Greetings,

As we move towards Christmas, the coming of our Saviour, you can feel the excitement and momentum building to the crescendo of Christmas Day. Travel gently; treat each other with kindness and pray for others who may not be as fortunate. Whilst this is a wonderful time of the year, for others they can feel isolated and their crosses can be heavy to carry. Often our prayer is for ourselves, however as we make way and prepare for the Lord, let’s think of others!

"Are you the Messiah we’ve been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?" Jesus told them, “Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen—the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor.” Matthew 11:3-5

The people who lived in Jesus' day were watching and waiting for the Messiah who had been promised by the prophets of old. Many of them watched the stars in the sky looking for a sign that would announce the coming of the Messiah. As you know, a star did appear announcing the birth of Jesus Christ. The wise men saw that star and went to find the Christ child, but for many years after that, some people were still watching and waiting.

In our Bible reading, John the Baptist is in prison. He had heard reports about the things that Jesus was doing. So he sent some of his followers to ask Jesus, "Are you the one that we’ve been waiting for, or should we continue to look for someone else?"

Jesus told them, "Go back and tell John what you have seen and heard—the blind are made to see, the lame are able to walk, lepers are being cured, the deaf can hear, and even the dead are raised to life."

One of the names given to Jesus is "Bright Morning Star." (Revelation 22:16) Jesus is not a wishing star to whom we say a prayer and make a wish. He is a star of hope. Our hope is in the living God, who is the Saviour of all people.

Heavenly Father,

As we see the many stars in the decorations of this season may we be reminded that Jesus is the "Bright Morning Star" and that when we put our hope and trust in him, our future is secure. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

© Sermon4Kids, adapted by Miss Fletcher
Thank you for your generous support for our annual St Vincent de Paul Christmas Hamper Appeal. This week we filled 5 cars with 16 hampers put together by each class and one by the staff.

Thank you John McCrae from St Vincent de Paul who organised the collection of hampers on Monday. These will brighten the light of Christ to someone in need. Blessings.

What’s on:
Week 10: End of Year Mass, 11.30am, Friday, 16th December 2016
Christmas Carols Evening, 5.00pm Thursday, 15th December 2016—All children are expected to attend and perform with their class.

Thank you for all your support throughout the year.
Wishing you and your loved ones a happy, safe and holy Christmas.

Go gently with Jesus Christ
Jacqueline Fletcher
Religious Education Coordinator
Congratulations to Year 6 on graduating, what a great night!! and Congratulations to Mia Whigham on Winning the Samantha Metti Citizenship Award!
FROM OUR PRINCIPAL.............

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Let your forbearance be known to all, for the Lord is near at hand; have no anxiety about anything, but in all things, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God. Lord, you have blessed your land; you have turned away the captivity of Jacob."

Philippians 4:4–6; Psalm 85 (84):1

Dear Parents and students,

This Sunday we begin the Third Week of Advent, ‘Joy’. Joy has many shades. It should never be determined by how we feel, but on who God is. The joy of the Lord can thrill us or make us resolute in the secure knowledge of God's presence. Joy can be exuberant when we experience the faithfulness of God, it can be calm confidence in His sovereignty, or pure delight as He expresses His love.

For me Joy has special meaning as it relays my feelings of nearly finishing my first year at St Patrick’s. My whole experience this year has been one of Joy and thankfulness for being given the opportunity to serve such a wonderful community.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first year at St Patrick’s. The parents, children and staff have made me feel very welcome and I am especially appreciative of Miss Perry, who has been a rock, not just for myself but for the school as well.

I would like to thank each and every one of you for such a wonderful start to my time at St Patrick’s. I hope that you all have a Holy and Happy Christmas, filled with many fond memories. I also hope everyone has a safe holiday and I look forward to seeing you all back at school in 2017.

Mrs Rhonda Jenkins

As you all know, next week will be Mrs Jenkins last week with us at St Patrick’s. We will all certainly miss her presence with us a great deal but I am sure that you would agree with me that her retirement means a well-earned rest for Mrs Jenkins. We wish you a long and happy retirement and don’t forget us, because we certainly won’t forget you.

School Uniforms for 2017

As the end of the year is fast approaching and as you prepare you children for the 2017 school year, can I remind parents that when purchasing new school runners, that they should be predominately white. While I understand that it is difficult to purchase completely white runners, ones that have coloured stripes are quite acceptable, but completely coloured runners are not part of the school uniform. If you would keep this in mind when purchasing new runners that would be wonderful.

Also hair styles are also important when the students return next year. Please look at our School Uniform Policy to refresh your memory of what is suitable.
Reports

Next week the Semester 2 School Reports will go home. Please remember that when looking over your child’s report, that this reflects the learning that has taken place this Semester. The grades your child receives may be different from last Semester but this does not mean necessarily that your child has not achieved as well, because the Outcomes that were assessed this Semester are different to the ones that were assessed in Semester 2. If your child’s teacher has had a concern about their learning, they would have already been in contact with you prior to the report arriving.

Thank you

It was wonderful to see so many of our parents, grandparents and family members at our ‘Thank you’ morning tea today. Today’s morning tea is just a small way for us to say how much we appreciate your support and we look forward to seeing you all next year.

I look forward to seeing all our families at the carols night as the children again preform to our eager crowds. Each child will be performing with their class and are asked to wear some form of Christmas clothing or decorations. Take care and God Bless.

Cheryl Walsh
Principal

Upcoming Events

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<td>Carols Night</td>
<td>Thursday 15 December</td>
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<td>Rhonda Jenkins M/Tea 10am</td>
<td>Friday 16 December</td>
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<td>Step Up to 2017 classes 10am</td>
<td>Friday 16 December</td>
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<td>End of Year Mass 11.30</td>
<td>Friday 16 December</td>
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<td>Mathematical Assessment Interviews Years 1-6</td>
<td>Friday 27 January &amp; Monday 30 January 2017</td>
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<td>Kindergarten Assessments</td>
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<td>Back to School Year 1-6</td>
<td>Tuesday 31 January</td>
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<td>Back to School Kinder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swimming carnival</td>
<td>14th February 2017</td>
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THANKS FADIA FOR MANY YEARS OF SERVICE TO OUR SCHOOL IN THE USED CLOTHING POOL
You should have received your customised letter showing which teacher to choose. Teacher X or A etc.

Medical Information

Any student who has a current Asthma or Allergy plan at school will be sent home a letter early next week requesting that they get an up dated copy of their current plan from their medical practitioner for the start of the school year in 2017. Attached to the letter will be a copy of the students current plan, a new Individual Health Care Plan form and if required, a request to administer medication form. Can parents please check that all the current information is correct and complete the new forms to send to school with a copy of the updated plan at the start of Term 1 next year.

It is a WHS requirement that all plans are updated every 12months. The information is being sent home now to allow adequate time to visit your GP sometime over the next 8 weeks. If you require any further information in regards to the new forms or anything else in relation to these medical plans please contact the School Office.
CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS WITH YEAR 5 PEN-PALS

Year 5 students have been writing letters and sharing stories with their pen-pals from the Presbyterian Aged Care Centre, East Gosford.

The Centre extended an invitation to our students to attend their Christmas Party recently. Some of our pen-pal students were able to attend and had a lovely time catching up with their Pen pals face to face.

FROM THE MUSIC ROOM with Mrs Suzie Morris

St Patrick’s Choir at Erina Fair: Our St Patrick’s Choir shared their gift of singing with the community at Erina Fair on Monday and then at a local nursing home on Thursday – busy week singing! We treated family, shoppers at Erina and residents at the nursing home to the joys of ‘Santa Claus is coming to Town’, ‘Silent Night’, ‘Away in a Manger’ and other Christmas carol gems. Well done to the Choir who have worked and practised so hard this year with many performance to prepare for. We had lots of fun singing and it was very exciting to be able to perform at Erina Fair and then for the older residents and staff at the Presbyterian Aged Care Centre.

St Patrick’s Training Band: We are finalising numbers for the 2017 training band – it looks like we might just have enough students to get it up and running but are keen to see some more students involved. There are a range of instruments on offer from trumpets and trombones, clarinets and flutes to drums and percussion. With full tuition and training band sessions right here at school this is an excellent opportunity for students who are keen to learn an instrument and play as part of a band, and at a very affordable price! For more information please email Suzie Morris on susan.morris@dbb.catholic.edu.au

Music Together Evening: What a wonderful evening! We were packed into the music room to listen to this wonderful line up of student musicians share their talents. After learning technique, notes and pieces this year, it was a great opportunity to be able to share our musical gifts with each other and our families. We were blessed to have our music tutors there with us and to play some pieces accompanied by them. My heart was nearly bursting I was proud of these Year 2 to Year 6 students and the courage and grace they showed being involved. Thank you to everyone who attended you were a beautiful audience – we are blessed!
Year 6 Drama Plays: Just a reminder to all Year 6 students that our drama performances will be on this coming Monday! Don’t forget to polish your lines over the weekend and make sure you bring in all the costume bits and props that you need – keep it simple because it is all about your acting skills and being able to show your character on stage! Our lucky audience will be our Kindy buddies, Year 3 and of course Year 6. I can’t wait to see you in action!

The St Pat’s Christmas Tree @ Erina Fair: Have you seen our beautifully decorated Christmas Tree at Erina Fair yet? Courtesy of our Art Club led by Mrs Lewis the tree (located outside Kmart) is adorned with handmade ornaments. You can vote for your favourite Christmas tree (which will of course be the St Patrick’s one!) by giving a gold coin donation to raise funds for Lifeline Central Coast – a truly worthy cause. The schools with the top 3 number of votes will receive a $300 Erina Fair gift voucher - no pressure families but last year we were one of the top 3 and used the money towards our concert this year!

From the Library and LARC (Learning and Resource Centre)

As we draw to the end of another year I wish to thank everyone for their support of library and LARC at St Patrick’s.

Many books have been borrowed, read, shared and enjoyed by the children and their families throughout the year.

The library and LARC now need all books to be returned to the school as soon as possible.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and safe holiday period.

See you back in the library and LARC next year for the beginning of another chapter.

“I can no other answer make, but, thanks, and thanks”. William Shakespeare

Carmen Hartz
Teacher Librarian
Christmas Carol Night
Thursday 15 December
5PM START
CAROLS AT 5.45
MELBOURNE STREET CAMPUS

Wear your best Christmas dress-up clothes and accessories
Bring along:
- A picnic rug or chair
- Your family
- And your voices to join in the singing!!

Drinks available $1.50
Tea or Coffee and cake $2
Raffle Tickets still available on the night

Please order and pay for Sausage sandwiches for your whole family below $2 each. (One order per family please)

LAST ORDERS MONDAY MORNING 12 DECEMBER

_______________________________________________

Yes, we will be coming to the Carols night !!

Family Name _______________________________________

Number of sausage sandwiches ____

Amount enclosed $____

SAVE THE DATE—Friday 24 February-
School Disco
Infants 5.30-6.45pm and Primary 7.00-8.30pm
The other day a few members of the Team at Laura’s Place were sitting outside in our beautiful grounds, eating lunch, and the subject of Teenagers was raised by one of us. She was despairing at the, what seemed to be sudden, change in her daughter. As the team chatted about her worries, I sat and listened and started thinking.

My own 4 kids are safely past the teenage years and I remember them very clearly, but their transition into being a teenager happened, when they were in their teens. They were around 14 before the ‘teenage behaviour’ started. So is it just me or are our kids in year 5 onwards, behaving like you remember you were, when you were in year 8 or 9?

It started me thinking about why this appears to be happening at a much earlier age than ever before?

Year 6 seems now to be a really difficult year, going by the Parents we see at Laura’s Place.

Puberty is occurring earlier and earlier than ever before, therefore we are getting this hormonal behaviour earlier. It is starting as young as 8 yrs old now.

Being aware of what is happening to your pre teen and beyond, helps you understand (to some extent!) some of their behavioural changes.

**Brain Changes**

Did you know that your child’s brain is not fully developed until their mid 20s?

Children’s brains have a massive growth spurt when they’re very young by the time they’re six, their brains are already about 90-95% of adult size. However it needs some remodeling before it can function as an adult brain.

Even though all teenagers’ brains develop in roughly the same way at the same time.

The main change is that unused connections in the thinking and processing part of your child’s brain are ‘pruned’ away. At the same time, other connections are strengthened.

This is the brain’s way of becoming more efficient. This pruning process begins in the back of the brain. The front part of the brain is remodeled last.

This is the decision-making part of the brain, responsible for your child’s ability to plan and think about the consequences of actions, solve problems and control impulses.

Changes in this part continue into early adulthood!

Because the brain is still developing, teenagers rely on a different part of the brain to make decisions and solve problems, more than adults do.

This part is associated with emotions, impulses, aggression and instinctive behaviour.

This explains why one minute you have a mature, logically thinking child one minute and the next minute they seem illogical, emotional and impulsive!
Social Changes

**Searching for identity:** young people are busy working out who they are and where they fit in the world. This search can be influenced by gender, peer group, and family expectations.

**Seeking more independence:** this is likely to influence the decisions your child makes and the relationships your child has with family and friends.

**Looking for new experiences:** means that teenagers are likely to seek out new experiences and engage in more risk-taking behaviour. But they’re still developing control over their impulses.

**Thinking more about ‘right’ and ‘wrong’:** your child will start developing a stronger individual set of values and morals. Teenagers also learn that they’re responsible for their own actions, decisions and consequences. They question more things, they argue with you.

**Being the parent to a teenager** requires a sense of humour and the ability to remember several vital strategies to maintain your sanity!

**Firstly,** remember that neither you nor your partner have" ever been teenagers" yourself so you 'cannot possibly understand how they feel' you were beamed onto this Earth as a Mother/ Father, you have no experience to offer!

Part of being a teenager is to learn how to function outside the family and therefore they will spend hours talking and listening to friends. It is annoying, but normal. Peer group friendships are all consuming and their friends know best (as far as they are concerned)!

**Secondly,** remember to pick your battles with your teenager, you won’t be able to win them all, make sure it’s the important ones that need fighting. A tidy bedroom is important to you, but is unlikely to matter to them. However where they want to go out to and the time they must be back is an important battle that must be won to maintain their safety and your sanity.

**Thirdly,** Teenagers are great imitators; they like to identify with their all important peer group, as it is essential that they have their friend’s approval. Therefore when your son or daughter gets ready to go out, having spent hours in the bathroom, it isn’t helpful to suggest they look just like all their friend so’ why not wear that nice top that Pop got you for Christmas?’ They have just got the look they wanted, just the same as their friends.

**Fourthly,** remember all those hormones racing around your teenager’s body. One minute they are out with their friends being "cool" and then at home they suddenly become young again and want a hug from Mum. As much as they fight against your advice and help, this is the time they are at their most vulnerable and really need you to be consistent.

**Lastly,** remember that you are the expert on your child and if you are worried about them then please seek help and advice. Parenting a teenager is difficult and scary at times; remember you are not alone with your worries. Ask friends how they are getting on, you might find they are in the same boat as you.

If you are in doubt as to whether your teenage problems are normal or not, seek advice; it is always best to nip things in the bud.

And finally if anyone knows who ’everyone else’s parents’ actually are, it would be good to meet them. My four teenagers often quoted them!
Fun at Year 6 Market Day!!
MONDAY 24 JANUARY

used uniform shop is open

www.freshaoptions.com.au

During Wellbeing Week last term, the locally based company Fresha Options Fresh Fruit & Veg Home Delivery generously donated enough fruit and vegetables for all our St Patrick’s students to enjoy fruit break.

A lunch box filled with healthy, natural food has a huge impact on a child’s ability to grow, learn and concentrate at school. Eating healthy = healthy body = healthy brain

Fresha Options Fresh Fruit & Veg Home Delivery delivers fresh fruit and vegetables straight from the produce markets to your door across the Central Coast – eliminating long term storage! With easy online ordering, you can choose one of their mixed boxes or select your own produce saving you time and money.

Fresh - Easy - Affordable - Fast

Find them on Facebook, call on 4384 7835 or order online at:

www.freshaoptions.com.au