Week 8  
TERM 4, 2015  
St Francis School

Educating The Whole Child For Today and Tomorrow.
A school community that recognises learning is natural, creative and ongoing

Prayer of the week

A LEADER’S PRAYER

Leadership is hard to define.
Lord, let us be the ones to define it with justice.
Leadership is like a handful of water.
Lord, let us be the people to share it with those who thirst.
Leadership is not about watching and correcting.
Lord, let us remember it is about listening and connecting.
Leadership is not about telling people what to do.
Lord, let us find out what people want.
Leadership is less about the love of power and more about the power of love.

Lord, as we continue to undertake the role of leader let us be affirmed by the servant leadership we witness in your son Jesus. Let us walk in the path He has set and let those who will, follow.

Let our greatest passion be compassion.
Our greatest strength love.
Our greatest victory the reward of peace.

In leading let us never fail to follow.
Is loving let us never fail.

Amen

Key Dates

November:
26th  27th Gr3/4 camp
27th  Strawberry Festival

December:
1st  Jump Start
2nd  GV Festival of the Sacred
7th  Gr 4 Transition –at SMOTA
     Swimming program commences
8th  Orientation Day & Information Session for Parents
10th  School Christmas Carols/Concert
11th  Nathalia Community Carols by Candlelight
16th  End of Year Christmas Mass & Graduation
17th  Students last day of school.
18th  Staff last day.
Dear Parents and Friends of St Francis,

Fr. Bob McGuire Foundation
Earlier this week the entire staff of St Francis enjoyed an incredible few days in Melbourne. On Sunday night we helped to serve meals to many of the homeless and disadvantaged residents of St Kilda. This act of generosity was through the courtesy of the Fr Bob Foundation who allowed us to help cook, serve meals and to talk to the many people who are doing it tough and living on the fringe. It was truly a humbling experience and one, which not only helped galvanize us as a staff but also made us realize we are part of a bigger picture. Meeting and talking to Fr Bob was a highlight. He certainly hasn’t lost his sense of humour or quick wit!

As teachers, parents and students living the ethos of a Catholic School we are all called to serve others. Our experience on Sunday was indicative of this and showed the true spirit and commitment of our staff of whom I am very proud of and grateful for. We are forever asking our students to think of others and to give monetary donations for various charity fundraisers, which is very generous, however the ‘act of doing’ is the most powerful way to give back. We are St Francis is extremely good at doing this through our visits to the elderly at Barwo, visiting kindergartens and meals on wheels for example. With all that is happening in our world at present, it is important we continue to lead by example and to help our children understand it is ok to be caring, thoughtful, accepting and loving people. It’s what we do…

Walker Learning Professional Development ~ Walker Learning Approach
On Monday our entire staff attended a WLA professional development day in Melbourne run by Kathy Walker, founder of WLA. The purpose of this ‘fast track’ day was for all staff to witness the Walker Learning Approach across years F-6. Walker Learning is the approach for teaching and learning we are aiming to implement across our entire school. As with any approach or teaching pedagogy, appropriate professional development needs to be completed and staff need to feel fully prepared or comfortable before significant implementation and adoption is introduced. Our junior classes have been running Walker Learning for a number of years now and we have seen significant improvements in student learning, engagement and social development in these areas. Project based learning has been introduced in some middle years classrooms and the 5/6’s have been running the program all year. Our Art program has just recently adopted the Walker Learning Approach with significant changes to class structure, layout and lesson design. We are very excited to be ‘up-skilling’ of staff next year as we develop our whole school philosophy and teaching pedagogy in 2016.

For further information regarding the WLA please visit: http://earlylife.com.au/info/section/walker-learning
Last week I attached WLA Philosophy and Pedagogy. This week I have attached the Key Principles that guide the Walker Learning Approach:

**The Key Principles that Guides Walker Learning Approach Key Practices Across All Stages of Development**

- All teaching is intentional.
- Not all children are ready to learn the same thing at the same time in the same way.
- Children's interests are used not for the interest alone, but as a catalyst for engagement.
- Children’s interest, culture and context are respected and used as a springboard to facilitate further understandings and skill development in all areas of learning including literacy, numeracy, the sciences, the arts, language, cognition, social, psychological and emotional development.
- Child development is used as a basis for guiding practices as well as the principles of culture, community and family.
- Learning is personalised and uses the children's interests alongside additional exposure and concepts and experiences for children to explore their world, concepts, skills and environment.
- The process of learning and skill acquisition is valued - not just, or always the focus of the end product.
- Intrinsic (not extrinsic) motivation is valued and embedded in practice.
- The adult / child relationship is highly valued and the relationship itself is a scaffold in the learning alongside the child.
- Relationship with child, family and community are integral components of the approach.
- The WLA does not require topics or themes but does include opportunities for teachers to include specific concepts.
- Child development is used as a basis for guiding practice.
- Relationships are developed and deepened through a range of key practices including Focus Children.
- Learning is real, relevant and meaningful and is contextual to the child, family and community.

**End of year Mass and Graduation ~ December 16th**

Preparations are well on the way for this important end of year function. At this stage, we will be holding our End of Year Mass and Graduation at the school undercover area starting at 6:30pm.

**Christmas Carols ~ School Concert ~ Thursday 10th December**

On Thursday 10th December we are having Christmas Carols and school concert. Each Learning Community will perform 1-2 Christmas Carols with the senior students performing segways between class performances. A whole school finale will conclude the evening. Our Christmas Concert will be held on the SMOTA oval beginning at 7pm. Families are asked to BYO Chairs and picnic tea.

**Jump Start Program**

Our Jump Start Program continues to be a wonderful experience for our new Foundations students for 2016. Our newest students are eager and raring to start their formal schooling. Welcome to all of our new families who have joined our community.

**Parent Information Session ~ New Families 2016**

An information session for new families is organized for next Tuesday 1st December in our Gathering Space commencing at 9:30am. Morning tea, a cuppa and a chance to meet new families will be provided after the meeting.

**St Francis School Board ~ Thank you!**

Our final school board meeting for 2015 was held last Tuesday evening. It was a great to express gratitude and thanks for the incredible work our School Board has done over the past 12 months. Much has been achieved and there is plenty to look forward to in 2016. To say this year has been a huge learning curve is an understatement of mammoth proportions. There has been much to learn, get used to and to simple get my head around. However, without the support of the school board, staff, students and wider parent community my first year as principal would have been impossible. I am grateful on many levels and have many people to thank. I am especially grateful for accepting the challenge and having the opportunity to lead such a vibrant, welcoming and inclusive school community. Our annual School Board AGM will be held during term 1 March 15th, 2016.
**Billabong Ranch**
Today our grade 3/4 students returned from camp. By all accounts students, teachers and parents have had a wonderful time and we look forward to hearing more stories and experiences next week.

**Echuca Excursion ~ F-2**
Our Foundation, Grade 1 and Grade 2 students had an excursion to Echuca last Friday. The students enjoyed some investigation time followed by a session learning all about dinosaurs at twistED! in Echuca. They enjoyed lunch and a play at the Moama Adventure Park. The students and teachers had a great time.

**Grade 2 ~ ‘Big Sleep Over’**
Last night our grade two students enjoyed a sleep over and games night held at school. Thank you to everyone who coordinated and made the ‘Big Sleep Over’ such a fun experience. I’m not sure if there was much sleep had by everyone!

**Strawberry Festival ~ Friday Nov 27th**
Many of our students have volunteered to take part in this event tonight. Thank you to those who can participate and represent our school in this community event. Please note our students will be performing at 5.00 p.m. Hope to see you there!
**Raffle Tickets ~ School Voucher**

Sold raffle books may be returned to the school office at any time. We have received a number of sold books back and looking forward to receiving more.

Enjoy your weekend and week ahead!

Chris Summers

**Other School Happenings...**

**Dillmac Concert**

Our students who undertake music/dance tuition with Dillmac will be performing at school on Thursday, 3 December 2015 at 10.30 a.m. in the school library. All parents are most welcome to attend.

**Swimming Program**

We are running our swimming program again this year. Further information will be forwarded home early next week. We will commence the swimming program on Monday, 7 September 2015 and conclude on Monday, 14 December 2015. We will not be running the swimming program on Tuesday, 8 December 2015 as this is our whole school transition day. For parents’ information, the water fee that is included in the school fees covers the costs of the swimming program.

**Updated of Student’s Records**

Please find enclosed in this newsletter a “St Francis School Nathalia Update of Student Records” form. Please go through this form and if there are any changes please make them and return the form to the school office as soon as possible. We thank you for your assistance in keeping our records up to date.

**Classes for 2016**

Foundation ~ Miss Brydie Bonsema;
One / two ~ Mrs Elli Mestrom;
One / two ~ Mrs Karyn Miller;
Three / four ~ Mrs Shirley Jean;
Three / four ~ Mrs Veronica Williams;
Five / Six ~ Mr Brodie Ross;
Five / Six ~ Miss Anna Newman.

**Other Specialist Subjects...**

**Languages** ~ Mrs Shirley Jean will continue our French program for one day a week;
**Sport / Bluearth** ~ Mr Brodie Ross will continue to run our sport and Bluearth program for 2016;
**Art** ~ Mrs Fiona Baker will continue to run our Art program for 2016.

**Other Positions of Responsibility...**

Mrs Veronica Williams ~ Catholic Identity & REC / Technology & Deputy;
Mrs Fiona Baker ~ Welfare Officer - Students with Special Needs;
Mrs Tameryn Perry ~ Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Officer;
Ms Veronica Daniel ~ Administration / Learning Support;
Mrs Louise Robertson ~ Finance Officer / Learning Support.

**New for 2016 ~ Stepahanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program.**

Mrs Kerry Conroy will be coordinating the SAKG program for 2016.
Our School News

Festival of the Sacred
Our Grade 5 and 6 students have been busily preparing for the Festival of the Sacred concert, which is taking place at the Mercy Centennial Stadium at Notre Dame on Wednesday, 2 December 2015. Parents are most welcome to attend this fantastic event. We ask that parents ensure that they arrive at the stadium by 12.30 p.m. in order for the concert to start on time.

Wednesday 2 December 2015
Featuring the Goulburn Valley Deanery 5/6 Students & selected College performances
Mercy Centennial Stadium
Notre Dame College Shepparton
12.45 pm - 2.00 pm
This is a FREE event for all parents & friends of our school communities

Quote of the Week:

Praised be You, my Lord,
through Sister Earth our Mother
who sustains and governs us
- St. Francis of Assisi

Pictured left and right: Our students who are part of the Young Engagement Mentoring Program (YEMP) painting the Christmas Trees that they have made with the members of the Men’s Shed, Nathalia.

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.

Due to the school closure on Monday 23 November 2015, no class awards were announced this week.

Winner of the care box was Lachlan Russell

Congratulations Lachie!
On Thursday, 26 November our Social Justice students assisted the Red Cross in catering for a local play in Nathalia, which is being performed this Sunday. We made lamingtons in true Australian spirit. Wendy Baxter from the local Red Cross came and discussed how the Red Cross started and the acts of service they do within our community. Thank you also to Sheree Spiteri who thought to ask us to become involved. It was an activity that our students really enjoyed being a part of, especially the part where they got to sample their cooking!
Our School News

2016 Enrollments now being taken!!
Kyabram & Echuca Studios

- Vocal
- Guitar (acoustic, electric)
- Drums
- Bass
- Piano/Keyboard
- Theory
- Glee (singing & movement)
- Pre-school Music (4-5 yr olds)
- Tots n Tunes (2-3 yr olds)
- Performing arts/drama (prep-yr9)
- Dance (ages 5-18 yr old)

Dillmac Entertainment also takes lessons at the following schools: (not all instruments are available at all schools)

- Echuca West School
- Kyabram P-12 College (primary campus)
- Lockington Consolidated School
- Nathalia Primary School
- Nathalia Secondary College
- Sacred Heart Primary School
- St. Augustines College
- St. Francis Primary Nathalia
- St. Mary of the Angel's Nathalia
  - St. Pat's Tongala
  - Tatura Primary School
  - Tongala Primary
  - Merrigum Primary

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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.