Dear Parents, Friends and Guardians

**Year 7 Leadership Badge Ceremony – Wednesday, 29 February**

Next Wednesday we will be conducting our Year 7 Leadership ceremony at our normal assembly. Our Parish Priest, Fr Pat Molony, will be leading our celebration and blessing our children as they take on the role of Leadership within our school community. At Marymount we view all of our children in Year 7 as leaders. Each one has a different gift to share and they can all lead in their own individual ways. We recognise this by presenting them with a badge. All parents are welcome to attend our service which should go no longer than half an hour.

**The Introduction of the Australian Curriculum**

As parents may be aware, the new Australian Curriculum has been introduced as a compulsory part of your children’s education from this year in the Learning Areas of English, mathematics and science. Other areas such as history, geography the arts and technology are to be trialled and phased in over the next few years. I was intrigued to see a newspaper report over the weekend which talked about a great fear and confusion over this introduction from some teachers in Queensland. Please know that this is the complete opposite here at Marymount. Our teachers have been very professional in their approach to this new curriculum by actively involving themselves in professional development and engaging in teaching and planning with these documents for over two and a half years now. Yes, there are some challenges presented by this initiative but our staff members have met them head on and have developed, dare I say it, a real ‘Can Do’ approach to its implementation. They are still working on its implementation through shared planning sessions as well as after school Year Level meetings. We are blest to have such committed staff and I thank our teachers on your behalf for their dedication to their role.

**Federal Government Funding Review of Schools – The Gonski Report**

In last week’s newsletter I mentioned that this report on the future funding model for schools across Australia was due to be released on Monday just gone. You may have seen some reports in the media on its release but at this stage the finer details are yet to surface. Brisbane Catholic Education through its parent bodies, the Queensland Catholic Education Commission and the National Catholic Education Commission, will be working through the full ramifications for us and in time will be able to pass on to us the gains/losses of the new model. I will then pass these on via our P & F meetings and this newsletter.

**School Goal – Setting Conference**

On Thursday and Friday of this week our school Leadership Team will be absent from our site as we attend our annual Goal-setting conference. We will be joined by our Area Supervisor, Trevor Doyle, and the Leadership teams from the 9 other Gold Coast Catholic schools. These days help us to focus on our broader picture plans for the school over the course of the year. We use Brisbane Catholic Education’s Strategic Renewal booklet as our base and draw our goals from their 4 main priority areas –

- Mission and Religious Education
- Learning and Teaching
- Professional Practice and Collaborative Relationships
- Strategic Resourcing

After developing our goals we will present them to our staff and parent community via this forum and our P & F and Staff meetings. In our absence John Jensen will be the Teacher-in-Charge.

**Yours Prayers Please**

I would ask that you please keep the Jones family (Class Teacher Kim from 4A) in your prayers. Sadly Kim’s mother-in-law Pat Jones, passed away in the presence of her family over the weekend. Pat’s funeral is being held today in Northern New South Wales at St Martin’s Church in Mullumbimby. Pat’s declining health has meant that Kim has been away over the last week as her family gathered to say their farewells. I am sure that Kim and her husband Geoff, and the wider Jones family would appreciate our prayers during this time.

**continued over...**
Extended Absence for Diane

Diane Gawler, our Parent Reception Secretary, has been on an extended period of leave due to an ongoing health concern. The matter first came to a head during our Christmas holiday break and Diane was unable to commence in her role at the start of the year. After undergoing specialist treatment there is still the need for Diane to stay at home and keep rested. I would ask that we remember Diane in our prayers and pray for her speedy recovery. We have asked Anna Rofe to fill in for Diane as Anna has had experience in our office before. We thank Anna for sharing her talents with us and we hope that Diane’s road to recovery will be swift.

Parent Meet ‘n’ Greet – Prep to Year 3 – Thursday, 1 March

We will be holding our next parent meet ‘n’ greet on the above date at 9.00am in our school staff room. This Morning Tea is open to all parents of children in our early years’ classes. We have no fixed agenda – it is just a chance to meet with our Leadership Team and share a few stories over a cup of tea / coffee. We are generally finished by 10.00am. I look forward to seeing you there.

Parent Information Evening for New Students in 2013 (Preparatory to Year 7)

We would like to invite you to our Parent Information Evening on Tuesday 6 March from 6.30pm to 7.30pm to be held in the Theatrette at the Doyle Centre. The information evening will be of a general nature and cover important matters relating to the enrolment at Marymount Primary School, our Mission Statement, the Parish Sacramental Programme, school policies, etc. Existing families with new student enrolment for 2013 are most welcome.

Catholic Schools’ Swimming Carnival – Friday, 2 March

Marymount will join with our sister Catholic primary schools on the Gold Coast to contest the annual swimming carnival on Friday week at Pizzey Park. Any children involved in this should have received a note by this stage which details times, transport arrangements, etc. if your child hasn’t received this note please contact our PE Teacher, Paul Hill for assistance. This day is always a great day and parents are most welcome to come along and cheer on our squad.

Whilst on swimming it would be remiss of me not to mention our squad of swimmers who went to last week’s District carnival. Our children performed admirably and we had 11 children make the South District team to compete at the Regional carnival. Thanks again to Paul Hill for his help with the co-ordination of this carnival and good luck to our children at the next level.

Thanks for reading.

Yours in Christ

Greg Casey

More from “What Makes us Tick” by Hugh Mackay (Hachette, Australia; 2010)

Mackay writes that humans have an almost insatiable appetite for control. We tend to mock “control freaks” whilst at the same time we are to some degree obsessed with it ourselves and can feel very uncomfortable when not in control.

He argues that almost all circumstances are actually beyond our control. He cites examples such as the global financial crisis of 2008-2009 and fluctuations in demand and cost of iron ore and gas as just a couple of examples to highlight the point. He writes (p.211):

Even if you don’t think on so grand a scale, nothing in human history encourages the idea that the important things in our lives – especially our relationships- are ever under control or that “getting my life under control” has ever been a realistic goal.

Mackay refers to this control as “a modern Western madness”. He attributes some of the blame for the current high levels of stress and anxiety to this. What’s worse, is that we continue to seek solutions to our stress and anxiety in all the wrong places. Accepting that the desire for control is both natural and even healthy to a point, he cautions that we need to be careful just what and how we are trying to exercise control of and over.

Put simply, the desire for control is really about wanting our own way. This desire is reinforced from birth when our demands for food and nappy changes as well as responses to crying (and sadly for some, tantrums!) were well met. With maturation came the realisation that our needs were in competition to others in our families, schools and social neighbourhoods. We learnt that co-operation (the very opposite of control) was necessary if at least some of our needs were to be met, in a society with competing demands. Mackay writes (p. 212) that “we learn how to cooperate, collaborate, compromise and even capitulate, but we secretly keep wishing it otherwise”.

At its worse then, the desire to control creates an all-consuming ambition to perpetuate the “centre-of-the-universe” type thinking. Over time, most people wisely manage to work towards control over small, more manageable goals such as managing the household budget or having the household routines manageable enough for reasonably efficient functioning. We do however continue to fantasise about controlling external events such as our environment; the children, and our professional or personal workloads. Particularly in the light of natural disasters, it is clear that we do not and cannot control many of life’s events and the resulting effect can be heightened levels of stress and anxiety.

If we are therefore to successfully help our children learn to cope with the processes of social change, economic upheavals and the technological revolution therefore, we need to be very mindful of our responses to the children’s “demands”. We need to both model and respond from the head, rather than from the heart so that our ambitions do not impair good sense; our compassion is not over-ridden by our competitive urges, and our prejudices do not blind us to truth.
Children need adults to make sound and decisive decisions and have the strength to say, “No” at times, and then stick to the “No” despite protestations. Furthermore, we need to model (and expect) a high level of resilience and adaptation to change. Children need to know that all their desires cannot and do not even always deserve to be met. Centre-of-the-universe type philosophies and resulting demands require challenging and any traces of “bossy boots” type behaviour warrants intervention before it becomes ingrained in a natural way of behaving.

Whilst we cannot really control our state of health, and we can never guarantee outcomes, we can certainly have an influence in it. There is enough information to guide us in making lifestyle decisions. Specifically, choices about diet and exercise are significant. It has been very satisfying to see the large numbers of children accessing our fitness programs and I applaud parents for affording these children the opportunity. Whilst immediate results may not be noticed, the development of a love of exercise and the resulting long-term health and social benefits are great gifts.

With my wishes for a great week, I leave you with the following cartoon to ponder.

Annette O’Shea

SCHOOL FEE CONCESSION INTERVIEWS CLOSING DATES

We advise that Parents/Caregivers who are applying for a school fee concession will need to do so URGENTLY as interviews are being conducted for FOUR WEEKS ONLY this year at the Primary School:

Wednesday 22 February 2012 to Wednesday 14 March 2012

Some Mondays may be available on request depending on the number of applications received. Please note that if you do not submit your application within this timeframe you will jeopardize your chances of approval being granted for term 1. Applications must be received with ALL SUPPORTING documentation attached including a current Centrelink INCOME STATEMENT before an interview can be made.

Please phone Janelle Holmes on 55208417 if you have any queries.

FOR SALE

Clarinet and Standard of Excellence book for sale – hardly used, good for beginner. $150.00. Please see Ms Christensen at the office.

New Bankers Wanted

Ann from the Commonwealth Bank will be in Student Reception to open new accounts for students on Tuesday 28th February from 8.00am until 9.00am. To open a new account we need a parent to bring in their photo id. (drivers licence) or bank details if already a Commonwealth customer. It will only take a few minutes to complete and your child does not need to be with you.

Student banking teaches children the great life skill of ‘saving’ and also raises money for our school as the bank pays $5 for every new account and 5% of the total amount banked each week through school banking.

After the new account is opened student simply brings their banking to school each week and gives to the class teacher. They will receive a token for each time they bank which can be redeemed for some great prizes.

We hope to see you next Tuesday!

The Banking Ladies

Ash Wednesday

Students from class 3P received the ashes today, Ash Wednesday, a feast that marks the beginning of the liturgical season of Lent.

Primary and College students collected the Ashes from Mass this morning to bring to our school assembly.

MEETING TONIGHT

6.00PM

COLLEGE BOARDROOM

ART SHOW

2012
Ash Wednesday
Today is Ash Wednesday, a feast that marks the beginning of the liturgical season of Lent. This season is 40 days in length and ends at the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on April 5. Traditions and practices during this time have varied over the years though they still revolve around the themes of prayer, almsgiving, penance, fasting and abstinence. While our understanding of these concepts is less literal than in the past, people over the age of thirteen years, provided they are in good health, are still required to fast and abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

This morning we were lead in prayer at assembly by 4JH (M). We welcomed the ashes that had been blessed by Fr Pat at Mass earlier in the morning and listened to the scripture story about Zacchaeus. We prayed and sang about ways to change our ways, much like Zacchaeus. At school we encourage children to focus on changing behaviour and becoming better people. Students make their own personal Lenten promises and work towards these goals.

We also focus on the work of Caritas Australia and Project Compassion as a way of looking outwards into the world and giving in order to make a difference to others.

Project Compassion (for Caritas Australia)
This fundraising campaign runs throughout the season of Lent and gives us a practical and immediate way we can contribute to the efforts of agencies who work with the poor in Australia and overseas. Caritas continues to be active in many countries such as Peru, the Thai-Burma border and Zimbabwe responding to the needs there. Their focus this year is Timor Leste. We see the story of Flabiana and her children who have had to rebuild their lives after fleeing to the mountains to escape the fighting in their village.

With the help of Caritas volunteers Flabiana and her friends were encouraged to take out a small loan, grow soya beans to make tofu and set up a cooperative business. Their profits mean that Flabiana’s children can now go to school and have a healthier life.

Please take a close look at the money box that has been sent home to you this week. Collect your small change or make a plan to give up a family treat so that you can give the money to those less fortunate. Please send the box back at the end of term and remember to fill out the information on the top if you would like a receipt for tax purposes.

Caritas Launch Friday 17 February
Last Friday Natalie, Olivia, Jacob and Cooper from Year Seven joined College students at the launch of Project Compassion in the Brisbane Mall. Beforehand we listened to Sr Joan who works with the poor in Peru about her experience there and the assistance Caritas has given to the people in her village. Minister for Foreign Affairs, Kevin Rudd, spoke about the projects that funds are used for, and the difference we can make in the lives of others. We made the Peruvian flags in the photo when we gathered with students from other schools in small groups. The flag features red and white sections, leaves encircling a crest and a wreath above.

Fundraising at Marymount
Your generosity through donations to agencies such as Caritas means a great deal to those struggling to meet basic needs for their family members.

Marymount Primary supports only three agencies through fundraising during the year:

- Caritas Australia (through Project Compassion) in Term One
- St Vincent de Paul (through the Winter Appeal) in late Term Two
- Catholic Missions in early Term Four

and response to individual instances (such as the bushfires and floods)

We have noticed lately that several students have come to school with chocolate fundraiser packages to sell to their friends for sporting clubs etc. While we acknowledge that these clubs play an important role in the lives of families, we do not allow the sale of food or other items at school. On the one hand, students are carrying amounts of cash and items which may be at risk of theft or loss. Secondly, we promote healthy eating through our tuckshop and classroom discussions about nutrition, and oversized Freddo frogs don’t have a place on the menu!

I receive many calls throughout the year from worthy agencies hoping that we might take part in their promotions as we are a large school and, as such, a relatively easy source for generating funds. We have deliberately and carefully chosen three Catholic agencies to support on your behalf. Brisbane Catholic Education strongly encourages us in our endeavours of outreach that mission to people on both local and global levels through these organisations. We are very grateful for your support of our efforts to focus on the needs of the most disadvantaged people in our world. Families can, and should, continue to support causes that they deem important as an example to their children, but we ask that you keep items for sale among family and friends.

Enjoy the rest of the week

Bernadette Christensen
Boy are we lucky", I am sure this has been echoed throughout our school over the last week. The tuckshop has been blessed with a record number of volunteers. This was very evident the last couple of days which saw all windows open, the children being able to make their purchase and then head off and play with their friends. Let’s hope we continue this way and children waiting in line for the entirety of their lunch time becomes a thing of the past at Marymount Primary.

The expression: *many hands make light work*, certainly rings true at the tuckshop. A huge thank you to all volunteers!!

**Pancake Tuesday** saw the children feasting on pancake stacks with maple syrup; they really enjoyed them! **Ash Wednesday** has been greatly supported with over 260 fish burgers being ordered for lunch.

**ST PATRICK’S DAY** - Joining in the fun of free dress day the tuckshop will be going GREEN. Green cupcakes; green pikelets; green ice blokes and anything else green I can think of, any ideas?

**BIRTHDAYS** - Please ensure (if bringing on day of birthday) ice blocks are frozen. I have been receiving water ice blocks not frozen. Unfortunately they will not freeze during the day in time for your child's celebration. The tuckshop can offer party treats such as cup cakes; ice blocks and pikelets should you wish to purchase these for your child's birthday. Twenty four hours notice would be great.

**ROSTER FOR NEXT WEEK:**
- Monday 27 Feb..............Amanda Dixon and Tara Lynch
- Tuesday 28 Feb.............Santina, Christina and Kristy
- Wednesday 29 Feb.......Melanie Leis, Margaret & Kylie Cooke
- Thursday 01 March.......Sharon Lally, Karen Whatman, Louise G. and Monica Tacchi
- Friday 02 March.........Paul Harris & Lindy Jansen-Harris, Sarah Bower and Brigette Brennan

Thanks again to our wonderful volunteers. Please let me know if you are unable to do your day.

Have a GREAT weekend!!

Vicki Turner
How to register:
Complete the form below and place it in an envelope marked
"Attention Ms. Kelvin
Parent Workshop –Reading"

Your name...........................................

Your child's name......................................

Your child’s class........................................

Tick which session that you wish to attend:
□ Morning Session
29th February 2012
□ Evening Session
29th February 2012

Please return by:
Friday 24th February

Workshop topics

How do children learn to read?

What do I need to know about reading?

Making reading fun by using:
* “hands on” activities to help children with reading
* Games to help your child learn the Marymount Wonder Words (first 200 sight words.)

HELPING YOUR CHILD WITH READING AT HOME AND AT SCHOOL

If you want to help in the classroom or have some great ideas to make reading more fun then this ‘hands on’ workshop is for you.

on Wednesday 29th February 2012 at 8.45 am (sharp) till 11 am in the Meeting Room (upstairs opposite the library)

Or
On Wednesday 29th February 2012 at 6.45 pm (sharp) till 8.30 pm in Year 6 (drive up Sunlight Drive)