achievable.

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What ensued was months upon months of hard work, dedication, sacrifices, collaboration and many, many learning experiences. The team's engineers, Jesse and Luke, were hard at work researching, testing and designing what was to become the world's fastest F1 in Schools™ car.

While this was going on, Nicole and Joel raised a total of \$65,000 to ensure the team could compete to the best of their ability, and Will and Peter designed and implemented what was the ever-present Infitude brand. This all took place every day with communication across two states, South Australia and Victoria; something that was a challenge in itself.

The months flew by and it was time for the World Finals, taking place in Austin, Texas. Reminiscing with students from over 20 countries, getting private tours of the F1 Circuit of the Americas track, experiencing the pressure of intense judging and developing friendships that will last a lifetime were only some of the benefits of the World Finals.

Being second on the world stage and obliterating the world record is an amazing achievement, but what was more important was the skills in Project Management, Marketing, Engineering and Graphic Design that we have learnt and applied through managing a business. It would not have been possible without our mentors Mrs Rebecca Seel and Mr Mark Micallef who most definitely deserve an honourable mention. We hope we have done our country proud.

We are Infitude! Read more at our website infitude.com.au.



Photos courtesy of Infitude

Infitude races to glory

F1 in Schools™ is the only global multi-disciplinary challenge in which teams of students aged 9 to 19 collaborate, design, analyse, manufacture, test, and then race miniature air-powered balsa wood F1 cars. After placing fourth in the Australian National Finals, the F1 in Schools team from St Bede's College, Mentone, in collaboration with Brighton Secondary College, Adelaide, had thought their dream of racing at the world finals was over. However, a wild card found them preparing for the world stage in Austin, Texas.

By Joel Bright,
St Bede's College,
Mentone

When we as a team look back on our achievements and accomplishments in this competition, it is hard for us to believe that not only have we come second in a worldwide educational competition, not only have we created the fastest car in the history of the program, but we have represented our country so well at such a young age, and we have developed skills that will last us a lifetime.

It all had to start somewhere and for Peter, Will and myself (the Melbourne contingent of the team) what was initially a period of thinking our participation in the competition was over after the Australian National Finals in March, we were given the news that we had the opportunity to represent our country internationally in the competition. It was vindication that what we had been working so hard for was indeed achievable.



Developing virtuous children:

Temperance

This article is the first in a series of four from the Life, Marriage & Family Office that aims to provide parents with an opportunity to examine the virtues of **temperance** (self-control), **fortitude** (courage), **justice** (giving to others what is rightly theirs) and **prudence** (good judgement), and how to foster these virtues in their children www.cam.org.au/lifemarriagefamily.

In March 2016, Pope Francis released his apostolic exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*, the Joy of Love, which is an invitation to reflect deeply on the gifts of marriage and family and to understand more deeply how they can be signs of God's love. Paying heed to the role that parents play in developing and nurturing faith and virtues in their children, he dedicated a whole chapter to *The Better Education of Children*.

Francis notes that parents are responsible for shaping the will of their children, fostering a natural inclination to goodness. Presenting as worthwhile certain ways of thinking and acting is part of a gradual process of growth.

Virtue is a conviction that has become a steadfast inner principle of operation. The virtuous life thus builds, strengthens and shapes freedom, lest we become slaves of dehumanising and antisocial inclinations. (Amoris Laetitia p. 267)

Temperance

Temperance, also known as self-control, is the habit of seeking pleasures appropriately – both exercising moderation in pursuit of enjoyment and in learning to find pleasure above all in what is good, true, noble and beautiful. It is characterised by establishing habitual expectations for rewards in ways that are truly good for us, and our children.

When children or adolescents are not helped to realise that some things have to be waited for, they can become obsessed with satisfying their immediate needs and develop the vice of "wanting it all now" ... When children realise that they have to be responsible for themselves, their self-esteem is enriched. This in turn teaches them to respect the freedom of others. (Amoris Laetitia p. 275)

Parents are encouraged to help children to understand that delaying gratification, or setting limits (even on good things), is necessary. Eating too much and avoiding exercise makes us unhealthy and unwell, which affects our freedom and capacity to enjoy other good things. Encouraging limits on how much screen time children receive also provides an opportunity for children to learn the benefits of moderation and control.

Equally, emotions need to be moderated. Though emotion is essential to gauge our own response, engage with others, and respond energetically to events around us, it is important to foster an awareness of the impact on others. In this way, parents can play a pivotal role in modelling good emotional behaviour with each other and with their children. Encouraging children to express emotions is healthy and necessary, but parents can guide them in recognising the right way, time and person to whom the emotions should be expressed.

Children watch closely what their parents do, perhaps more so than what they say, so it's important for parents to think about the behaviours they are modelling. If children see parents making an effort to read in the company of family perhaps, rather than surfing the internet or being preoccupied on the phone or computer, this will make an impact.

In trying to foster this virtue, take to heart the words of Pope Francis: 'Good habits need to be developed ... The strengthening of the will and the repetition of specific actions are the building blocks of moral conduct; without the conscious, free and valued repetition of certain patterns of good behaviour, moral education does not take place.'

Start small, and build from there! ✦



Showing your kids how they can give to others and pray for others during Lent will help your family to become persons of Easter.

The Project Compassion prayer can be found on the inside of the front cover of this edition.

experience, with the focus on prayer and giving alms. Students lead the daily Lenten prayers and are responsible for raising awareness of the Project Compassion theme through fundraising activities such as crazy hair days and cake sales.

'Our students see Lent as a way of giving back something of themselves and more than just giving something up, like chocolate. They follow the daily activities of the Project Compassion Lenten Calendar and look forward to watching the weekly stories where they can see how their fundraising makes a difference to communities,' she said.

Year 7 students at St Monica's College, Epping, launch Project Compassion at a special assembly on Shrove Tuesday each year, where they reflect on the importance of caring for the vulnerable and marginalised in our global community.

Coordinator of Community Engagement, Glenda Hay, said, 'Making a difference to the communities in the Project Compassion stories really resonates with our students. They look forward to leading the weekly homeroom prayer during Lent for those communities.'

Preparing the way of the Lord

Encouraging your kids to give up eating chocolate during Lent is a familiar and challenging tradition in the lead up to Easter.

Giving up their favourite sweets is one of many ways your kids can experience Lent as a time of reflection, prayer and the giving of ourselves.

In 2017 we are encouraging our community to focus on becoming a person of Easter by giving something of ourselves to others during Lent. Every year Caritas Australia's Project Compassion chooses a theme for its Lenten fundraising. This year's theme is 'Love your Neighbour', which aims to show how love and giving of ourselves for our neighbours can transform people's lives.

Director of Catholic Identity, Danielle Fairthorne, encourages students at Mount St Joseph Girls' College, Altona, to approach Lent as a personal

“In 2017 we are encouraging our community to focus on becoming a person of Easter by giving something of ourselves to others during Lent.”

Starting on Ash Wednesday, 1 March, your children can get involved with one of the many activities during Project Compassion's Lenten campaign:

- Follow the daily stories, prayers, reflections and actions in the Project Compassion Lent Calendar. Some examples are doing something nice for someone you don't know very well and making a plan on how you will love your neighbour during Lent. You can download the Lent Calendar at www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion/lenten-calendar.
- Choose from one of the many different ways you can help by raising much needed funds. For example your kids and their friends can hold an arts and craft day to express how they help each other and their neighbours through their art. You can find more fundraising ideas at www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion/fundraising-ideas.

Moved by the *love* of Christ

**CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK
12-19 MARCH**

This March, Catholic Education Week 2017 embraced the theme 'Moved by the love of Christ'. Coinciding with the church's feast day of St Patrick of Ireland, Catholic Education Week was a time to recognise the spirit of more than 150,000 young people who attend primary and secondary schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

The **Mass of St Patrick for Schools** (17 March) provided the religious centrepiece for the week's events. Student representatives from every primary and secondary school in the Archdiocese of Melbourne joined Archbishop Denis Hart for a celebration of the Eucharist. Led by Celtic pipers and a procession of school banners, the Mass recognised the charism of the Catholic education community in a ceremony that honoured the commitment to our shared tradition.



The **Concert in the Park** (17 March) was a scene of great excitement for the students who descended on Treasury Gardens following the Mass of St Patrick for Schools. The concert in the park came alive with activities, games, dancing and laughter with all ages enjoying the festivities.

The **Young Speakers Colloquium** (17 March) offered the chance for secondary students to hear about some of the unique and diverse life journeys that former Catholic students have embarked upon. Speaking at the Colloquium this year were rock star/Parish Priest Fr Rob Galea and 18-year-old Manu Lavemai, each of whom brought different perspectives on music in youth ministry. They were accompanied by performers from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College, Bentleigh, and St Columba's College, Essendon.

The **Visual Arts Exhibition** (14-19 March) presented a showcase of the range of artistic talents of our students. From photography to papier mâché, hanging mobiles to sustainable clothing and everything in between, the creative gifts of Catholic students was a delight to behold. A selection of these artists was invited to an award presentation ceremony on Sunday 19 March to recognise the quality of the work.

While these individual events formed the culmination of Catholic Education Week, the celebration was also held at a local level in the individual school communities with a wide-range of events, enabling schools to show the joyful spirit of the staff and students and the ways in which every member of their communities is *Moved by the love of Christ*. ✝



New year, fresh start

I've just completed the annual ritual of covering and naming school books. There's something therapeutic about writing sticky name labels and twirling them around dozens of pencils, textas and crayons. Marking the passage of time as one year becomes the next and our children move from preschool to primary then onto secondary where, surprisingly in this age of the eBook, there still appears to be as much covering and labelling as ever!

It's the exercise books that always strike me. Their blank newness speaks to me of the limitless potential we feel at the start of the new school year and of the fresh start available to us all.

For some of us, our first child is starting school for the first time and we look forward to seeing them in their new environment, blooming in new ways as their formal education begins. Possibly it's our last child heading into Prep and we wonder, to paraphrase Winston Churchill, whether it's the beginning of the end or merely the end of the beginning. So many learning experiences for our little ones and for us as parents as well.

Maybe you have a child beginning secondary school; negotiating timetables, public transport, new friends, new privileges and responsibilities. And just as the brains, personalities and abilities of our Year 7 students expand to fill their space, so too do we grow as parents, adjusting to the new boundaries and challenges necessitated by life with a teenager.

Perhaps VCE is the challenge this year; our children on the launching pad to the rest of their lives, focused on their special areas of study, invested in their friendships and interests, hopeful for their future outside the school gates, yet still very much in need of parental guidance and support.

And then there are the in-between grades, no less important and just as alive with promise as those seminal years. There's trepidation or excitement about new opportunities, (pen licenses, school camps, work experience) or new challenges (independent learning or exams) reminding us that there is always something to look forward to and new heights to climb.

“The fresh start applies at any age and stage and, as parents, the new school year invites us to reflect and perhaps even press reset.”

By **Rhyannon Elliott**,
Victorian Catholic
Schools Parent Body



The fresh start applies at any age and stage and, as parents, the new school year invites us to reflect and perhaps even press reset. Before the holiday pace quickens we can ask the questions that can sometimes be forgotten once the busyness of the school routine is upon us:

- What are our hopes for our family this year?
- What are our dreams for our children? What do they hope to achieve with their learning?
- What encouragement can we offer to them as they embark on a new journey?
- What worked well in the past year in how we supported them and what could be improved?
- How do we want to grow as individuals and as parents?
- What encouragement and support do we also need from our schools in guiding our children on the right path?

Before we know it those empty exercise books will be filled with a whole year of learning, but for the moment, remind your children and yourselves that, in the year ahead, anything is possible. ✦

NOW THAT YOU'VE SETTLED IN

Once the busy start to the year has passed, children should be settled into a routine at school. Routine is also important at home to help children manage their time effectively. So what can you now expect as you head towards the end of term?



- Encourage your child to develop a routine each day to manage their time – a diary or calendar will help them organise 'learning at home' time around sport commitments, screen time or other events after school.
- Sleep is extremely important and any routine should include getting to bed early (around 7.30 – 8.00 pm for primary-aged children) so they are wide awake and ready to learn the next day. Continue this routine during the holidays so they are not too tired getting back to school in Term 2.
- Children will now be making new friends or rekindling old friendships. Encouraging positive relationships by organising play dates after school. This also helps you to get to know other parents.
- Many notes and invitations are sent from school: lock them in your diary or calendar so it doesn't become too overwhelming. Google calendar is great to use for the whole family so everyone knows what is happening and when.
- Managing time around school hours and after-school activities can be tiring for parents. The most important thing is to enjoy this time as it is an opportunity for great learning for children and they need us to guide and support them along the way.

Following in the Broadfootsteps

Annette and Gerard Broadfoot are principals at St Bede's School, Balwyn North, and Mother of God School, Ardeer, respectively, and their daughter Claire is a teacher at St Mark's School, Fawkner. We asked what wisdom this family of Catholic educators had to offer.

The thing I like about working in a Catholic school ...

ANNETTE: *David Whyte says of Moses that when he stood in front of the burning bush it wasn't so much him hearing the voice of God, but rather that he realised not only that he stood in God's presence, but that he had been in that presence all his life. Every step of his life had been on holy ground. (Already Within, Daniel J O'Leary.)* This reflects for me the challenge and beauty of working in a Catholic school: the opportunity to explore, encourage and discover God within each one of us.

I have always found parish-school partnerships enriching. I've worked in leadership with amazing parish priests who have deepened my faith and faith leadership through great conversations, community and lasting friendships.

CLAIRE: How lucky are we to work in a place that values spirituality so highly? At St Mark's, I enjoy the charism of the Mercy Sisters that elicits the Christian message. I think that's important in shaping the kids' futures beyond primary school.

GERARD: Mother of God is a Brigidine school, where the charism and core values are explicit everyday among the kids, not just in mission statements and policy. I am proud of that.

A Catholic school allows for times of stillness, reflection, gathering together as a faith community in prayer. Mother of God is a school where many faiths are present. It is a privilege to lead such a community of young people; thoughtful, respectful, inclusive and loving of their families and all they do for each other. Best job I've ever had. I love coming into school every day.

I can't wait for these young people to lead their own communities.

A Catholic educator requires ...

ANNETTE: Moments of reflection, opportunities to seek out the symbolic in life, and celebrate all that is good.

CLAIRE: The desire to listen to children's own spirituality and nurture that carefully; compassion and an ability to see what kids need and respond with love and understanding.

GERARD: In the current climate, a contemporary requirement of a Catholic educator is to be ready to stand up for the amazing faith-based schools we have in abundance here in Melbourne and celebrate all that is good with joy and gratitude. Importantly, every child, family and colleague should see in us a conviction to the values of our faith in all we do.



Meet the Broadfoot family (L-R) Gerard, Claire, Annette and Isla

The greatest challenge for parents today ...

ANNETTE: To value time, and not to get caught up in a competitive, materialistic world. The busyness of life leads to so much anxiety.

CLAIRE: To honour and cherish the simplicity of life – the time spent with loved ones, the joy of watching our kids grow and thrive.

GERARD: After having just become a grand-dad, I am reminded of the privilege of being a parent and the joy it brings into your life each day. Simply loving your kids and being present in their lives will overcome any challenges there are. Perhaps that's a challenge in itself.

By the time I retire ...

GERARD: I might talk about retirement too much. On a Christmas card last year one child said he'd miss me next year.

'Are you going?' I asked him.

'No, you're going,' he replied.

'I'm going? Where am I going?'

'You're going to restore, or something.' Trying to remember the R word.

By the time I do retire, I hope that I'm satisfied with how I leave the school community, to disappear into the land of no bells, no improvement plans or meetings, and be able to pick up our granddaughter from her school.

We also want to say...

CLAIRE: It is unfair to put me in an article with my parents who have 60 years combined more experience than me in Catholic education and life. Having said that, I look up to them for their undeniable passion, knowledge and vision in education as well as their faith. I was brought up to value the spirituality of life and I value that very much.

ALL: We enjoy working together, sharing our ideas, getting insights from each other. We delight in the stories, and are enriched by the friendships and relationships that are shared with us. †

Postcodes of Hope

St Dominic's School in Broadmeadows was delighted to host its local MP and former student, Frank McGuire, to launch the program Postcodes of Hope, and to announce a \$300,000 grant from the state government towards a new STEM learning centre. ✦



Photo courtesy Nine News



Cupcakes for charity

A group of six Year 4 students from St Thomas the Apostle Primary School in Greensborough North have tackled the issue of animal welfare in the best way they know – with cupcakes. After a family pet was senselessly shot by a stranger, the students decided to band together to hold a fundraiser for the RSPCA. The group sourced eggs from the school chook run – and even wrote their own media release to publicise the fundraiser, catching the eye of the local newspaper. ✦



Dual Dux Dhruvi does Double Degree

Profound deafness proved no barrier to Dhruvi Desai, becoming joint dux of Aquinas College, Ringwood, and St Mary's College for the Deaf, with an ATAR of 99.1, including a perfect study score in Business Management. Dhruvi has been offered a place in a double degree for 2017, a Bachelor of Law/Commerce at Monash University. ✦

Walk through Bethlehem

St Peter's School, Epping, has started a tradition in which its school community and the general public alike can engage. An epic and interactive production held each night 21–23 December, *Walk Through Bethlehem* was a living display of life in a small town at the time of the birth of Jesus. ✦



Science Talent Search

One hundred and fifteen Catholic students received major or minor bursaries in the categories of Computer Programs, Games, Experimental Research, Inventions, Working Models, Creative Writing, Science Photography, Video Productions and Posters Scientific Wall Charts, in the recent Victorian Science Talent Search. The students came from 13 secondary schools and two primary schools. ✦



Syrian refugee dux of CRC Sydenham

Saad Al-Kassab topped the table at Catholic Regional College, Sydenham, with an ATAR of 96.65 despite only starting to learn English after arriving in Australia as a refugee from Syria in June 2014 and missing two years of school due to the conflict in his homeland, instead studying at home with his mother. Saad received a scholarship to study at the college. 'I was overwhelmed and so pleased to accept the scholarship to study there. It was actually a really amazing experience. You see other perspectives and learn so much from the Catholic faith,' he said. ✦

Corey Lyons AFL draft pick and VCE success



Corey completed his VCE at De La Salle College, Malvern, in 2016 with an ATAR of 94, all the while training with his footy team, the Sandringham Dragons, and earning an AFL draft pick with the Brisbane Lions. Corey said, 'My teachers were truly amazing over the course of Year 12 as they understood my commitments outside of school and helped me manage that as best I could'. ✦

St Michael's and the Royal Children's Hospital

St Michael's School in North Melbourne is located across the road from the Royal Children's Hospital (RCH), and the school has opened its doors to some special families. With children from all over the country needing the specialist care available at the RCH, St Michael's (with help from the Parkville chapter of St Vincent de Paul) has been able to provide education for young patients and their siblings, including covering the cost of fees and uniforms. ✦



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ResourceSmart Awards

Each year, the ResourceSmart Awards are presented, celebrating the achievements of sustainability programs in schools across the state. On 11 November, the finalists all had their sustainability stories showcased at IMAX Theatre at the Melbourne Museum. A number of Catholic schools were finalists and several that also won the award in their category. ✦

Energy Primary School of the Year Winner:
St Joseph's School, Elsternwick

Siena College principal receives award

Gaynor Robson-Garth, Principal at Siena College, Camberwell, strongly believes that staff professional development is central to the growth of the individual, the team and the school. She has invested much time in promoting professional development at Siena and has recently been recognised for these efforts by being awarded a John Laing Award for Professional Development awarded by the Principals Australia Institute. ✦



Gaynor Robson-Garth with 2016 Siena College captains

Maree's TV interview with Missy Higgins

Aspiring singer Maree Tsotsos from St Mary Magdalene's School, Chadstone, interviewed Missy Higgins for ABC ME's *In Tune* program. Missy gave Maree some tips for overcoming stage fright and strengthening her voice. Maree said, 'It was the most amazing experience ever! I hope that I can meet her again one day!' ✦



Image courtesy of ABC TV

St Anthony's wins *Screen It* competition

Students from St Anthony's Primary School, Noble Park, won the Junior Live Action category for *Screen It* 2016. Michelle Quan, Royce D'mello, Sarah Siddig, Souze Mubarak and Tina Nguyen's entry, *Amazing Mums*, was the winner of the Junior Live Action category. *Screen It* is Australia's national film, animation and game making competition for school-age students. ✦



Building community

The Year 3 and 4 students at St Aloysius' School, Caulfield, began their visits to nearby Sheridan Hall Aged Care Home in what will be a fortnightly program, in which the focus of their visits will alternate between craft and reading. Many students commented on 'how happy everyone was' and 'how lovely the place was' (and that they would like to live there too!). ✦





Silent film award

Jordan Nandan, Julian Petrone, Joshua Bell and Anthony Bougioukos from St Bede's College, Mentone, won the International Youth Silent Film Festival for their film *Writer's Block*. Their film will now compete with films from other countries at a competition in Portland, Oregon, later this year. ✦

Ice Cream for Asylum

The Languages Club of Caroline Chisholm Catholic College's Christ the King campus, in collaboration with the college Social Justice Team, held a fundraiser for people seeking asylum. The day was successful, with all the flavours being sold out by the end of lunch break. A long line of students filled the quadrangle to have a taste of the LOTE Club's ice cream. ✦

End of year celebrations

Principal of St Pius X Primary School, Heidelberg West, hosted Deputy Opposition Leader, Tanya Plibersek and local federal member Jenny Macklin at the school's end of year celebration *Creating Bright Futures*. Barbara inspired the school community with her address, 'Let us continue to work together as a team building a positive future for our school, full of magical moments for all in our community to shine!' ✦



Taking technology to the world

Students at St Lawrence School, Derrimut, have taken their ideas for reducing driver distraction out of the classroom and in front of world leaders in the transport field. In partnership with Scienceworks in Spotswood, the Year 6 students built on their inquiry-based learning to develop an idea to make Victorian roads safer, by integrating steering wheel sensors in a car and designing a phone app to stop drivers texting and making calls while the vehicle is moving. ✦

VCAL class grow food to feed the hungry

The VCAL class at Our Lady of Mercy College, Heidelberg, has been involved in a project called *The Garden Collective*, about growing food for others and setting up, and maintaining a garden within a social justice framework. After a growing period of about twelve weeks, the crop, weighing close to thirty kilos, was harvested and then donated and delivered to FareShare in Abbotsford to be incorporated into meals for soup vans, homeless shelters, food banks and breakfast programs around Victoria. ✦



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