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20 June 2012

Principal's Pen



In Appreciation of a Term of Hard Work and Success

As I write this editorial, I am mindful of the extremely busy and productive term we have had here at St Rita's. Most recently, this weekend saw yet again, our school values of faith and community being lived out by staff, parents and students.

On Saturday evening, the Parish Community gathered to celebrate First Eucharist and Confirmation for young members of the Parish, two of which were St Rita's students Molly and Caitlin. On behalf of the school community, I congratulate the girls and their families.

Acknowledgement also to Mrs Hession for her assistance of Fr Grundy in the preparation of the evening, particularly the supper afterwards. Thank you also to Mrs Greenwood and Mrs Jago for their attendance and assistance.

Then, Sunday morning a group of parents and students gave their all and came to the Working Bee. 9 parents and 10 students came along and helped to help improve our school grounds. While we didn't get the paving done, most of the front fence looks all shiny and new, as does the noticeboard. The lawn looks great all mown and the bin area was gernied. 'Wet and Forget' was also sprayed on the pavers at the front of the school to rid them of the mould that has begun to form. In all, a very successful working bee. Thank you parents and students for your community mindedness! Oh and that wasn't including Mrs Jago who came in on Saturday for a few hours to clean the gate – thanks Mrs Jago.

This term St Rita's has continued to blossom as a school in so many ways. Some of the highlights include:

- Cross Country
- ANZAC Celebrations
- Mrs Ross starting at St Rita's as Prep/1 teacher
- NAPLAN Testing
- Staff Professional Development in Maths with St Michael's
- Classroom Profiling and School Feedback
- Parent Workshop on Boys
- Cairns Central Promotion
- Principal and APRE Conferences
- Feast of St Rita
- Simultaneous Reading Time
- Trivia Night
- Harvest Festival – float and P&F activities
- Athletics Carnivals (dodging the rain)
- National Year of Reading Celebrations at St Rita's
- Workplace Health and Safety Audit of the school
- Class Masses

- Planning for the Opening of School Buildings
- Celebrations of 20 years of Julie Cross
- Spellathon
- P&F Meetings
- Confirmation and First Eucharist
- Assessment and Report Cards
- Beginning the writing of our new St Rita's Mission Statement

One of the highlights for me as Principal has to be beginning to spend more time in the classrooms. Watching the quality teaching and learning that occurs in the classrooms of St Rita's has grounded me again in what is really important – the students and the joy in learning and discovery.

As the term comes to a close, we can look back and celebrate achievements and have a well-deserved rest. Holidays are so important for children to relax and recharge. These holidays, staff will be preparing more exciting learning for next term... something for the students to look forward to.

NEW NEWSLETTER FORMAT

In trying to keep our newsletter presentation modern, professional and easily accessible for parents, we are trialling the use of a company to assist us with the publishing. We are still in the infancy stages, so please bear with us as we become familiar with the process. Next term, we hope to be able to offer the newsletter digitally as well as hard copy. Feedback is always welcome.

You can access the *new electronic newsletter* via the following link:

<http://stritasbabinda.schoolzinewsletters.com/2012/20120620/index.html>

REPORTING



In preparation for Semester 1 reports coming home, I have included information about reporting at St Rita's. Reports for Years 2-7 will come home this Wednesday 20 June and the P/1 on Tuesday 10 July. This is due to the later than expected appointment of Mrs Ross. A letter will accompany the reports, which has been written by Dr Bill Sultman, Executive Director of Catholic Education, explaining to parents the effect of the Australian Curriculum on teaching and assessment in English, Maths and Science. This is also the first time Prep students have a report of this kind.

Reporting in an integral part of the learning process at St. Rita's school. Reporting communicates information that has been obtained from a variety of assessment processes and involves a professional judgment on behalf of the teacher. On-Track reporting software is utilised by the staff to formally report on student achievement in terms 2 and 4. In addition, parent/teacher conferences are used to provide feedback to parents and students in Terms 1 and 3. These processes are supplemented by informal feedback on a needs basis.

Teachers maintain an assessment schedule in their term program to highlight the timing of significant assessment tasks. Assessment task sheets provide a detailed summary of the assessment task criteria. Rubrics are in integral component of major assessment tasks at St Rita's School. Student achievement in assessment tasks is maintained in teacher programs as assessment results. Reporting from Year 1 to 3 requires teachers to make judgments of standards based on a five point scale of Very High, High, Sound, Developing and Needs Attention. Reporting from Years 4 -7 requires teachers to make judgments of standards based on a five point scale of A to E with A being the highest and E being the lowest. A hard copy of student reports is archived on the school premises until the student reaches the age of 25 years.

Student portfolios further supplement the reporting process at St Rita's School. Student portfolios typically contain samples of student work and major assessment tasks selected from Semester 1 and Semester 2 in all Learning Areas. Student portfolios are representative of student achievement throughout the school year. The portfolio is provided for parent observation at the end of Semester 1 and sent home at the end of the school year.

I trust that this information has been helpful to you. I encourage you to focus on the positive aspects of your child's report and celebrate achievements. It is also a time to set new learning goals for Semester 2. A reminder that the Assessment and Reporting Folders must come back to school by the end of the first week of Term 3.

ST RITA'S ATHLETICS CARNIVAL WRAP UP



A courageous and resilient St Rita's athletes have conquered the elements and we now have a winning team... the overall winner for 2012 is Palmerston... congratulations!!!

Across all of the events, the staff witnessed some amazing examples of courage, determination and resilience. Mindful that not all students enjoy competing in athletics, everyone achieved something worth celebrating. Our Age Champions for 2012 are:

AGE CHAMPIONS

BOYS	GIRLS
5 Years -----	5 Years Adah Naawi
6 Years Joshua Villari Jaxon Saylor	6 Years Billie Luce Cassie Ross
7 Years Jacob Bowen Cooper Luce	7 Years Grace Hession
8 Years Vito Musumeci	8 Years Caitlyn Ross

BOYS	GIRLS
9 Years Corwin Hillard	9 Years -----
10 Years Nicheolas Blonner	10 Years Molly Stager
11 Years Clifford Stone	11 Years Shylah Montague
12 Years Darragh Stager	12 Years -----

The winner of the Tai Snowball Encouragement & Good Sportsmanship Award for 2012 was Ryley Oliveri. Staff noticed Ryley often helping younger students, encouraging them and offering to assist. Well done Ryley – we are proud of you.

I must acknowledge and thank our Athletics Carnival Co-ordinator Mr Dean Garside for his leadership of the event in recent months. It takes a lot of co-ordination to plan and execute an athletics carnival and Mr Garside has done it extremely well. Thank you Mr Garside!!!

SHOP FOR KIDS – CAIRNS CENTRAL SHOPPING PROMOTION



This is our last week to win the big bucks. Many of our staff, parents, extended families and 'friends of St Rita's' have been supporting our cause. This week the code word is "HOMEWORK"

Woolworths and Coles Promotions

We are also registered for the Woolworths 'Earn and Learn' and the Coles "Schools for Sports". Keep sending in those docketts and the vouchers.

DANCE FEVER FINALE



This Friday 22 June, (last day of term) we will be hosting the Dance Fever finale where parents are invited to come along and watch the

moves and grooves learned by the children this term. Parents are asked to be here for the start of the festivities by 12.30pm. Those parents who wish to, can take their children from school at the completion of the performances.

SPELLATHON MONEY

Thank you parents for sending in the money from the Spellathon. If you haven't already done so please settle this before the end of the week.

SCHOOL FEES

Parents of St Rita's are generally very vigilant when it comes to paying fees and for that I commend you. It would be appreciated that any outstanding debts be settled by the end of the week. Thank you.

2013 ENROLMENTS

I am going to be conducting all of the 2013 Prep enrolments in the first few weeks of next term. There is a healthy interest in St Rita's around the town which is promising for the future. If you are a current parent and have a child eligible for Prep in 2013 then I strongly urge you to phone the office and ask Julie to send an enrolment pack home. The confirmation of these enrolments is crucial in the planning process for the school for next year. This process begins next term.

If you have any friends or know of anyone wanting to have a no obligation chat and tour, please send them our way.

ONLINE LIBRARY SEARCH



I wish to bring to your attention the new facility we have installed for your convenience. If you visit the school website, under the 'Your Catholic Education' Tab you will find the 'Library Search' option. Here you can search books in our library and search websites which are suitable for children. Let's know how you find this...

In conclusion, I would like to wish all of our students and families a sincerely restful and re-energizing break over the next 2 weeks. It has been a long hard slog this term and a break is just what the doctor ordered. I look forward to seeing you all back on Monday 9 July ready to tackle the term. Be safe.

Gavin

APRE/SEL NEWS



As we prepare for the holidays, I thought this reading was very appropriate. May you all enjoy the celebration of life and have the chance for some relaxation of routines and busyness while your children are on holidays; and hopefully you don't let the mosquitoes ruin your picnic!

Sarah

Mosquito Bites



<http://www.bne.catholic.net.au/asp/index.asp?pgid=12093>

"When grace enters, there is no choice - humans must dance."



W.H. Auden wrote those words and, beautiful as they sound, I wish they were true. When grace enters a room we should begin to dance but, sadly, more often than not we let some little thing, some minor mosquito bite, blind us to grace's presence.

I say this with sympathy, not cynicism. We all know how mosquitoes can ruin a picnic. Here's an example: You are celebrating your birthday in your back yard, having a picnic with family and friends. The weather is perfect, the sun is warm, the mood is mellow, and everything around and within you is an invitation to be joyful and grateful. This is "Sabbath" in the biblical sense: You are celebrating life, your birthday. You are healthy, surrounded by family and friends who love you, enjoying leisure, time off the wheel of work, all with good food and good drink. Grace has entered and everything is wonderful, except for one thing, mosquitoes. As dusk begins to take hold they discreetly begin to infiltrate, inflicting a bite here and a bite there until eventually most everyone loses his or her focus and is preoccupied with keeping exposed parts of their flesh under vigilance. Eventually most of the good cheer and the gratitude evaporate and irritation at the mosquitoes effectively ends any inclination to dance. The picnic is brought down by a series of little bites!

We could all recount a hundred kinds of incidences of this sort. Given the complexity and contingency within our everyday lives, mosquitoes of some type are invariably present. There is some rain on every parade, some irritation in virtually every situation in life, and some element challenging pure grace within almost every moment of life. Life rarely comes to us pure, free from all shadow. That's why former spiritualities said that we are "living in this valley of tears". In our lives we never experience a moment of clear-cut, pure, joy. Everything comes with a shadow, a mosquito at the picnic.

And so it is not always easy to dance, even in the clear presence of grace. Mosquito bites can easily cause us to lose perspective, to lose the big picture, the one that would have us see and celebrate grace, even in the face of some minor irritation. A minor irritation can make us lose sight of a huge grace....

And yet the challenge remains, an important and healthy challenge: Don't let the mosquito bites within life blind you to the larger presence of grace! One of my favorite spiritual writers, David

Steidl-Rast articulates this challenge very strongly, though he does it by emphasizing the positive. Here's an example from his writings: "You think this is just another day in your life. It's not just another day; it's the one day that is given to you today. It's given to you; it's a gift. It's the only gift that you have right now, and the only appropriate response is gratefulness."

But that is a grace that does not come easily, it must be fervently prayed for. Mosquitoes will inevitably make their presence known at every picnic in our lives. That's a given. The challenge is to not lose sight of the larger presence of grace because of minor irritations."

RON ROLHEISER, OMI Speaker, Columnist and Author
2012-01-22
www.ronrolheiser.com

PRAYERS OF GRACE

Father, thank you for the gift of life today and for all eternity. Amen.

Jesus, forgive me for losing sight of the big picture things in my life, especially the gift of salvation. Amen

Holy Spirit, open my senses to treasure the many graces you shower upon me this day. Amen

REPORT CARD TIME

It's report card time again, and no matter if this is your child's first year at school or their seventh, it can prove to be stressful for everyone involved.

Teachers want to be sure that you receive an accurate assessment of your child's achievements and progress. They have been recording results of formal assessments, as well as keeping track of ongoing task completion and achievement. Students want their parents to be proud of what they've done and they want to bask in the glow of your approval. As parents you want to be sure your child is developing as they should, and their learning is progressing soundly. That could add up to an awful lot of pressure and tension.

All of this build up culminates in that moment in time when you hold The Report Card in your hand ready to read it! Before you do, here are some points to consider:

- Report cards are not designed to compare one child's achievements with another child's achievements
- As your child moves up in year levels the work becomes more complex so factor this in to your expectation levels
- Look for progress rather than a particular achievement level. Getting a 'B' is not the same as getting 'A', but it's also not the same as 'C'
- Affirm the effort they make rather than the final result. Celebrate personal bests and trying hard rather than looking for 10/10
- Avoid nagging about progress such as reading levels and test results. Your child is fully aware of their own abilities and if they feel pressure from you they may choose to avoid work so they can avoid your disapproval
- Read the report card with your child and use the time to support and problem solve if it seems needed
- Be honest with your child. Acknowledge that they might find some things difficult and validate how they feel about this while showing them the part they play in moving forward i.e. problem solve

Finally remember that parenting is the role in life that challenges us to experience wonder, joy, hope, patience and unconditional love – all in abundance especially at report card time!!

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

*Don't let your mind become cluttered with worry.
It leaves less room for the good stuff.*

GROUNDS AND GARDENS ROSTER



Thank you to the following families who are rostered on:

BREADEN - 9th - 22nd June
MONTAGUE - 23rd June—6th July
SALVESTRIN - 7th - 20th July

Please be sure to check the roster so that you can organize to pick up and drop the mower key to the office.

STARS OF THE WEEK



Prep / Year 1	Montana Oliveri
Year 2/3/4	Nicholas Stone
Year 5/6/7	Ryley Oliveri

MUNRO THEATRE BABINDA

Screening at 7.30pm on 22nd, 23rd & 24th June, 2012

DR. SEUSS' THE LORAX...3D Movie (G)

Admission \$7.00 Info line 40671032

Coming Soon:

THE PIRATES! BAND OF MISFITS...3D Movie (G)

Screening 29th 30th June & 1st July, June, 2012

Date Claimers

JULY	
AUGUST	
7 th Aug	P & F Meeting 7pm
13 th 17 th Aug	Book Fair
14 th Aug	Maths Competition
20 th – 24 th Aug	Book Week
24 th Aug	Book Character Dress-up Day
SEPTEMBER	
4 th Sept	P & F Meeting 7pm
19 th Sept	NAIDOC

20 th Sept	St Rita's Got Talent Show
21 st Sept	Student Free Day