



UPCOMING EVENTS:

2014 - TERM 1

March

Wed 19th	School Cross Country - Years 3-6 Year 6 - End of Year Celebration - Cake Stall
Thurs 20th	Year 4 iLearn iPad Project Information Session - 9.30- 10.30am
Fri 21st	HARMONY DAY - Mufti Day
Mon 24th	Patrician Brothers' College visiting Year 6 boys
Mon 31st	STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY
Fri 11th	Whole School Assembly - Easter Raffle - 2.15pm School Closes for holidays

April

Mon 28th	Teachers and Students return to school
-------------	--

St Michael's Church Orwell Street Blacktown South

MASS Times: Sat. Vigil - 6.00pm
Sun, 8am, 9.30am, 6pm
Weekdays: 8am
Wednesday Evenings - 7.30pm
1st Friday 7.30pm
Phone: 9622 9149
stmichaelsparish.com

155 Reservoir Road
Blacktown South 2148
Ph: 9622 9910
Fax: 9622 6902

Website:
www.stmichaelsblacktown.catholic.edu.au
Email:
stmichaelsblkt@parra.catholic.edu.au

St Michael's Primary School

Blacktown South

NEWSLETTER

2014 - ISSUE 4

18th March 2014

From the Principal

Dear Parents and Friends,

REMINDERS:

CROSS COUNTRY - (Years 3-6) - 11.30am-1.30pm
STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY (Pupil Free Day) - Monday, 31st March
During this day we will see all staff work through the
New English Syllabus with an emphasis
on writing and reading

Catholic School week was a beauty! To see so many of you visiting our learning spaces and participating in your children's work was a great pleasure.

I sincerely thank and congratulate all of the St. Michael's staff for organising and participating in this week. We have so much to celebrate in living out our vision of Engagement, Reflection and Empowerment.

One of our events taking place last week was the first of our 2014 *Coffee Clubs* led by Mrs Easton our Religious Education Coordinator. The programme is centred around Lent and reflecting on Gospel readings. The peace of the moment was appreciated by all of our parents who enjoyed the opportunity to stop and reflect for a little while. I think the tea, coffee and talking was also greatly appreciated.

Once again I sincerely thank you for your affirming feedback from the survey and at our last P & F Meeting.

Some more actions:

- ♦ Literacy and Numeracy workshops to be planned throughout the year commencing Term 2, Week 2.
- ♦ Literacy and Numeracy information to be shared via newsletter, keeping in touch, website, facebook and skoolbag app.
- ♦ Safety on site. This week we will invite parent support for morning drop off. I was initially worried for safety and wellbeing of parents at morning car drop off but recently I have been able to see parent volunteers at other schools making a difference. Parents will support student alighting cars and proceeding into school. See the last page of newsletter for a response sheet.
- ♦ Our uniform shop continues to improve both in product and service. Due to system advice we will not be able to accept generous offers of volunteer support. We will continue to seek out ways of increasing opening times. I am pleased to see the Order System working, which is saving you the need to attend the shop.
- ♦ Current and projected opening times are every Wednesday - 8:15am-11:00am.

Last week we met with Year 4 parents and their children. I sincerely congratulate the Year 4 team and Mrs Coope for their work in bringing this exciting project to its initial stages. Over the next three years our current Year 4 students will each receive an iPad to support learning and teaching. I remind all Year 4 parents that their attendance at the remaining session is imperative in ensuring maximum success of this initiative.



MEETING WITH TEACHERS

As we move into Week 8, I have an important message for all of us. At all times be vigilant in meeting the individual needs of our children. If at any time you are concerned with your child's progress you need to share these concerns with your child's teacher.

We are here to serve you and your child. It is important that you make an appointment to see your child's teacher at any point where clarification is required, or where you may need to confirm your work at home with your child. All appointments should be made through the office.

LENTEN MESSAGE

In last week's *Coffee Club* Mrs Easton shared Matthew 17:19.

"This is my son.....listen to him..." and *"Get up and do not be afraid."*

These words from Matthew say so much to us today. They again invite us not to be afraid but instead LOVE. They invite us to listen and follow Christ. So often in the Gospel we are being called to a life of following Jesus, to live in and with Jesus. In such a life we are invited to enter into a loving relationship where fear is replaced by love. So... what is stopping us....let's all choose LIFE?

"Love One Another"

John Laffan
PRINCIPAL

From the Assistant Principal

ST MICHAEL'S LITERACY BLOCK STRUCTURE



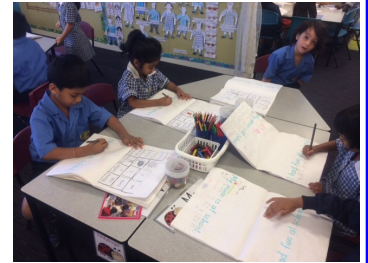
If you were to walk through St Michael's during Literacy, what would you notice? You would see consistency of teaching practice and structure of the Literacy Block. These highly effective teaching and learning practices are based on best practice research and ensure all students achieve the best possible outcomes.

These structures ensure consistency of practice within a grade and across grades and enable students to see their continuation of their learning each year and how they build on their knowledge and skills.

Teachers identify learning intentions and success criteria which assist in measuring achievement and assist students to set future learning goals for themselves.

The Literacy Block occurs daily for a minimum of 100 minutes and consists of three components, that includes integration across other Key Learning Areas:

- ◆ Speaking and Listening
- ◆ Reading and Viewing
- ◆ Writing and Responding



Speaking and Listening

Students in all classes participate in purposeful discussions about their learning with their peers. This involves both speaking about their learning and actively listening to others. Purposeful speaking and listening opportunities are an embedded part of reading and writing activities each day. During other Key Learning Areas, other opportunities are provided to enable students to effectively communicate their ideas with others.

How can you as a parent help your child with Speaking and Listening?

If you speak a language other than English at home, it is important that you continue to support your child in maintaining the home language. Being able to speak more than one language is a good thing!

Here are some suggestions for home:

- ◆ Encourage your child to talk about different topics. If you are unfamiliar with the topic, let your child know that they will need to give you more information.
- ◆ Try not to ask too many yes/no questions. Ask your child questions that require more lengthy use of language.
- ◆ Encourage your child to tell you about events that did not involve you. This helps students work out what a listener needs to know and prepares them for writing.
- ◆ Encourage your child to listen to and share their ideas with people from various backgrounds and age groups. This will give them more experience in communicating. Children can sometimes be disadvantaged by interacting only with people who share their views.

Learning to speak and listen effectively is a lifelong process of learning about language and using language for social, cultural and academic purposes.

Kind regards,

Katherine McKay

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

RE News

In last Sunday's gospel we heard the story of the Transfiguration in Matthew's gospel. What happened to Jesus on the mountain needs to be seen in the light of what happened on another mountain. The glory of the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor is only fully revealed in the shame of the crucifixion on Calvary Hill. One is pointing to the other so that the second can reveal the significance of the first. Christ emptied himself of his glory as God when He became one of us. But this self-emptying of God was only completed when Jesus, hanging upon the cross, was finally able to say: 'Into your hands, Father, I commend my spirit.'

Taken from ***Walking the way of Mercy and Simplicity Lenten Program*** used at our Coffee Club.

On Ash Wednesday each family was given a Project Compassion box. Your donations to Project Compassion will help Caritas Australia pursue justice and assist those who are the most vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice. Later in the term you will be asked to return the Project Compassion boxes on certain days with the students wearing Mufti as a reward. Please keep the boxes at home until you are notified of the Mufti Day dates. Project Compassion is one way we at St Michael's can live out our school motto of "Loving One Another" in a true and rewarding sense.

Anne Easton

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR



Cake stall

Tomorrow, Wednesday 19th March, Year 6 will be holding a cake stall at recess and lunch for the whole school. The funds will be going towards the Year 6 End of Year Function. The cost of the cakes will range from 50c to \$2. Also there will be bottles of water on sale for a cost of \$1.



Uniform Shop

Stock Update: Boys and Girls Socks ALL SIZES BACK IN STOCK! CAPS still out of stock but expected soon
Size 6 Sports Jackets still out of stock but coming soon.

Mr Laffan has advised that until stock of these items has been received, children are able to wear any hat and on sports days, yellow shirt and blue shorts (if possible). We sincerely apologise for this inconvenience, and should you have any queries, please call Amanda on 9622 9910.

School Holiday Opening Hours: We will be open in the school holidays on Thursday 24 April from 9 am to 12pm. Sizing for winter uniform is similar to summer uniform so, if more convenient, Order forms are available at the office or outside the Uniform Shop. We accept cash or cheque and EFTPOS is available at the Office.

Library News

PREMIER'S READING CHALLENGE

Due to a change in procedures, we were a bit late getting new students registered for 2014. However, by now all students who returned their yellow slips should have received their user names and passwords. If you have not received a password, please accept my apologies, and just send along a note and I will arrange it as soon as possible.

To take part in the Challenge, Infants children have to read 30 books and Primary students 20 books, before August 10th. Books need to be those on a list which is available at the website. Many of the books in our school Library have tags to help children choose the right ones. Blacktown Library also tag their books, and you can borrow there as well.

As the children read, parents (or older students themselves) can log on to the website and enter the names of their books. They do not have to wait until they have finished to do them all at once. Here are some steps to help you with this.

Do a search for PRC NSW. This will take you to the Premier's Reading Challenge (PRC) website for NSW.

Click on "Login" in the left side column.

Enter the user name and password you were given.

Click on "Student Reading Records" and type the titles of your books. Sometimes it auto-fills the information. Make sure it gives the correct author and title.

When you have entered the required number of books, you get an on screen message of congratulations.

Please let me know when your child has completed the challenge so that we can celebrate by putting the names in our school newsletter.

If you are unsure what to do, feel free to call in to the Library before or after school to see me.

CONGRATULATIONS

We already have three very keen readers who have completed the Challenge. Well done to **Marina Ibrahim from 3S** who was the first to finish from St Michaels. Congratulations also to Shannon Gibbins from 4E, and Pavithran Visakeswaran from 4M, who were very close behind. I'm sure all three will not stop reading now, but will enjoy lots more reading through the year.

HARMONY DAY

This Friday, 21st March, is Harmony Day, when we celebrate the many cultures in our school community. This year at St Michaels, we will celebrate through stories, so if you have any stories from other countries you could share with us, we would appreciate it. Please send books to your child's class teacher marked with your name so they can be returned.

Children will be invited to wear mufti on Friday - if possible something orange as that is the symbolic colour for Harmony Day or a cultural outfit.



BOOK COVERING

At the moment, there are quite a few new books in the Library that need covering. If you are able to help, even by covering 5-6 books, please call in to the Library for some books. All plastic is provided.

Judy Buhagiar

TEACHER LIBRARIAN

Canteen

Rosters for Canteen have been sent home. Please make sure you are using Yellow/Orange Price List that went home in the last newsletter for Term 1 2014.

Thank you for your support.

Jan Crawford

CANTEEN MANAGER

P & F News

Hello again to all. I am struggling to believe that Easter is near and that we are approaching week three of Lent. In saying this, the P&F are organising some fun Easter activities that you and your children can participate in. Here are the dates you can put into your diaries.

Mufti Day – March 26

Raffle tickets sent home – April 2

Easter card competition

Easter card competition closed – April 9

Easter raffle drawn and Easter card competition winners announced – April 11 (last day of school for Term 1)



Please refer to the Easter fun flyer for more detail on these events.

When we return for Term 2 the Mother's Day Stall will be near at hand.

Here are the dates again for the Mother's Day Stall and the other events that are in planning for the rest of the year.

*** Mother's Day stall - Wednesday May 7**

*** Father's Day stall - Wednesday September 3**

*** Spring Fair - Sunday October 19**

Thank you to all who have volunteered to be a classroom representative. In saying this we still have quite a lot of classes still needing a representative – 1D, 2G, 2S, 2L, 3B, 3C, 3K, 3S, 4C, 4E, 5A, 5O, 5P, 6A, 6E, 6T and 6C. Please fill out a parent rep form below and return it to school ASAP. Keep your eyes open for parent representative information next term.

That's it again from me for the moment. Remember the first fun Easter activity to be excited about is **Mufti Day on Wednesday, March 26.**

Susan Perry

P&F President



Parent Representative Volunteers

Would you like to help out this year as a parent representative? Please fill in the form.

Childs name: _____

Childs class: _____

Your name: _____



Following parent interest in supporting the Safety and Wellbeing of children at the morning Kiss & Drop drive-through we are now seeking expressions of interest for morning volunteers to support children's entry into school yard.

Please complete this form and we will invite Parent & Friends to create Inservices and rosters.

Iwould like to support the parent 'Drop Off' team

I am available to support this initiative on these mornings from 8.30am- 9am

My contact details are as follows.....

From the Bishops Office

Diocese of Parramatta on Social Media

Connect with the Diocese and find out the latest news and events on Social Media:

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/parracatholic>

Twitter @parracatholic

Diocesan positions

Housekeeper – Residential: casual (6-10 hrs/wk), St Patrick's Cathedral area, Parramatta. Applications close on 24 March. Details: John Sheehy (02) 8838 3400.

Director, Catholic Youth Parramatta: full time, located in Parramatta. Applications close on 31 March. Details: Fr Paul Roberts 0417 44 11 77.

Director of Family and Life Office: full time, located in Parramatta. Applications close on 6 April. Details: Antoine Kazzi (02) 8838 3400.

For further details of these roles and the position descriptions visit the Employment section of the Diocese of Parramatta's website: www.parra.catholic.org.au

St Patrick's Cathedral Choir, Parramatta

Recruiting male and female singers in all voice parts. Develop vocal skills and learn more about the Catholic faith and liturgy. Scholarship payments available to singers aged 16-35 who demonstrate music leadership skills. To arrange an audition, contact the Director of Music, Bernard Kirkpatrick tel 0430 431 884. For further information, visit www.stpatscathedral.com.au

Preparing Music for the Easter Triduum

These workshops organised by the Office for Worship include ministerial chants for clergy (priests and deacons), cantors and choir, with particular focus on the new translations and chants for the Unveiling of the Cross (Good Friday) and the Exsultet (Easter Vigil).

From 7.30pm-9pm on:

20 March at St Nicholas of Myra Parish, 326 High St, Penrith. RSVP 17 March

27 March at St Patrick's Parish, 51-55 Allawah St, Blacktown. RSVP 24 March

RSVP to the Office for Worship tel (02) 8838 3414, liturgysupport@parra.catholic.org.au

Holy Hour for Vocations: 20 March

Everyone is welcome to join the Holy Hour for Vocations at 7pm on the 3rd Thursday of each month for an hour of adoration, prayer, music and quiet time. Blessed Sacrament Chapel in St Patrick's Cathedral, Marist Place, Parramatta.

To find out more about priesthood in the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta contact Fr Warren Edwards – Vocations Director: tel 0409 172 700, vocations@parra.catholic.org.au

Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend: 21-23 March

A Marriage Enrichment experience for married couples. During the weekend, couples have a unique opportunity to reconnect, rekindle and refresh their relationship. Invest in your most precious asset ... your marriage! Venue: Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, Varroville. Inquiries & bookings: Ardell & Bill Sharpe tel (02) 4283 3435 or

wsharpe@bigpond.net.au www.wwme.org.au Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/WWMEasternUnit

DISCOVER Weekend: 21-23 March

Young women aged 18-35 years are invited to DISCOVER – a self-knowledge weekend on identity, personality, dignity, womanhood, personal ideal, vocation and mission. Mount Schoenstatt Retreat Centre. Registration essential. For further information or to register contact Sister M Julie Brcar: juliebrcar@gmail.com

Bridging Sydney City Assembly: 26 March

Bridging Sydney will launch the Sydney Alliance agenda for the common good with specific asks for the NSW Government on the issues of public transport, affordable housing and supported job pathways. With a year to go before the next NSW election, the aim is to build a bridge between Sydney's civil society and those who serve in elected office. The Diocese of Parramatta is a member of the Sydney Alliance. Doors open at 6pm, concludes 8.30pm. Venue: Sydney Town Hall, George Street.

Register your attendance at: www.sydneyalliance.org.au

<http://www.sydneyalliance.org.au/news/2014/01/29/bridging-sydney/>

Catenian City of Parramatta Circle Dinner: 27 March

Members of the Catenian Association are Catholic men who meet once a month to join collectively in a friendly atmosphere in the practice of their faith, to enjoy each other's company and to support their local parishes and the Diocese. The City of Parramatta Circle meets for dinner on the 3rd Thursday of each month at Lachlan's Restaurant in Old Government House in Parramatta Park. Commences at 6.45pm for a 7.15pm start. This month's guest speaker will be Christine Berrierre from St Lucy's School in Wahroonga. More information contact Ian Goldthorpe – Membership Officer, City of Parramatta Circle, tel 0408 169 941.

MGL Spiritual Association Healing Mass: 29 March

"I have come to bring fire to the earth" Luke 12:49.

The Missionaries of God's Love Spiritual Association (Sydney) warmly invites you, your friends and acquaintances to a Healing Mass with Fr Ken Barker MGL. Mass at 1pm will be celebrated at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 7 Grantham Rd, Seven Hills. The day concludes at 4pm. Please bring a plate to share for afternoon tea. RSVP to Jenny: jennytscott25372@gmail.com or Missionaries of God's Love Facebook page.

Colloquium on The Francis Effect: 3 April

Catholic Mission and Catholic Religious Australia are hosting a colloquium that will enlarge on the reflections contained in The Francis Effect: Living the Joy of the Gospel as well as further explore Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium. This event will bring together Catholic leaders for a day of formation and professional development for anyone who is living and leading mission and evangelisation. Keynote Address by Fr Noel Connolly SSC – The Francis Effect: A Theology of Leadership for Mission. From 8.30am to 4.30pm. Registration: \$195 adult, \$95 concession (registration includes a copy of The Francis Effect, morning tea and lunch). Venue: Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club. More information and to register: www.catholicmission.org.au

The Seven Last Words of Christ Lenten Retreat: 4-6 April

A Lenten weekend retreat for young adults organised by Singles for Christ Australia. Includes silent reflection, talks, prayer, adoration, Confession and Mass. Kihilla Conference Centre, 5-17 Queens Rd, Lawson. Cost: \$115. Details: Alex Pace (02) 9831 4044.

Grace & Silence Retreat Day: 12 April

Young women aged 17-30 years who are discerning their vocation to marriage, single or consecrated life or who would like to have a day of recollection are invited to the Schoenstatt Shrine at Mulgoa. Grace & Silence commences with a short impulse followed by Eucharistic Adoration; silent prayer and reflection and concludes with a group rosary and afternoon tea. From 9.30am-4.30pm. Cost \$20 includes lunch. The Schoenstatt Shrine is at 230 Fairlight Rd, Mulgoa. For further information and registration contact: Sister M Julie 0408 738 334, juliebrcar@gmail.com

Palm Sunday Procession & Youth Mass: 13 April

This year, Palm Sunday is also World Youth Day with the theme: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' (Mt 5:3)

Everyone is invited to join the annual Palm Sunday Procession, which starts at 5.30pm with the Blessing of the Palms at Parramatta Town Hall. The Street Procession will move through the Parramatta CBD to St Patrick's Cathedral for the Palm Sunday Mass at 6pm. Mass will be followed with a shared meal in the Cloister.

An initiative of Catholic Youth Parramatta and Catholic Education Parramatta. Find us on Facebook catholicyouthparra
RSVP 9 April to Fr Suresh Kumar MSFS tel 04 8844 8844, youth@parra.catholic.org.au www.parra.catholic.org.au/youth

Good Friday Walk & Talk with the Lord: 18 April

Last year more than 1000 young people participated in the overnight Good Friday Walk. The Stations of the Cross will be made in the parishes at Blacktown, Seven Hills, Toongabbie, Wentworthville, Westmead, North Parramatta and Parramatta. Starts 10pm at St Patrick's Church, 51-59 Allawah St, Blacktown, and ends early Saturday morning at St Patrick's Cathedral, 1 Marist Place, Parramatta. Bring your rosary beads and walking shoes.

An initiative of Catholic Youth Parramatta and Catholic Education Parramatta. Find us on Facebook catholicyouthparra
RSVP 15 April to Fr Suresh Kumar MSFS tel 04 8844 8844, youth@parra.catholic.org.au

Download a check-list and permission form for under 18s at: www.parra.catholic.org.au/youth

Macquarie Princess Cruise: 6 May

Cruise back in time with the social group from Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, Greystanes, and enjoy the ancient Hawkesbury River, surrounded by national park and 200 million-year-old sandstone gorges. The MV Macquarie Princess enhances the experience, being a covered all-weather classic and historic former Sydney ferry. Enjoy all this with great food and great company. Cost: \$65 including cruise, morning tea and lunch on board. Bus departs 8.45am at 20 Virgil St, Greystanes. Book early to avoid disappointment – deposit of \$20 required. Marie (02) 9896 7046, 0414 782 358 or Frances (02) 9636 5548, 0421 027 119, francesgrima@optusnet.com.au

Easter Fun!



Whilst the children are busy learning about the true meaning of Easter in class, the P&F Committee have been busy organising some Easter fun!

Mufti Day: Wednesday 26th March, 2014

We're giving you the day off from ironing those school uniforms and putting on a mufti day to raise some money in assisting us to help fund our Easter activities. All we're asking for is a gold coin donation on the day which will be collected by the class teacher in the morning.

Raffle: Loads of prizes, drawn 11th April, 2014

We all love a nice chocolate at Easter time so we'd like to give you the chance to win some. We will be sending books of 15 tickets home on Tuesday the 1st April and kindly ask that they be returned by the 10th April. This will give us enough time to organise the draw for the last day of term. Tickets will be 50c each or 3 for \$1.00

Don't forget to write your full name and contact number on the tickets.

Easter Card Competition - Let the fun begin!

Here's a chance for your children to demonstrate their artistic talents with a card making competition. The card needs to be designed and hand made by the children ONLY. We know how much you would all love to take some time out of your busy schedules to do some craft, but let's leave this one for the kids.

The Easter card needs to be on paper or cardboard and be no bigger than A4 size with their full name and class clearly marked on the back. They need to be placed in the box provided in the student foyer (located near lost property) by Wednesday 9th April. The best part about it, it's free to enter and there will be a prize for each grade. Cards will be given to the elderly at the Nursing home so don't forget to write a message inside.

Mark your diaries for 2pm Friday 11th April so you can come to the raffle draw and the announcement of the winners for the Easter card competition. Look forward to seeing you there.



Your P&F Committee

