Message from the Principal

Dear Parents,

At the moment we are between two calendars as we race to the end of 2013. For our Catholic Church we have commenced the beginning of the liturgical year – the season of Advent. Advent is a Latin word that actually means "coming." In the Christian church, advent is time of preparation and waiting for the birth of Jesus. Our church challenges us to take the time and space to prepare for the ‘birth of Jesus’ in our hearts and minds. As the school year comes to its completion, that reflection time can seem impossible to find. Hugh Mackay in his book ‘The Good Life: What makes a life worth living?’ has a thought-provoking reflection which can speak to us in this most holiest and busiest of times. He says, "Attentive listening, sincere apology, generous forgiveness: these are the gifts we most want from others, and therefore, the gifts we should be most willing to give to others."

Over the coming weeks find some time of quiet and challenge yourself: Who needs to be listened to? Who needs my apology and forgiveness to make a difference in their lives?

Staffing Update

It is with great pleasure to announce that Miss Geracitano has been appointed Coordinator at St. Anthony’s Primary at Girraween commencing in 2014. Miss Geracitano was a foundation staff member and has contributed tremendously to the wonderful Catholic learning culture we have at Mother Teresa Primary. We will miss her energy and passion in providing the best learning environment for all our students. We wish her every blessing in her new role.

Other staff leaving at the end of the year include Miss Ashleigh Harrold, Mrs. Melissa Palmer, Mr. Thanh Nguyen and Mr. Doug Fuller. We wish them all much happiness in their new appointments for next year.

Our staff continues to grow and for next year it is wonderful to inform you that Mr. Chris Maguire, Mr. Greg Egan, Mrs. Nadia Esposito (Administration) and Miss Jessica George (PE Teacher) have been appointed at Mother Teresa Primary. They are all warmly welcomed into our school community and will have much to offer our students, staff and parent community.

IMPORTANT DATE CHANGE

Due to a clash of dates with one of our high schools our Celebration of Learning with be held on Wednesday December 11 from 4-6pm. This will be a wonderful opportunity to

- Celebrate all your child’s successful learning
- Receive your child’s Learning Report
- Offer feedback to the school for planning for next year.

Sorry for the inconvenience but the lack of parking onsite challenges us to coordinate these key events.

A BIG THANKYOU

Due to your generous support through our Family Contribution and Technology Fees for this year we have been able to;

- Complete the installation of school bag storage right across the school. This has been a wonderful addition to help the students stay organised and support the general appearance of the school.
- Purchase 12 laptops and 12 iPads for the learning studios for next year. This will ensure that our students have the latest technology to support their learning.

Have a great week,

G Borg
**STAGE 3 CANBERRA 2014 EXCURSION**

In 2014 Stage 3 will be travelling to Canberra for an excursion. This excursion is supported through PACER. Here is a short explanation about PACER.

The Parliament and Civics Education Rebate (PACER) is an initiative of the Australian Government which provides some financial assistance for students in Years 4-12 across Australia to travel to Canberra, the nation’s capital. Students who learn about civics and citizenship in the classroom see their knowledge brought to life when they experience Canberra first hand. Students visit Parliament House, the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House and/or the National Electoral Education Centre and the Australian War Memorial, and have the opportunity to visit a number of other sites of cultural and historical interest.

**COSHC CHRISTMAS CLOSURE DATES**

Closure dates for COSHC across the Christmas holiday period:

CLOSED: Thursday 19 December 2013 to Friday 3rd January 2014 inclusive

Vacation Care

Opening on Monday 6th January (demand pending) until Friday 24th January 2014 at Mother Teresa Westmead.

All COSHC services will be closed on Monday 27th January and Tuesday 28th January 2014.

Before and after school care will resume normal operation on Wednesday 29th January 2014.

**All day care will be offered on Wednesday 29th January 2014 for those schools with a pupil free day through liaising with individual school principals.**

**The Fr Colin McKay Institute of Counselling**

The Fr Colin McKay Institute of Counselling, established in 1969, offers a course designed to develop skills in personal growth, communication, parenting and general counselling principles. Participants can learn new skills in dealing with daily personal challenges and the issues that arise within families, the school environment and in the workplace. It is conducted on Tuesday evenings within the school term between 7.30pm – 9.45pm at Holy Cross College, Victoria Road, Ryde commencing on Tuesday 4 February 2014. For enquiries please contact:

Michael Hill - 9869 3774 or 0410 774 432;

Carol Harding - 9639 0096 or 0411 022 478;

Jannelle Carlile - 0431 598 004 (Mon – Fri between 7.00 & 9.00 p.m.); or

Email: counselling1969@gmail.com

**SCHOOL UNIFORMS 2014**

If you would like to start purchasing your school uniforms for 2014, you can either email your order, or come into the front office. [www.motherteresawestmead.catholic.edu.au](http://www.motherteresawestmead.catholic.edu.au) (download order form). The office will then fill your order and place in your child’s bag.

**School Fees**

Thank you to all families who have finalised school fees for 2013. Could we ask that any outstanding fees be finalised by **Tuesday 17 December 2013**. Families will once again be offered the Flexible Payment Plan option for 2014 school fees early in Term 1. We strongly urge you to consider taking up this option which allows a great deal of flexibility with regard to payment of fees. Payment can be made weekly, fortnightly or monthly to suit your budget.

**LEAVING STUDENTS**

If your child will not be returning to school in 2014, you must notify the office as soon as possible and advise the last date of attendance at our school and the name of the new school your child will be attending.