Praying Lent This Year

Lent offers us all a very special opportunity to grow in our relationship with God and to deepen our commitment to a way of life, rooted in our baptism. In our busy world, Lent provides us with an opportunity to reflect upon our patterns, to pray more deeply, experience sorrow for what we’ve done and failed to do, and to be generous to those in need.

Trust in the Lord

How rich are the depths of God – how deep his wisdom and knowledge – and how impossible to penetrate his motives or understand his methods! Who could ever know the mind of the Lord? Who could ever be his counsellor? Who could ever give him anything or lend him anything? All that exists comes from him; all is by him and for him. To him be glory forever. (Romans 11: 33–36).

Lord our God,
all truth is from you, and you alone bring oneness of heart.
Give your people the joy of hearing your word
in every sound and of longing for your presence
more than life itself.
May all the attractions of a changing world
serve only to bring us the peace of your
kingdom which this world does not give.

10 tips for making Lent more meaningful
1. Slow Down - Set aside 10 minutes a day for silent prayer or meditation. It will revitalize your body and your spirit.
2. Read a good book - You could choose the life of a saint, a spiritual how-to, an inspirational book or one of the pope’s new books.
3. Be kind - Go out of your way to do something nice for someone else every day.
4. Get involved - Attend a Lenten lecture or spiritual program.
5. Volunteer at your parish - Whether it's the parish fish fry, cleaning the church or helping with the food drive, it will give you a chance to help others.
6. Reach out - Invite an inactive Catholic to come with you to receive ashes on Ash Wednesday.
7. Pray - Especially for people you don't like and for people who don't like you.
8. Tune out - Turn off the television and spend quality time talking with family members or friends.
9. Clean out closets - Donate gently used items to the St. Vincent de Paul Society.
10. Donate - Google "Catholic Missions" or “Project Compassion” Then pick one mission and decide how you can help by sending money, clothing or supplies.

Make your Lent worthwhile!
Dear Parents and Friends of St Francis,

**The Jubilee Year of Mercy**

Last Friday I had the privilege of listening to Sr Veronica Lawson, theologian and lecturer at ACU, speak to school leaders regarding the significance of being merciful and compassionate to all. Her presentation highlighted the importance of *mercy* as a way of being and that we have an obligation to be ‘kind, loving and generous to all in our communities’.

I think we are doing a pretty good job of this (social justice, care team, Caritas, Project Compassion, social skills, PBIS etc.,) but there is always room for improvement. Simply saying sorry isn’t always enough, however teaching children how to authentically be merciful is important. Although no real examples or ‘quick fix’ remedies were given, Sr Veronica reminded us not to give up and that it is our responsibility ‘to let go of hurts and show mercy to one another’. Good advice for everyone.

**No Assembly Next Monday 29th February.**

Due to a number of staff being away next Monday, assembly will be postponed to the following Monday 7th March.

**Assembly change of time:**

Assemblies will be at 2:20pm Monday afternoons commencing now on Monday 7th March.

**Announcement of School Vouchers winners:**

The School Raffle will be drawn on Monday 7th March at school assembly.

**Foundation Students:**

Our Foundation students commence their full week of school next week.

**Staff PD ~**

In the past few weeks a number of staff members and parents have been involved in Professional Development opportunities. These have included:

~ Mrs Shirley Jean and Mr Chris Summers – Languages PD with Dr Andrea Truckenbront.
~ Mrs Veronica Williams – Religious Education PD
~ Mrs Shirley Jean, Mrs Jenny Tucknott and Mrs Amy Cooper – Vision Australia PD in Melbourne.
~ Whole School PD – Walker Learning.
~ Mr Chris Summers – Leadership PD with Sr Veronica Lawson Bendigo.

**Next week:** Mrs Williams, Miss Newman, Mrs Mestrom and Mr Summers will be involved in a diocesan initiative called the ‘Inquiry Mindset’ project. This project provides schools with the opportunity to look at their literacy data and analysis of how to best respond to emerging trends or issues. Helen Timperley a leading researcher and academic will be working with schools to help with the project. This is an exciting opportunity especially in light of our on-going commitment to Walker Learning and providing the best education we can.

**Three – Way Parent Teacher / Student Interviews ~ Thursday March 3rd, 2016**

Please call the office to book your parent teacher times.

Our assessment and reporting schedule for 2016 is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>3-Way Interviews or Conferences</th>
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<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
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<td>Term 2</td>
<td>Mid – year Written Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>3-Way Interviews or Conferences</td>
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<td>Term 4</td>
<td>End of Year Written Report</td>
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Please remember that students are expected to attend the Parent/Teacher interviews as well.

SAKG
What a hot week for garden lessons. It didn’t dampen the kid’s enthusiasm. We planted, watered, prepared new beds for planting, harvested, saved seeds, and worked on our tool licences.

School Photos:
School Photos will take place on Friday, 15 April 2016. This is the first Friday of Term 2.

Have a wonderful week everyone

Chris Summers

SOCIAL SKILLS BLITZ

This week, our Positive Behaviour Blitz is Cooperation

Cooperation is the act of working together or jointly; of being united in producing an effect. By developing cooperation skills, students build relationships as they complete tasks, utilizing their own skills and those of others to their best advantage. Cooperating encourages students to compromise and negotiate and creates opportunities for unity and harmony to occur.

In Week 4 our Social Skills Blitz was around Cooperation. The following students were nominated by their peers and teachers as displaying positive behaviour last week:

Hamish Whyte, Patrick Ryan, Adam Brooks, Kiara Deverish, Harry Dietrich, Zarlina Maynard and Harry Morgan.
Winner of the care box was Bailey Woods.

Congratulations Everyone!
ST FRANCIS COMMUNITY GROUP RAISED
$10,000 IN 2015
WHAT A WONDERFUL ACHIEVEMENT!
CONGRATULATIONS TO EVERYONE.

Look at what we did with these funds:

- Paid for the new storage shed;
- Paid for the much needed upgrading of furnishings in our Western end portable;
- Funded part of the repainting of the main school building;
- Paid for our new netball/football uniforms;
- Paid for the upgrade to our PA system.

Why do we hold fundraisers?

School Funding ~
As part of our funding, it is a requirement that each year our school will commit to raising additional funds over and above the funding that we receive. All Catholic Schools have an obligation to raise these additional funds and the amount that we have to raise is dependent on the number of students that we have in the school. These funds will be put towards improving the educational needs of our students through hardware or programs and / or improving school grounds or facilities.

What is the amount we need to raise in 2016?

This year our Community Group is aiming to meet our budgeted estimate of $8,000.00.

A barometer of success will be displayed in our newsletter to motivate and keep our focus on raising the required funds. There are many exciting events, initiatives and activities that we can all get involved in, many of which won’t require monetary donations. Please join us as we strive to actively involve our community and make our school the best it can be.

What will the funds raised be spent on?

The majority of our funds this year will directed at improving our Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Project (SAKG). This will include:

- Extending our raised garden beds to the Western side of the chook coup.
- Removal of several trees in this area.
- Building a bike shed / lean to, to the Eastern side of the sports shed.
- Garden Shading.
- Improving / enclosing our current ‘outdoor’ kitchen area.
- Purchasing of new garden tools
Our School News

- Purchasing of new kitchen ware / tools (knives, chopping boards etc.)
- Purchasing of a new Garden Storage Shed.

Other items on the wish list include:
- Building 'raised' seating around the adventure playground and sandpit areas (a recommendation from our full school review)
- Building of a safety fence around the split system units to the southern side of the Gathering Space / Library.
- Permanent Wall / Structure along the fence line to the back of the Tiger Turf and Adventure Playground. This can be used for murals or Year 6 end of year projects/mementos.

I am new to St Francis, what is the St Francis Community Group and how does it work?

The St Francis Community Group is instead of a Parents & Friends Club. Last year we decided to move away from the traditional structure of parent associations or P&F. We are in forever changing times with the busyness of families, work commitments people being generally time poor and finding it difficult to commit to a ‘permanent commitment’ of president, secretary, minutes taker etc. Jane Waser was our treasurer last year and she has again agreed to be our Treasurer for 2016.

Below outlines how our St Francis Community Group works:

a. Meeting free (or limited) Community Group Meetings ~ our technological age means we can use email, Facebook or flyers to promote events and activities.
b. Coordinators running different events ~ these coordinators and key personnel will allocate ‘Team Members’ or volunteers who will help run events or activities.
c. A checklist will be prepared for each activity so coordinators and team members will be able to run designated activities effectively and with confidence. Coordinators, with the help from Lonky will put these together.
d. Documentation of activities, costings etc. with be maintained through the office with all correspondence of emails, etc. being sent to Lonky who will document these in a central folder.
e. Opportunities for parents to be involved in events and activities will be advertised continuously throughout the year with the ‘main’ events for each term being sent out via a flyer and in the newsletter.
f. A weekly ‘barometer of success’ will be presented in the newsletter highlighting where we are at with our goals of money raising..

A flyer will be coming out shortly of the events that we are locked in for this year, however, we are always looking for fun and different ways to raise funds so please let us know if you have any ideas or if you would like to run a particular fundraiser.

One of our most successful fundraising events is coming up – our Easter Egg Raffle. A flyer will be coming home next week seeking donations of Easter Eggs. We are looking for a coordinator of this event also. Kristy Brereton who has successfully coordinated this fundraiser for the past three years is unable to do so this year. There is a checklist, which has a step-by-step guideline of how to run the raffle so if anyone would be willing to put their hand up to coordinate this, we would love to hear from you.

TOGETHER WE CAN ACHIEVE THIS
ST FRANCIS SCHOOL BOARD

AGM
TUESDAY, 7TH MARCH
7PM – 8 PM WITH SUPPER AFTERWARDS
SCHOOL LIBRARY

All parents are warmly invited to attend our Annual General Meeting. We currently have parent positions available on our School Board. Nominations for new members are most welcome. We will be recognising past School Board members at this meeting.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

WALKER LEARNING OVERVIEW

WL Overview Years 3 to 8

Walker Learning provides a platform of practical strategies to schools which seek high levels of student engagement and motivation across middle and upper primary and early secondary years with opportunities for students to be independent learners who are acquiring skills for learning and for life, not just "content".

The emphasis of WL is not just about the "what" (curriculum) but most importantly about the "how" (pedagogy).

The philosophy and implementation of WL consistently demonstrates that engaging children is the first fundamental 'must' for successful teaching and learning in a sustained way.

"Compliance does not equate to engagement"

The middle and upper years of primary often reflect increased dissatisfaction and disengagement of children with their learning. We want to set children up in the middle and primary years to succeed, to thrive and flourish rather than just cope or struggle or fail. We want children as they transition into the middle primary years to enter another seamless set of strategies that build upon their first three years of school; that
will provide continuity, consistency and continue to provide opportunities for individual interests.

The transition between grade two to three is also viewed as a significant pathway into another part of child development. Children move out of the unique characteristics that define the early childhood years and into a slightly higher level of thinking, processing and understanding. WL seeks to ensure that children moving from their early childhood classrooms into the higher grades also are provided with a seamless and consistent set of practices and strategies that maximise engagement and motivation. We want children in these years to have a sense of empowerment and ownership of their own learning, to view the learning process as meaningful to their lives now and for the future. We want them to have a range of choices within the limits set by the teacher and to learn to identity some of their own learning needs as well as to continue to build upon their self esteem and identity.

Teaching and learning in the 21st century requires acknowledgement that successful education needs to provide a set of fundamental foundation skills that are transferable and adaptable for whatever the future holds.

WL not only ensures that curriculum obligations for "content" and skills are maintained and enhanced but it is achieved by teaching strategies that truly and effectively engage, empower and provide greater ownership and choice for students. It is after all, the students learning that is most important, not educators predetermined interests/topics.

Some of the key intentions and aims of Walker Learning in the year levels 3-8 are designed to:

• Provide a voice for students to express their opinions
• To learn to appreciate and respect the views of others
• To develop their own value system and appreciate the different values of wider society
• To relate the issues, skills and knowledge of science, history, health, politics, literacy and numeracy, technology and other areas of learning to their own lives and to develop transferable and relevant skills
• To develop effective interpersonal skills in relationships and communication skills
• To develop creativity, exploration and open mindedness
• To grow in awareness of the world, society and associated issues that impact on the world

Some of the key elements of Walker Learning year levels 3-8 include:

• Communication board for greeting and meeting each morning, posting affirmations, information, clinic teaching groups, quotes and learning intentions.
• Weekly Class meetings which relate to external, global or community needs and issues rather than in house behavioural issues.
• Learning Environment that is set up to reflect personal choices in where to sit, in groups, alone, with furniture that has a range of options including tables, sofas, workshop areas, technology.
• Education Research Project each term which replaces traditional topics of inquiry and relates to National Curriculum subject areas for content but where students also include an issue of interest from their own lives
• Literacy and numeracy continues explicitly in discreet teaching modules but is also included in ERP’s
• Clinic groups of small teaching led by teachers and by students and other community members.
Community News

Nathalia Community Fundraiser for the PETER MACCALLUM CANCER CENTRE

FRIDAY MARCH 4th from 5.30PM

Ella Wilson, daughter of Anthony and Di, is currently receiving treatment at the Peter MacCallum Centre in Melbourne. As a community we take pride in our efforts to support each other in difficult times. We invite you to a fun evening of social tennis to support Ella and other Nathalia patients to raise funds for the Peter MacCallum Centre.

- To enter a team contact Sue Vaughan 0409981550 or Helen Gillman 0408913223
- For catering purposes RSVP by email tennisnathalia@gmail.com or facebook Nathalia Lawn Tennis club

Even if tennis is not your thing COME ALONG and enjoy a BBQ and social evening.

MOIRA HARMONY FESTIVAL

Sunday 20 March 2016
St Joseph’s Primary School
Cobram
11am - 3pm

Celebrate the diversity and richness of our cultures.

Multicultural Foods, Kids Activities
Live Performances and Music plus
Emergency Services Displays by Police, CFA and SES

Alcohol & drug-free event
BYO chairs and picnic rugs

For information and queries contact the Moira Shire Council on 03 5822222 or email at info@moira.vic.gov.au

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School Wiki: www.stfrancisnathalia.wikispaces.com

St Francis Catholic Primary School acknowledges the Bangarang and Yorta Yorta people, the traditional custodians of the land on which our school is situated. We commit ourselves to actively work alongside Aboriginal people for reconciliation and justice.