



ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI COMMUNITY NEWS UPDATE

Term 1

Week 9

23rd March 2016

As we move through Holy Week this year, we are exposed to the radical nature of God's forgiveness in the manner in which Jesus accepts his crucifixion and death. Jesus is a victim of great injustice but instead of nursing feelings of hurt, anger, disgust and contempt, he exhibits a strong sense of compassion toward those responsible for his execution when he says, "Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing".

Jesus' lack of self-pity is further illustrated as he slowly approached his death, crucified between two criminals and mocked by the religious officials and others who passed by. When one of the criminals makes fun of him saying, "Are you the Messiah? Then, save yourself and us!" Jesus has no angry response. Instead, when the second criminal asks "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom," Jesus does not ask him what he has done or how repentant he is, but with compassion responds, "Today, you will be with me in paradise."

The events of Holy Week remind us of our calling to be active Christians in the way we lead our own lives. If we are harbouring hurt within us, Jesus' actions can encourage us towards forgiveness and away from grudges and bitterness. We have all experienced hurt through the actions or words of another and this hurt we might have carried for years and deprived ourselves of the opportunity to embrace peace, hope, gratitude and joy by being unforgiving.

Forgiveness is a decision to let go of resentment and thoughts of revenge. In place of anger, confusion, maybe anxiety or even depression through being swallowed up by our own bitterness or sense of injustice, we can move away from our role as victim and relieve the power, that the offending person or situation has on our life, As we let go of hurt and resentment and don't allow them to define our life, we open ourselves to find compassion and understanding. Slowly, we embrace forgiveness and begin once more to live a truly Christian life.

Jesus' example to us on Good Friday, clearly defined for us the extent for God's forgiveness and the encouragement for us to do likewise in our own limited human way. But Jesus' example has an after effect as well, for on Easter Sunday he rose gloriously to a new life.

Jesus' brought us the promise of new life, and that is why we celebrate with Easter eggs and chickens, as newly hatched chicks are a sign of new life. (The chocolate is just a bonus!)

During Lent, Alleluia is not said but at Easter we celebrate in prayer by saying, "*Alleluia, He is risen.*"

Happy Easter to everyone.

Mrs Jenny Bellenger

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY
TUESDAY 29TH MARCH 2016
THERE WILL BE NO STUDENTS AT SCHOOL ON THIS DAY**

QUALITY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS SURVEY

All Catholic schools in the Diocese of Parramatta will be participating in the Quality Catholic Schooling (QCS) survey. This survey provides information from students, staff and parents about school's cultural behaviour, relationships and learning community and assists us in our focus on continuous improvement.

If you have been one of the few chosen families to be asked to complete the survey, we would appreciate your honest feedback. Please be assured that all information remains strictly confidential. Thank you for your participation in this important survey. **The closing date is Monday 4th April 2016.**

DATES COMING UP

- 25/3 Good Friday
- 28/3 Easter Monday
- 29/3 Staff Development Day

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NAPLAN 2016

The 2016 NAPLAN tests will be conducted over three days from **Tuesday 10th May—Thursday 12th May** for students in Years 3 and 5. There are four tests covering numeracy, reading, writing and language conventions (spelling, punctuation and grammar).

The assessments are an opportunity for students to demonstrate what they have learned in class. The NAPLAN test results and the student reports are released in September.

The results provide information about student achievement that can be used to inform teaching and learning programs. NAPLAN tests provide point-in-time information regarding student progress in literacy and numeracy and are intended to complement the wide range of formal and informal assessments that are already conducted in schools. NAPLAN test results are not intended to be used in isolation from other school-based assessment programs.

More details can found at: <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/naplan/info-for-parents.html>.

Test dates for your calendar: 10 May—Language Conventions and Writing
11 May—Reading
12 May—Numeracy

CROSS COUNTRY

Congratulations to the primary children who competed in our annual Cross Country Event last week. The conditions were perfect for running with all children successfully completing the long distance course. Thank you to the parents who volunteered as marshals on the day to ensure the students were safe throughout the event. An announcement will be made in the next week of those who qualified for the diocesan event next term.

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ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCHOOL—MAJOR FUNDRAISER

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- We will be holding our Yearly ‘a-thon’ in Term 2. Similar to last year, we are looking for any local businesses
- that are able to donate prizes. Can you help with this? Do you know someone who can help? Please
- contact the office if you or someone you know is able to help out.

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HOLY WEEK AND EASTER CEREMONIES AT GOOD SHEPHERD CHURCH PLUMPTON

Holy Thursday - Mass of the Lord’s Supper 7.30pm

Good Friday - Stations of the Cross—Passion Play (10am in the hall)

Good Friday - Celebrations of the Lord’s Passion 3pm

Holy Saturday - Easter Vigil 7.30pm

Easter Sunday - Masses at 7am, 9am, 12.00pm (Vietnamese)

**ST FRANCIS SCHOOL WOULD LIKE TO
WISH EVERYONE A HAPPY, SAFE
& HOLY EASTER**

