Dear Parents, Guardians, Students and Other Parishioners,

Congratulations to the School Education Board sub-committee who held a very successful Yr6 Parent celebration last Friday. I believe everyone, especially the children, had a great time! Next year, Father Tad has generously offered to say a Transition Mass during the last week of school and we will hold a Transition Ceremony after that in the PAC and then there will be a supper for the parents and siblings and a Disco for the Yr6 children.

**BEFORE SCHOOL SUPERVISION**

Last week I spoke to you about the possibility of changing before school supervision of students. After much discussion, thanks to all parents who emailed me and spoke to me, these are the changes that will be in place in 2015.

- Children will be welcome after 8:30am and the Community doors will be opened at 8:45am after several minutes of music.
- Children will be allowed to wait on the courts or play on the oval before school between 8:30am and 8:45am with balls. We will discourage full
scale soccer matches!

- Staff supervision on outside areas between 8:30am and 8:45am will increase.
- No-one will be able to access the walkway until 8:45am.
- Community teachers may use a roster if they choose to do so for supervision in the Learning Communities between 8:45 and 8:55am.
- Formal learning will begin at 8:55am.
- Morning recess will be extended by 10 minutes to 30 minutes and lunch play will decrease from 40 minutes to 30 minutes.

This means that all staff will have at least one 30 minute break in their teaching day, children will run off some energy before school but still have time to unpack before learning and everyone will be safe! Parents can feel assured that their children are cared for at all times before school to the very best of our ability.

UPDATE TO OUR HOMEWORK DISCUSSIONS
Rebecca Gage has written an excellent summary of changes to our Homework Policy. Please make sure that you read this carefully!

NEW HOMEWORK POLICY - (REBECCA GAGE)
The Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into homework was released in August this year and attracted quite a lot of media coverage. Christine wrote about some of the findings in the newsletter on the 29th August which we have looked at as a staff. There were 12 findings and 11 recommendations made that we have taken into consideration when reviewing our school Homework Policy.

I have included below a list of the findings and recommendations as well as how our Homework Policy either already met or will be adapted to meet them.

Finding 1: Feedback on homework is a crucial step in the learning process and without timely feedback some of the learning benefits of homework may be reduced.
At the moment students are waiting up to 11 days to have their homework corrected in class time. We have purchased subscriptions to Mathletics for our students in Yrs 3-6 which tells students whether or not they have answered a question correctly and this is what we will set as homework. Teachers will also provide some websites that students can use to practice their spelling words that will also tell if the word is spelt correctly or incorrectly.

Finding 3: Homework can reduce the amount of time available to pursue other activities and interests which may have equal or greater long term benefit.
Our new Homework Policy allows greater opportunities for all our students to engage in out of school activities such as physical activities, community groups or cultural activities.

Finding 4: Flipped learning offers a new way of engaging children in education and may allow for a better use of time in the classroom.
Flipped learning means children learn about something at home and then follow it up in class time. By changing our maths homework to Mathletics, students are able to use the program to receive assistance and support in areas they are learning at school. If they are unsure about a concept, the teacher can see this on the computer and the student can ask for help the following day.

Finding 5: There is strong evidence and general agreement that homework at the primary school level has little impact on academic performance, but may play an important transitional role in preparing students for secondary school and beyond.
Again our homework is a choice families can make in Yrs 3-6. Families that wish for their children to
complete homework will indicate this on the homework contract. Where there are other pressures such as an illness in the family or a grandparent in hospital, families may choose to change their commitment to homework for this period of time. Families that want to increase the amount of time to pursue other activities and interests or support learning in other ways can choose not to commit to homework.

**Finding 6:**
*Measuring homework by the time spent doing it is an imprecise and inadequate measure that does not take into account the quality of the work or the ability of the student or, increasingly importantly, student access to technology.*

We have reviewed the time recommendations that have been updated by the Department of Education. In yrs 3 & 4 our existing policy recommended 30 minutes per night whereas our updated policy will be 20-30 minutes and in yrs 5 & 6 our existing policy recommended 40-60 minutes per night whereas our updated policy will be 30-40 minutes per night. Students who do not have access to technology, including the internet at home are able to use the facilities in the Nook from 3.15-3.40 Monday to Thursday to complete work on Mathletics or the spelling websites recommended by their class teacher.

**Finding 7:**
*Homework can have the effect of helping a parent to understand the progress the child is making and can therefore help make parent-teacher interviews more meaningful.*

**Finding 8:**
*Successful schools see education as a collaborative process between the student, parent and the school, and consider parents to be ‘partners’ in their children’s education. Schools that assist parents in providing support to their children tend to have better educational outcomes.*

Mathletics has inbuilt help which can assist parents to understand what their child is being asked to do to complete a question. This also helps parents who are not confident with maths or are unable to assist their child.

**Finding 11:**
*Homework may need to be adapted for children with learning disabilities to ensure they obtain the same benefit from homework as their peers.*

Mathletics caters for a wide range of ability levels so students will be working at their point of need whether that is requiring support or challenge.

**Recommendation 4:**
*That all homework policies require assessment and feedback mechanisms to be stipulated.*

By changing to homework that is completed using technology, students receive immediate feedback so are not left waiting until the end of the fortnight to spend class time correcting their homework. Teachers are able to check results online at any time of the day or night.

One of the major advantages to moving to a technology-based approach to homework in yrs 3-6 is that students receive immediate feedback, work is at their point of need, teachers spend less time photocopying worksheets that only cater to some students and teachers are able to monitor results without having to collect, correct and collate up to 29 different books. Another major benefit is gaining back up to 2.5 hours of learning time every fortnight that has previously been spent on handing out homework, explaining it and correcting it. That adds up to 50 hours a year, or, 2 whole weeks of learning time gained through these simple changes to what we set for homework! What we are trying to do is to help parents by setting homework that meets student needs and also fits into the rhythms of family life.

Rebecca Gage
Learning and Teaching Leader
gagere@sedandenongnth.catholic.edu.au

Christine Ash
The Principal
Welcome to the Season of Advent.

This Season marks the beginning of the new Liturgical year for the Church and calls us to wait and to prepare for the coming of the Christ child at Christmas.

In both our waiting and our preparing we are caught up in the business of the end of year rush. Where ever we go, we are reminded of the commercial crush in this pre-Christmas time. We see around us colourful decorations, gifts, food and others, like us, all caught up in this Christmas rush. We hear the never ending Christmas carols and songs that keep reminding us of how fast Christmas is approaching and how much we still have to do to be ready.

There is more work for parents to do in a day than will ever get done. Some of them work outside their homes while some stay at home. In either case there are always bills to pay, laundry to wash, meals to prepare, errands to run and things to fix. Unless they deliberately set aside time to prepare themselves and their families for Jesus’ return, they will continue with the busyness of everyday life. Especially at this time of year, it is easy to get caught up in the demands centered upon Jesus’ birth rather than his return. Take the time to slow life down and take time for prayer in preparation during Advent.

Keep preparing and waiting!
Maria Popowycz
Religious Education Leader
popoma@sedandenongnth.catholic.edu.au

CLASS LITURGIES:

Friday 21st November:
Yr3 & Yr4 Learning Communities will prepare and lead the 9.15am Mass

Friday 5th December:
WHOLE SCHOOL GIFT GIVING MASS - 9.15am

Sunday 14th December:
Yr6 Transition Mass - 10.30am

Wednesday 17th December:
WHOLE SCHOOL END OF YEAR MASS - 9.15am

FRIDAY 5TH DECEMBER IS ADVENT GIFT-GIVING MASS CELEBRATION. All Levels will gather at 9.15am in the Church for Mass during which the children will be invited to place their gifts in and place them around the empty Christmas Crib.

We ask the Yr5 & Yr6 students to bring, if possible, a gold coin that can then be used by St Vincent De Paul to prepare Christmas hampers for those families in need.

We are asking the Yr3 & Yr4 students to bring gifts of food, special treats - lollies or BonBons, to be added to the hampers. I’m sure you know those little extras that go to make Christmas special for all families.

We are asking the Foundation, Yr1 and Yr2 students to bring a gift, it can be pre-wrapped and tagged, to be given to those in need and to brighten up their Christmas day.

We invite you to join with us for this Mass at 9.15am on Friday 5th December.

BAPTISM At Baptism, Jesus welcomes us into his family. Last Friday Alan, Addison, Emily, Giovanna, Sharissa, James and Leslie received the Sacrament of Baptism. Emily, Sharissa, James and Leslie also received their First Communion. It is with great pleasure we would like to welcome our newly Baptised members to our parish of St Elizabeth’s.

Congratulations to all of them, their parents and godparents. God bless them.

MARANATHA! COME LORD JESUS!
Let the day come, Lord, when our hearts will find your mercy.
MARANATHA! COME LORD JESUS!

Let the day come, Lord, when our poverty will find your riches.
MARANATHA! COME LORD JESUS!

Let the day come, Lord, when our path will find the way to you.
MARANATHA! COME LORD JESUS!

Let the day come, Lord, when our tears will find your smile.
MARANATHA! COME LORD JESUS!

Let the day come, Lord, when our joy will find your heaven.
MARANATHA! COME LORD JESUS!

May you be praised, O God, for that day when our eyes will find your face!
Throughout our lives you have not ceased to go before us in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and our brother.
Amen.
MARANATHA! COME LORD JESUS!

BAPTISM At Baptism, Jesus welcomes us into his family. Last Friday Alan, Addison, Emily, Giovanna, Sharissa, James and Leslie received the Sacrament of Baptism. Emily, Sharissa, James and Leslie also received their First Communion. It is with great pleasure we would like to welcome our newly Baptised members to our parish of St Elizabeth’s.

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SWEARING

Good Language is about respect in action. Like other forms of language children need to learn that there are times and places when its use is unacceptable or causes distress to others.

Children swear for many reasons: to experiment with language; to attract your attention; to make themselves appear bigger or older than they are; and even as a challenge or expression of personal power.

Swearing needs to be considered as a form of language - albeit an unacceptable one. This is not to say that you condone it. Rather, it is an acceptance of the fact that your children will hear many forms of unacceptable language and they need to understand its use and purpose. Like other forms of language children need to learn that there are times and places when its use is unacceptable or causes distress to others.

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE AIR TURNS BLUE

- **Avoid over-reacting when children swear.** However, make the message clear that you are unimpressed with swearing and you are willing to leave them alone when they swear. Consider withdrawing your cooperation temporarily if they swear at you.

- **Discuss the concept of appropriate language with older children.** Teach them that language may be appropriate in one context or be accepted by one group but it is not acceptable in every situation. While not condoning swearing get across to children that they need to learn to control their use of language and adjust it to suit the situation they are in.

- **Children, like adults, can use inappropriate language out of habit.** If this is the case make up alternative words that replace swearing. One family had replaced certain words with fruit. They had a fruit for every situation!

- **Try the penalty system.** When family members swear they are fined an agreed amount which is placed in a money-box. At the end of the week or month the money can be given to a worthy cause or spent in a way that benefits others. Of course, parents should join in this as well.

- **Examine your own choice of language.** Judge if it is an acceptable model for your children. It is scary how much language and behaviour children pick up by observing their parents.

- **Try shock tactics with older kids who swear.** I know one mother who kissed her teenage son whenever he swore in public when he was with her. It was a habit he soon broke!

For more great ideas to help you raise confident kids and resilient young people visit: www.parentingideas.com.au

Nan Perazzo
Wellbeing Coordinator
Persistent Peter!

In Yr 3/4LO, Peter has shown the pillar of persistence. He is always ready to begin each task on time and always strives to achieve his best at everything he does.

Peter never gives up and does not let others distract him when he is working independently!
Last week I attended the Noble Park District sports meeting that dealt with the fixturing and sports played for 2015. For the first time we will be offering boys and girls soccer to our Yr5 and Yr6 students. We have only played mixed soccer to date, and given the game's popularity in the area, this is a welcomed call. This will also allow us to reduce the number of players on the bench at any given time across all of our winter sports resulting in more active kids.

Our European Handball program finished up this week with our Yr5 and Yr6 students playing a gala round robin format to see who was the champion team in their community. The school house captains are now in the process of organising a lunchtime finale to find out who is school champion! Our Yr3 and Yr4 students played their real games of handball on Wednesday and every game was umpired by Yr5 and Yr6 students. Thank you to those sixteen students for their efforts and expertise.

Yours in Sport / Dean Andrew

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Students leaving St. Elizabeth’s at the end of 2014

Could any families, who are planning on leaving St. Elizabeth’s School at the end of the year, please notify Lisa in the School office on 9795 5258. This will enable us to accurately plan for next year’s classes.

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New St. Elizabeth’s Winter Tunic / Skirt

The Uniform Shop now has various sizes of the new school tunic for parents/carers to try on their child. Any parent/carer wishing to try on a size is welcome to do so either Tuesday or Friday mornings 8.45-9.15am.

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Are you aware that our senior students are also holding a raffle?

It is a continuation of the raffle they held at their Market Day. The prize for this raffle is a brand new bicycle that has been donated by Big W., and all proceeds will be forwarded onto our sister school in the Philippines. Raffle tickets will be available on Carols Night.

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Parents and Friends:

The Christmas raffle is happening again this year. There is still time to donate goods towards the hamper.

Please keep an eye on school bags next week for raffle tickets. The tickets are due back on Monday 8th December and the raffle will be drawn during Carols Night.

Thank you for your ongoing support.
School News cont ...

School Banking Day Reminder.

School banking has been postponed for next week, week beginning 1 December.

School banking will be MONDAY 8 DECEMBER and THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER on the following week.

The final school banking will be Monday 15 December. Thank you for your understanding.

Please note that the Shark Pencil Case, Penguin Key Ring, Swimming Bag, Dollarmite Tin Money Box and Projector Cup are no longer available to select as a reward. These items are out of stock and no longer available.

Yr6 Uniform

Yr6 uniform orders need to be handed in to Lisa at the front office by no later than Friday 5 December. No late orders will be accepted after this date.

News from The Nook (Library)

It’s that time of year again

Please be aware that all library resources need to be returned to school by Wednesday 10th December (Carols night). Overdue reminders are being given to the students helping them to remember which books they need to return. Looking forward to borrowing beginning again early in 2015, not only for our students but also for parents.

Thank you

Trixie Martin

Community News:

Last Friday night, the families of our Yr6 students organised an evening to celebrate their children’s years at St. Elizabeth’s, before they move on to secondary school. The evening was a great success, enjoyed by all who attended the night.
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<th>Contact Details ...</th>
<th>Weekly Activities ...</th>
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| Elizabeth’s Out of School Hours Care Program  
111 Bakers Road, Dandenong North  
Ph: 0422 803 709 / 0426 282 721 | Beginning: 1 December 2014 |
| **Before School Care**  
Permanent: $12.00 / Casual: $13.00  
7.00am to 8.55am Monday to Friday during school term, excluding all Victorian public holidays. | **Monday**  
Make your own greeting card for Christmas |
| **After School Care:**  
Permanent: $13.50 / Casual: $14.50  
3.15pm to 6.15pm Monday to Friday during school term, excluding all Victorian public holidays. | **Tuesday**  
Christmas crafts, tree decorations |
| **Vacation Care / Pupil Free Days:**  
Per Day: $45.00  
7.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday. (No vacation care available in January.) | **Wednesday**  
Christmas paper lantern, paper chains |
| **Late Pick Up Fees:** Per minute: $1.00 | **Thursday**  
Reindeer masks |
| For enquiries or further information, please contact Elarne on 0422 803 709 or 0426 282 721 during session times. | **Friday**  
DVD with popcorn |