Dear Parents

This has been a very exciting week with our Preps for 2014 completing their Transition Program with an Orientation Morning where they spent the morning with their teacher for next year, in their allocated classrooms with half of their class for next year. There was lots of excitement and enthusiasm as this gave them a real feeling of coming to school.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff members that make this Transition program run so smoothly and being so worthwhile: Mrs Gwenda Burnett for organising all of the Kindergarten visits as well as running most of the “GAGS” sessions assisted by Mrs Joyce Lalor and Mrs Josie Kirby. To Mrs Carol Hicks and Mrs Cathy Sims for visiting all of the Kindergartens, for running the small group interviews and for opening their classrooms for a week so that each day a couple of next year’s Preps could come and see how a Prep class operates and for planning and conducting such a nonthreatening, enjoyable and engaging Orientation morning for our 2014 Preps. To Mrs Gwenda Burnett, Mrs Olive Chodowski, Mrs Margaret Masseni and Mrs Josie Kirby for assisting me in presenting the Prep Information night. And finally to our Administration Staff, Mrs Valda Pedley and Mrs Jane Sammut for their constant support and assistance throughout the whole program.

ARTS SPECTACULAR:

Hopefully you have this date marked in your diary Tuesday 10th December, as it is definitely not to be missed. All children will be involved in a concert in the church commencing at 6.00 pm and concluding around 7.15 pm. Then all families and friends are invited into the school grounds for a picnic meal. Tables and chairs will be set up but there is never enough so bring your picnic rug. Beer, wine and soft drink can be purchased from the canteen. All parents are welcome to attend. We hope you will be able to join us.

FATHER PAUL’S 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS ORDINATION:

You are all invited to attend the Celebration of Fr. Paul’s Twentieth Anniversary of his Ordination. The parishes of St. Mary’s Altona and St. Leo’s North Altona will come together to celebrate this Sunday 8th December at the 10.30 am Mass at St. Leo’s Church followed by a sausage sizzle afterwards. Please join our Parish in making this a memorable occasion.

PARENT THANK YOU AFTERNOON TEA:

I invite all parents / carers to join the staff for a THANK YOU Afternoon Tea on Monday 9th December in the school hall from 3.00 – 4.00 pm. Children will be supervised on the playground. All parents are welcome to attend. We hope you will be able to join us.

FUNDING UPDATE:

“Many of you may have seen the news over the last week and been concerned about the future of funding for our school. The Australian Government announced on Monday 2 December that it would reverse its earlier position and fully fund its commitment to all schools over the next four years. With the federal debate on funding now resolved, all Catholic schools are looking forward to the government and the opposition working together to engage in real policy reform to improve school performance in the interests of all students. As always, it is your interest in this matter that helps inform government on the need for fair funding for Catholic schools.”

Mr Stephen Elder: Executive Director of Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV).

SCHOOL FEES:

Thank you again to the majority of parents who have either settled their account or have contacted me to put some other arrangements in place HOWEVER there is still $26,969.00 OUTSTANDING. Please settle these accounts immediately or contact me otherwise we may need to involve an outside agency to retrieve these monies.

CONGRATULATIONS:

To two of our past students who have received awards at CBC College St. Kilda. Thomas Curran received an Academic Award for Outdoor Education as well as the College Spirit Award for Year 7. Nicholas Burgess received an Academic Award for Art. Congratulations to both boys.

David Kelly.
Principal.
**Caring Catholic Community in Education**

St. Mary's Altona Newsletter

**Differen**

Please place items packets/tins, biscuits, long Christmas hampers.

One of our busy mums, Leanne Vandeligt, has offered to handed out is to local people/families. The deadline for the Salvo's who are putting together Christmas hampers to be handed out to people in our community who turn to them at Christmas.

Without your support the Salvo's would not be able to assist one. Please consider changing a life this Christmas.

**Religious Education Coordinator**

Olive Chodowski

**O**

The birth of Morag and Henry Zun’s grandchild – Levi.

All members of our community who are sick or in need of our prayerful support.

Celebration of Fr. Paul’s Twentieth Anniversary of his Ordination.

The parishes of St. Mary’s Altona and St. Leo’s Altona North invite you to attend this occasion to be celebrated on Sunday 8th Dec 2013 at 10.30am Mass at St. Leo’s Church, Nth. Altona. A sausage sizzle will follow. Please join the parish in making this a memorable occasion.

**LIST OF SACRAMENT DATES FOR 2014**

- Celebration of Confirmation: 3:00 pm Sun 23 March
- First Reconciliation: 7:00 pm Wed 4th June
- Celebration of First Communion: Saturday 23 August at 6.30 pm Sunday 24 August at 9.00 am

**Olive Chodowski**

Religious Education Coordinator

**CHRISTMAS APPEAL**

There are hundreds of reasons to donate, you only need one. Please consider changing a life this Christmas. Without your support the Salvo’s would not be able to assist the people in our community who turn to them at Christmas.

A quick collection of non-perishables are needed for the Salvo’s who are putting together Christmas hampers to be handed out to local people/families. The deadline for the hand out is 18th December.

One of our busy mums, Leanne Vandeligt, has offered to coordinate a collection for the Salvo’s who are preparing Christmas hampers. They are really after food items e.g. biscuits, long life milk, custard powder, cake mix, soup packets/tins, tea and tin vegetables.

Please place items in Room 11 – 5/6C or in labelled yellow crate in front of Physical Education /Religious Education office in TRI Centre. Thank you. Together we can make a difference.

**IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE REMAINDER OR THE YEAR**

**DECEMBER**

Monday 9th
School Assembly 5/6G – 2.30 pm
Chair Cleaning Day – 9.00 am

Tuesday 10th
Arts Spectacular – 6.00 pm
Walk / Ride to School Day
Bicycle Victoria Incursion in the Hall – 11.30 am

Wednesday 11th
Creative Music Concert in Hall – 2.00 pm

Friday 13th
Pasta Making Day for Year 5/6’s
Reports to go home

Monday 16th
School Assembly Staff – 2.30 pm

Tuesday 17th
2014 Year 1 – 6 Orientation – 11.30 am
Graduation Mass – 6.00 pm

Wednesday 18th
End of Year Mass – 9.15 am

Thursday 19th
End of School Year for Children 3.20 pm finish

Friday 20th
End of School Year for Staff

**SOS HELP NEEDED**

On Monday 9th December we are washing ALL chairs and ALL tables in the school and would love the help of past students to help wash chairs. Parents would like your help to wash classroom tables. If you can help for all or part of the time from 9.00 – 11.00 am please come along on Monday and meet in the office.

**NORMIE THE GNOME**

Normie the Gnome is awarded to the House Team who keeps their part of the yard the cleanest. This week’s winner is:

**GREEN TEAM**

**TUCCSHOP HELPERS**

- **Manager:** Eva Coppola  Tel: 9315 0799

**UNIFORM SHOP OPEN**

**WEDNESDAYS 8.30 AM – 9.00 AM & 3.00 PM – 3.30 PM**

**Penny Ealem Co-ordinator and Assisted by Linda Wakfer**

**CHANGES TO 2014 YEAR SIX STUDENT LEADERS**

At St. Mary’s we have always promoted and supported our Year 6 students in taking on roles and responsibilities related to student leadership within our school.

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St. Mary’s Altona Newsletter

“Caring Catholic Community in Education”
DOING IT RIGHT – WEEK 7 & 8 TERM 4
Congratulations to the following children who were “Doing it Right” at St Mary’s in weeks 7 & 8 of term. They were seen working well and being reliable, displaying resilience, handing in money found, taking pride in the environment, sharing school values, being a supportive friend and doing loads of other great things.

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5/6L: Matthew H
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HEALTHY FAMILY CHALLENGE....ended last week. Hope you’ve had fun helping your family to be a little healthier. Thanks to the families who returned their calendars. Check them out on the notice board outside the staff room.

NATIONAL ATHLETICS
Congratulations to OLIVIA YACONO who represented St Mary’s and Victoria and came 6th in the multi event. Olivia competed in 100m, 800m, shot put (all of which she got PB in) and long jump. Well done Liv! We are very proud of you.

WALK / RIDE TO SCHOOL DAY
TUESDAY 10TH DECEMBER
Our last for the year...let’s make it a good one!

LITERACY NEWS

TAKE HOME READERS
Please return ALL take home readers to school as soon as possible. There will be NO readers sent home in the next two weeks. Thank you.

Gwenda Burnett
Literacy Leader.

MUSIC AT ST. MARY’S ARTS SPECTACULAR
The Christmas Concert is less than a week away! The children have been working hard preparing for the night. Hope you and your family can join this wonderful celebration next Tuesday10th December in the Church 6.00 pm. Please be seated by 5:55 pm.
The students need to wear their full summer uniform.

CHOIR
The School Choir has been asked to sing Christmas Carols at Altona North Bunnings store and Altona Gate shopping centre on Wednesday 18th December. We are performing at 12 noon at Bunnings and 10:30 am at Altona Gate food court.
We encourage as many parents and family members as possible to come along to give them support.

Morag Zun
Performing Arts Teacher
St. Mary’s Altona Newsletter
“Caring Catholic Community in Education”

CHANGES TO 2014 YEAR SIX STUDENT LEADERS
(Cont.)
We wish to continue to do this but also wish to recognise several leadership roles that students have been doing but have not been formally acknowledged for.

Therefore for 2014 we have decided to make the following changes:
- We will introduce two new student leadership roles.
- While acknowledging the role and work of all current and past school captains and vice captains, we will make the change to have four school captains and no school vice captains.
- Our House Team Leaders will be selected by staff rather than by peer vote.

New Leadership Roles:
WELLBEING LEADERS: Assist with the promotion of Wellbeing in our school community through initiatives such as Walk / Ride to School and Healthy Family Challenge and related activities.
- Promote an awareness of the importance of building positive relationships and the initiatives that help to do this.
- E.g. Our school based ‘positive relationship’ programs, the Day of Action against Bullying & Violence, Red Day for Child Safety and Better Buddies.

SOCIAL JUSTICE LEADERS: Assist with the promotion of justice for all within our school community and wider community. E.g. Help organise/promote fundraising events:
- Raise issues of injustice within our school & wider community and work together to solve these issues.

We have spoken to all Year 5 students about these changes and the new leadership roles and encouraged EVERY 2014 YEAR SIX STUDENT to apply for these positions of leadership.

WALK / RIDE TO SCHOOL
TUESDAY 10TH DECEMBER
Have a great day away! The children have been working hard preparing for the night. Hope you and your family can join this wonderful celebration next Tuesday 10th December in the Church 6.00 pm. Please be seated by 5:55 pm.
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Parents and Friends News

BUNNINGS BBQ
Thanks to everyone who helped out. There was a steady stream of customers and, coupled with the lunchtime rush, we managed to raise over $1350.00 profit. For all those who came on the day, some at short notice, your help is really appreciated. A particular thanks to the St Marys students who helped, notably Joseph Cooper who did a fine job spruiking and handing out the sausages.

Thanks also to those who shopped for supplies and organised advertising and the roster- Alan Mercer, Penny Ealem, Michelle Green, Lisa Curran, Ellie Corbie, Jarrod Pye, Gary Hills, and Monique Houlihan. Special mentions go to the last crew for the day Stephen Cooper and Tom Yeager who did double shifts and stayed late to clean up.

ARTS SPECTACULAR: TUESDAY 10TH DECEMBER
The Parents and Friends will be running a bar at the family picnic and organising a scavenger hunt for the children. Last week we asked for volunteers to help set up, pack down and manage the bar - please hand in the form attached to last weeks newsletter if you are able to help in any small way. Our fantastic teachers and staff have organised a great evening and we look forward to seeing lots of families there.

PARENT THANK YOU AFTERNOON TEA

Thank you for your help and support during the year.

We invite you to join the staff for Afternoon Tea

On

Monday 9th December
At 3.00 – 4.00pm

In

the school hall
(children will be supervised outside)

The Staff of St. Mary’s

Congratulations to Andrew Styzinski, Class of 1986, on his induction to the College Alumnus Roll of Honour. Andrew, who is also a member of the College Board, was guest speaker at the recent Celebration of Excellence evening and spoke of his career in the Chemical Industry. His current role with GrainCorp involves the management of facilities across Australia, New Zealand and Asia. Andrew emphasized the importance of family, relationships and teamwork, hard work, persevering through set-backs and having a clear idea of his goals.

ALTONA FAMILY SPOT.COM

Is a one stop guide for parents and kids on what’s happening in the Altona Beach and Seaholme area. Head to altonafamilyspot.com to find out more. Subscribe before 15th December, 2013 to go in the draw to win a bottle of Mumm champers. (Winner will be drawn 17th December and contacted via supplied email address).

altonafamilyspot@gmail.com