Dear Parents, Guardians, Students and Other Parishioners,

Today was the last day for parents or guardians to return application forms for enrolment in Year 7 at any Catholic secondary College for 2015. We are very fortunate in our area to have a regional College. Our regional college is of course Nazareth College just down the road in Manning Drive. I am not sure that everyone understands that our parish, St Elizabeth’s, is one of the five parishes who are directly responsible for the College through the association of our Parish Priests. The Parish Priest of St Elizabeth’s, St Simon’s-Rowville, St Justin’s-Wheelers Hill, St John Vianney’s-Mulgrave and St Gerard’s-Dandenong North are what is known as the Canonical Administrators on the Nazareth School Board. The College is actually ‘our’ college if you like. We are all very closely related through our ministry in Catholic Education.

It was terrific then to be able to welcome Ms Ann McDonald and her Deputies, Mr Garry Giese and Mr David Broadbent along with their Student Ambassador, Josh Aiello to our school assembly on Monday. Josh was living proof of the way Nazareth supports the personal and professional growth of its students. After assembly, the Nazareth team came into the Nook for a cuppa and a chat with interested parents. This was a great way for you to hear Ann, Garry and David talk about the changes to education taking place at Nazareth. We must do it more often.

We value the partnership we have with Nazareth College. All of you would be aware that we partner Nazareth in many activities and we are always thrilled with their support. Yr11 VCAL students work alongside our younger students all year after receiving training from the Nazareth staff. This is a lovely way for our students to have a role model working alongside them and encouraging them to be interested in all aspects of learning especially their literacy. The Nazareth students also play a leading role in our Confirmation program running the activities at the Salesian Retreat at Lysterfield during Confirmation Reflection Day. We also work in partnership in Social Justice with Nazareth students and students from the other 4 parish schools who are partners with Nazareth. Last year we had a project establishing Mini Vinnies in all the primary schools and Nazareth led the teams with staff from the St Vincent de Paul Society.

I know that we value parent’s right to choose an educational pathway for their children, and there are many available. However, I find it really difficult to understand how Christian/Catholic parents who have valued the faith component of primary schooling at a local parish school can make a choice to move to a secondary college where spiritual education has no place on the curriculum. True, a strong foundation is built at Catholic primary schools, but faith is not knowledge that serves you in adult ways when it has been taught in ways suitable for small children to understand.

This printed version is condensed. To view full version please go to the school’s website www.sedandenongnth.catholic.edu.au
Should you wish to continue receiving a hard copy of our newsletter, please contact the school office. If you do not receive an email notification of our newsletter, please confirm your email address with the school office.
Faith has to grow with you. Faith is about feeding a spiritual hunger that changes over time. At the very time in life when adolescents are choosing how they will manage themselves in a very complex, and in many ways challenging world, some parents stop nurturing their children’s spirit. Secondary school students have enormous pressures on them, to conform to parent’s expectations or to peers expectations, to live as Christians or to move away from their faith, to embrace life as a decent citizen with an eye on supporting their community or to live a selfish lifestyle where community never rates.

A child’s faith cannot grow without support and it must grow to survive. Having a child’s appreciation of the Christian faith is not enough to help our teenagers realise their potential as adults, nor does it support them to see that their adult life is purposeful. Teenagers continue to need a faith education appropriate to their level of understanding. They need support to understand that each of us is going to have to account for the way in which we have used our skills and talents when we move on from this life. We need to keep our faith growing. Many families can provide this rich Christian environment, unfortunately, some find it really difficult.

Continuing your child’s education in a place where Christian values continue to be taught within a church context is the best way that you can help your child find a meaningful way to grow to be the best person that they can be. That is your responsibility as a Christian parent! We are so lucky to have a vital and rich learning community like Nazareth on our doorstep!

**PARKING IN HENNESSY WAY**

After consultation with the school, Melbourne Water Board is moving to make the area at the back of the school safer for our students. Melbourne Water Board are hoping to put barriers to parking in at the front of their driveway within the month. Perhaps then, parents will get the message that only children who live in that area should be using the back gate. We had another near miss last week with people backing out of that driveway, looking at other cars on the drive and not looking for children! If the situation does not improve, the School Education Board will support the suggestion from residents of Hennessy Way that we keep the gates locked all the time and no-one uses the back gate. I am very loth to do that as some people who live there use the gate wisely and do not park illegally. However, the safety of our students comes first!

**AGM SCHOOL EDUCATION BOARD**

I hope that you all received notice of the School Education Board AGM on March 25th at 6pm in the staffroom. I look forward to receiving nominations for the Board as soon as possible but definitely before 3:30pm on March 11th. I do want to repeat my thanks to all who have served on the Board recently but especially to Ms Janine Phillips who has been the Parish representative for about 7 years. Many thanks Janine. Your generous contribution made sure that Parish and School worked together to do Christ’s work in our world.

Christine Ash  
Principal

**Religious Education News**

"Jesus said, ‘No one can be the slave of two masters’"

One of the hardest things to do in our busy modern lives is to live in the present moment. Our lives are made busy by what we have to do next. We are constantly making plans for catching up with friends, organising chores that need to be done, working or studying to ‘get ahead’ and create a better future for ourselves. We live our lives in the future. I wonder if in this incredible rush of living our lives, we’ll have regrets about some mistake in the past or how we might have handled a situation better. It is not only us, but our children who we bombard by advertising targeted deliberately at them. Advertising which tells them that they need this or that toy, game, confectionery, fast food etc in order to be happy. Today’s gospel message says ‘the most important thing is to be a follower of God.’

If we can be mindful of what we’re doing now, then we can be purposeful and intentional about our actions. When we live in the now, instead of the once was or soon to be, then we find ourselves actually listening to our friends when they speak to us, enjoying the food we eat, noticing both the beauty and the pain around us, and sometimes even becoming aware of the presence of God around and within us.

As we begin our journey into Lent, Sunday’s Gospel reading tells us to get our lives straight. Do we put first: God or some other master? Are we worrying about the wrong things? After reflecting on myself, and my rush to get things done, I went and spent more time with my dad in his nursing home. It was a wonderful time, although he can’t remember me most times, we sang his favourite hymns and songs together. It’s amazing that he remembers songs, but not me! It was worth slowing down to see the joy in his eyes.

**Mini Vinnies**

One of our Catholic Social Justice Principles looks at “The Common Good”. The common good is reached when we work together to improve the wellbeing of people in our society and the wider world.

This week Mini Vinnies leaders from St Elizabeth’s went to the Nazareth Cluster to meet with other Mini Vinnies leaders from five other cluster schools to begin their work together. This year their joint project is the continued support of the ‘Dandenong Homework Club’ which is located at St Mary’s Primary School. The Dandenong Homework Club is part of a St Vincent de Paul program. They work and support students in the Dandenong area every Saturday with their homework. Any student who needs help or just wants to improve with their learning is welcome to attend. Last year we raised enough money to buy the ‘Dandenong Homework Club an iPad’.

**Sustainability**

Another of our Catholic Social Justice Principles looks at ‘Stewardship of Creation’. We must all respect, care for and share the resources of the earth, which are vital for the common good of people. Care for animals and the environment is a common and universal duty, and ecological problems call for a change of mentality and the adoption of new lifestyles.

Here at St Elizabeth’s we do this in a number of ways. We have a recycling and composting program. This year we are beginning a ‘Waste Less Lunches’ program. Reducing waste is one way we can all contribute to ‘Stewardship of Creation’. What does it mean? It means we are trying to reduce waste and rubbish that goes into landfill. How do we do it? We do it by using fewer wrappers in our lunches. Many of our students already have little containers for their lunch and snacks. Look at your child’s lunch box. Will it have a wrapper to be thrown away? Discuss as a family how you can reduce the rubbish to be thrown away.

**Sacramental News**

**Confirmation Candidates**

The Lenten Season begins next week and we have a number of candidates presenting themselves at one of the parish Masses. Please, if you need to change the date or Mass time you have given me, let me know so I can adjust the rostered names for the commentator. There are still a few names missing. I hope these families will get in touch with me during the next week. This expectation of Lenten Mass attendance is part of the candidate’s preparation for the sacrament.

Maria Popowycz  
Catholic Identity Coordinator (CIC)  
popoma@sedandenongnth.catholic.edu.au
GENERALIZED ANXIETY

All children worry, but too much worrying can be a sign of generalized anxiety. This is a tendency to worry about many areas of life, anything from friendships to world events. You can help a child who experiences generalized anxiety learn to handle and overcome his/her worries.

Identifying Generalized Anxiety

Generalized anxiety typically emerges when children reach school age. Children with generalized anxiety might:

- worry about lots of things - for example, health, schoolwork, performing at school or in sports, money, safety, world events;
- feel the need to be perfectionists;
- be scared of asking or answering questions in class;
- find it hard to perform in tests;
- be afraid of new or unfamiliar situations;
- seek constant reassurance; or
- complain about feeling sick when worried.

It’s easy not to notice generalized anxiety, because children who have it can work very hard in the classroom and other situations. It can be difficult to know they’re constantly worrying. But they will often ask lots of questions, over and over, in new situations - for example, ‘What’s going to happen?’ or ‘What if…?’

There are also some physical signs: daydreaming, stomach aches, headaches, tiredness and inattention. Children might also spend a lot of time getting to sleep at night, because they’re worrying about the events of the next day. All young children ask lots of questions - they like to know what’s happening, when and where. This is a normal part of learning and understanding daily life. But if you’re concerned about the kinds or number of questions your child asks, it’s best to talk with your GP or health professional.

Here are some other ideas to help your child learn to handle his/her generalized anxiety.

- Gradually reduce the number of reassurance-seeking questions (for example, ‘What is going to happen?’) your child is able to ask you. If you’ve already answered your child’s question, encourage him/her to think about the situation, come up with the answers, and rely on his/her own judgment.
- Some children use lucky charms or special clothes or objects to make a situation ‘safe’. This is OK to start with, but consider gradually phasing them out so your child can eventually face new situations without them. He’ll/she’ll learn that he/she can handle it on his/her own.
- Think about whether to let your child’s school or preschool know about his/her anxiety. Sometimes it might be useful for the school to know about your child’s worries, particularly before events such as excursions, camps or carnivals. But it can sometimes be good not to tell the teachers, so that when your child comes across something that make him/her anxious he’ll/she’ll learn to handle it on his/her own.
- It’s tempting to give your child constant reassurance, and to help him/her avoid the things he/she worries about. This will only make the problem worse. It’s important for him/her to learn to handle worrying situations.
- No matter how frustrated you feel, avoid criticizing your child or being negative about his/her worry or need for reassurance.
- Make a conscious effort to foster your child’s self-esteem by complimenting him/her and giving him/her lots of positive attention.

Nan Perazzo
Wellbeing Coordinator
Supporting your child's safe online social networking

Social networking is an extension of offline friendships and we should treat people the same way as we do in real life. Chatting to friends using IM, chat or social networking is a great way to stay in touch and make new friends. However, your child should always keep in mind that there are some risks meeting people online—especially if they don’t know them in real life.

Discuss the following aspects with your child to help them safely enjoy social networking.

- **Limit your friend list.** Do you know your online friends in the real world? If not, consider changing your settings to limit interaction with them or remove them.
- **Protect personal information.** Restrict information that people can use to access your finances, and to identify where you live, work or go out.
- **Check on your images.** Does everything about your life really need to be online? How might this affect you and your reputation in the future?
- **Stay respectful.** Are your posts respectful to friends and others? This is real life; being online is no excuse for bad behaviour.
- **Think twice before meeting offline.** If you want to meet someone offline be safe — take an adult with you, meet in the daytime and in a public place. Don’t share information too early.

It is important to note that there may be age restrictions that apply to your child joining a social network. Many popular social networks are restricted to users only above 13 years of age.

If your child or someone they know wants to talk about online friendships, visit the Cybersmart Online Helpline ([www.cybersmart.gov.au/report.aspx](http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/report.aspx)) or call Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800.

**Glossary:**

**Chat:** Chat is the informal ‘conversational’ communication between users of the internet while they are online. This can be direct one-on-one chat using tools such as instant messaging (IM), chat rooms or SMS. It can also be text-based group chat through mediums such as Internet Relay Chat, online forums and Wikis.

**Instant messaging (IM):** Instant messaging is sending real-time messages from one computer to another by means of small ‘pop-up’ windows. They are a form of ‘instant email’ and are very popular with students and adults alike. They are usually a one-to-one communication medium, although some programs allow many people to chat at the same time, like a private chat room.

**Social networking:** Social networking occurs via an online site where a user can create a profile and build a personal network of online ‘friends’. In the past five years, sites such as Facebook and Twitter have engaged tens of millions of internet users.

A full cybersafety glossary may be found at [www.cybersmart.gov.au/glossary.aspx](http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/glossary.aspx)

Rebecca Gage
Learning & Teaching Leader
gagere@sedandenongnth.catholic.edu.au
Gabby has shown great organisational skills this term, especially when it comes to getting ready for the school day.

Gabby has been very confident in her new learning environment this term. She has been able to come out of her comfort zone and make new friends.

Gabby has been very persistent when auditioning for our Cross Arts. She was able to audition for a number of roles showing her talents and skills in singing and acting.

Congratulations Gabby on being 5/6 KL’s “You Can Do It” star.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Details</th>
<th>Weekly Activities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>St. Elizabeth’s Out of School Hours Care Program</strong> 111 Bakers Road, Dandenong North Ph: 0422 803 709 / 0426 282 721</td>
<td><strong>Beginning:</strong> Monday 3rd March, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Before School Care:</strong>  Permanent: $12.00 / Casual: $13.00  7.00am to 8.55am Monday to Friday during school term, excluding all Victorian public holidays.</td>
<td><strong>Monday</strong>  Paper Doll, Magnetic Fish Game, Fruit Salad, Ball Tiggy</td>
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<td><strong>After School Care:</strong>  Permanent: $13.50 / Casual: $14.50  3.15pm to 6.15pm Monday to Friday during school term, excluding all Victorian public holidays.</td>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong>  Salt Dough, Moon Sand, Skippy, Sand Pit, Footy</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Vacation Care / Pupil Free Days:</strong>  Per Day: $45.00  7.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday</td>
<td><strong>Wednesday</strong>  Sponge Stenciling, Snap Card Game, Basketball, Tunnel Ball</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Late Pick Up Fees:</strong>  Per minute: $1.00</td>
<td><strong>Thursday</strong>  Rubber Stamped Stationery, Chalk Drawing, Knockout, Magnetic Darts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For enquiries or further information, please contact Elarine on 0422 803 709 or 0426 282 721 during session times.</td>
<td><strong>Friday</strong>  Woven Paper Cards, Match Box Theatre, Pop-Netball, Picking Up Pegs</td>
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