

St Mary's School Avondale

Community Report February 2011 Issue



Principal's Comment

Financial Assistance

As a father myself, I am aware that schooling costs money. I know at this time of the year, the stationary list, the attendance dues, the uniforms, etc - the costs just keep adding up and up, and can seem like a mountain to climb.

I would like to thank all those people who come and tell us they need help with these things. They are the smart ones. It is good to be honest and talk it over with us so we can come to an arrangement with you. We don't want your child to miss out on anything.

For those who are struggling you might be surprised how easy it is to come to an arrangement over some of these costs. Give me a ring and tell me about it when you are finding some school costs too hard to meet.

Remember, we all want the same thing for the kids. The best education we can give them. So naturally, we want to help when the costs get too much for people. **However, if you don't ask, we can't help!**

Rob Allen
Principal

Religious Education

Welcome back to school! Our school year has begun with the Jesus strand in our Religious Education Programme. Children will be developing an understanding of Jesus: my friend, Jesus: the Eucharist, Jesus: his values and disciples and the life of Jesus. This term we will also participate in the Caritas Lenten program - united by our common humanity.

School notices were sent home in Week 3 about plans for a Sacramental Programme to be run as part of the school programme in 2011. Thank you to those families who have returned their notes back to school. If you would like to sign up your child to receive the sacrament of Baptism, Reconciliation, Holy Communion or Confirmation, please send a letter to school with your child to hand in to Room 9 before Wednesday 9th of March. This will be the last opportunity given for late enrolments. If you have any enquiries please arrange to see me.

Our season of Lent begins on the 9th of March with Ash Wednesday. There will be two masses at the parish. Ashes may be received during the 9am parish mass or at the 11am whole school mass. This year Father Jerome will be our celebrant as Father Ephrem will celebrate mass at camp with our Year 8's. A warm welcome to all.

Important dates:

Day of Prayer for Children - 6th March
Blessing of the Ashes - 8th March
Ash Wednesday - 9th March
NZ Bishop Lenten Appeal Begins - 9th March
Day of Prayer for Family Life - 25th March

Let us continue to keep the city of Christchurch in our prayers.

God Bless
Agatha Soagia
Director of Religious Studies

RED & BLACK DAY CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKE FUND

What a fantastic effort shown by our school! We raised **\$600.30** which has been sent via Caritas to help the people of Christchurch. Thank you for your participation and kindness.

Area 3 News

Greetings and welcome back! We extend a special welcome to Intermediate students new to our school:

Rm 12: 'Eneio Halatanu

Rm 13: Taliah Ah Van

Rm 14: Tamara Lui

And welcome back to **Fehoko Vaihu** in **Rm 14**.

We are well into the first term of our school year. The school holidays are now a fading memory and we have a busy term ahead of us.

Our unit of study this term is entitled, *Myself and Others – Responsibility*. Through our classroom programmes we hope to instil a strong sense of responsibility in our students. You will be getting your child's clearfile at the end of this term and this will give you an opportunity to comment on your child's work and progress.

The Year 8 Camp is a big focus for us this term. The camp is a part of our Intermediate education programme and provides our students with plenty of opportunity to acquire a range of essential skills. Mr Allen has once again opted to keep the camp fees to a minimum, in spite of rising costs, so that all students have access. We will help offset the camp costs through various fundraising efforts so we will rely on your support in this matter.

A very big THANK YOU goes out to all those parents who have shown their support for us by agreeing to our Expectations and Requirements. We set high standards for our students at St Mary's and we can only achieve those standards with your support. So THANK YOU once again! We are looking forward to another great year with our students and their parents.

God Bless You All

Michelle Jadoo

Deputy Principal

Area 1 News

Kia Ora, Talofa, Malolelei, Kumusta, Namaste!

Welcome back everyone. We also extend a warm welcome to the new families that have joined St Mary's school community and we look forward to being with you as you join in the many school activities we have for the entire school year. Thank you for all the preparation that you have done to get your child organised for this year. All the students in Area 1 look fantastic in their uniforms and we have had a very smooth start to the year.

There are four classes in the Junior Area this year.

These are as follows:

Room 1 (Year 1) Ms Marie Taefu

Room 2 (Years 2 & 3) Mrs Moetoto Isara

Room 3 (Year 3) Mrs Sandra Fernandes

Room 5 (Years 1 & 2) Mrs Avida D'Souza

Mrs Joselyn Laird - Reading Recovery and Special Needs Teacher

Mrs Marija Vincent- Support Staff

Mrs Sonia De la Cruz - Senior Teacher In-charge of the Junior Classes

Responsibility

Every child from Years 1 to 3 is learning to understand the meaning of the word **RESPONSIBILITY**. This term our integrated topic is about responsibility to oneself, responsibility at home, school and community. It is nice to see that our children are developing their basic responsibilities to themselves. As part of their homework, each child was given a checklist of what he/she needs to do before going to school. We are training our children to be more responsible in looking after themselves

Absence and Tardiness

This is to remind everyone of the school policy regarding absence and being late. If your child is away from school, they must bring a note on the day they come back and state the reason of her/his absence. If your child arrives at school late, they must go to the office and see the school secretary before going to his/her classroom.

Homework

St Mary's School believes that homework is an important strategy for improving student outcomes, informing parents about what is happening in classrooms and developing study habits. We expect that children should be supervised and guided by parents/caregivers when doing their homework. We also expect that homework must be corrected and acknowledged by the parents. Our homework tasks could be:

1. Daily reading to or with by parents/caregivers or other members of the family
2. Conversations about what is happening at school
3. Learning spelling words
4. Opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and problem solving skills
5. Bringing materials needed by your child at school e.g. book bag, permission slips if any and any materials to complete school projects etc.

Parent-Teacher Interviews

Please keep Wednesday 16th March available for your Parent-Teacher Interview. This is a special night for all parents. This will give every parent an opportunity to meet your child's teacher and discuss essential information about your child's standing in class. Don't miss this important night. Your presence is highly appreciated.

Expressions of interest for Home-School Partnership

Once again, we invite parents to support Area 1 children in their HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME. We have sent notices to parents/caregivers about this and still waiting for other parents to respond. What it takes is just 20 minutes of your time a week to listen to a child read and this will make a difference in the child's learning. Whoever is interested, please contact your child's teacher or see me for further information. We really need your help!

Let us all be interested in helping our children succeed!

Sonia De la Cruz

Senior Teacher Junior Classes

Area 2 News

Welcome to our first Area 2 Newsletter for 2011. We trust all our teachers, students, and their families enjoyed a restful summer holiday, and we now look forward to sharing together an exciting year of learning.

Area 2 Teachers:

Rm 9: Mrs Agatha Soagia, Rm 10: Mr Arona Sa and Rm 11: Mrs Geraldine Malgas
Support Staff: Miss Alavina Pomana, Miss Lagi Ah Yen, Mrs Elaine Colaco and Mrs Marija Vincent

This term we are focusing on a school wide unit "Responsibility". This unit has been designed to inspire discussion and thinking in school and then to be nurtured at home with you, the parents and caregivers. Growing up includes understanding that we have an important part to play in the world around us, and taking on that part. We look forward to helping our children become better at managing themselves so that they can become responsible, confident citizens of New Zealand. Every responsibility requires knowledge, understanding and wisdom. The more we learn, the better we will be able to meet our own needs, the needs of others, and the needs of our environment.

Literacy - A Hot Tip for Parents

Stay calm and relaxed when your child makes mistakes or forgets a word. If you get frustrated, change the situation by looking for the positive things your child has accomplished in the reading. Say things like:
"I really enjoyed how you sounded like the old man in the story."
"I can see that you understand how to use punctuation."
"Your voice got louder when you saw that exclamation mark."
"Do you realise that you read four pages tonight?"
"What did you like about this book?"
Or simply say, "How many more pages would you like to read and then I will read the rest?"

Goal Setting - Why Set Them?

Children in Area 2 are setting learning goals alongside their teacher. We are essentially trying to get children to consider why they are at school, what do they need to learn next and how might they measure that learning or check that they are on track. Hence we are guiding all children to set a writing, reading and maths goal. Good luck Years 4, 5 and 6. You all have worked hard to set your goals. Your goals are achievable because you designed them to suit your learning style. Remember when you achieve these goals, your next goal is to set a new one.

Week 4 PAT Testing

Students from Area 2 will be completing annual PAT tests. We conduct the tests to find out how the children are performing at National Level and your child's next learning steps.

GOD BLESS!

Geraldine Malgas
Assistant Principal

Office Updates

Addresses and Phone Numbers

Please make sure we have your current address and phone numbers on file at the school office. Precious moments during an emergency can be lost phoning out of date phone numbers. You can contact us by the following methods:
Phone: 828 5599
Email: stmarysoffice@stmarysavondale.school.nz
or just pop in to see us ☺

Early Release from School

Children who need to be released early from school must be collected from the school office. No student is permitted to leave the school grounds early without a parent or caregiver signing them out. If a person other than the listed parent or caregiver is to collect the child, a note verifying this must be sent or a phone call to the office beforehand. We ask this in the interest of pupil safety, as we are responsible for students while they are in our care.

Late Arrival to School

If a student arrives at school after the 8:45am bell, they must go to the school office. They will be issued with a late pass there to take to the class teacher.

Visitors to the School

We politely request that all visitors to the school report to the school office. Please try not to interrupt the class during lesson time.

Uniform and Stationery

Mrs Colaco is onsite at the school office if you need to purchase uniform and/or stationery. By now all children should have all their stationery. St Mary's is proud of its uniform and we ask for your cooperation in seeing your child is neatly and correctly dressed.

School Fees

By now each family should have received Term 1's invoice via post. If you have not received this then you may need to update your address at the office. School fees can be paid to Mrs Colaco at the school office in cash or by cheque (no EFTPOS available). You can also pay via direct credit to the school bank account or set up an automatic payment – just ask Miss Mackay for the details.

Attendance Dues this year are \$92.50 per term per pupil and are a compulsory fee that is forwarded to the Catholic Diocese for property maintenance. The Special Character Donation is \$10.00 per term per pupil and is also forwarded to the Catholic Diocese for use in teaching the Catholic faith. The Parent Donation is \$10.00 per term per pupil and is the only fee kept by the school used for purchasing any necessary school resources. As always, if you have any difficulties with payment, please speak to Mr Allen.

Leonie Mackay
School Secretary

School Diary

Year 8 Camp **Mon 7 Mar - Fri 11 Mar**
Ash Wednesday Whole School Mass 11am **Wed 9 Mar**
Parent-Teacher Interviews **Wed 16 Mar**
Mufti for Camp Fundraising **Fri 18 Mar**
Public Health Nurse consent talks **Tues 22 Mar**
BOT Meeting **Thurs 24 Mar**
Class Photos **Fri 8 Apr**
Hearing & Vision Testing **Tues 12 & Wed 13 Apr**
Y7 Immunisations & Y8 girls HPV **Thurs 5 May**
Queen's Birthday **Mon 6 June**
Dental Screening Van onsite **Mon 1 Aug onwards**
Mobile Dental Clinic onsite **Mon 15 Aug onwards**

Term Dates 2011

Term 1 Mon 7 February - Fri 15 April
Term 2 Mon 2 May - Fri 15 July
Term 3 Mon 1 August - Fri 7 October
Term 4 Tues 25 October - Tues 20 December

(Picture below)

MY FIRST DAY AT ST MARY'S – BY DEMELZA Rm 1

This picture is of Demelza and her mum walking to school.

