Dear Parents and Members of St Patrick’s School Community,

ASH WEDNESDAY—Yesterday was Ash Wednesday. It is a day on which Catholics traditionally resist eating between meals (fasting) and avoid eating meat (abstaining). Many Catholics also attend Mass or have special prayer liturgies. Ash Wednesday signals the beginning of Lent which is a forty day period of preparation for Easter. It reminds us of the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness before he took up his ministry. During this time he fasted and prayed. Lent is a time of self-denial and prayer for us as well. During this period we are called to focus on becoming closer to Jesus by praying a little more, doing good deeds for others, going without something we like and giving generously to others in need. Ash Wednesday is a good time for us to think about what we can do to grow closer to Jesus over the next weeks. Our students celebrated mass with Father Neville and church parishioners. Thank you to those families who joined us for mass yesterday.

Prayer for Ash Wednesday

Today we begin the season of Lent.
Lent is a time for renewing our lives as Christians—followers of Jesus. May the Spirit who guided Jesus to a life of self-sacrifice, self-giving and love inspire us to follow in his footsteps.
Lord, send us your Spirit to help us walk the journey of Lent with honesty, faithfulness, generosity and love.
Help us to renew our belief in you and to show this by our efforts to talk with you in prayer, to turn away from sin and to care for those in need.
Amen

PROJECT COMPASSION—Lent is a time to give generously to others. Project Compassion boxes are attached to this newsletter. Your contributions will be used to support projects which promote dignity and fight injustice, often in developing countries. We ask for your support for Project Compassion this year and request that all boxes be returned to school by the end of this term.

THANK YOU—

WELCOME GATHERING—Thank you to those families who attended Friday night’s welcome gathering. Although the gathering was small it was a fabulous opportunity to mix with everyone and learn more about some of our newer families. Thank you to Lisa and Jamie for working through the issues with the dishwasher!

PAC P&P CATERING—A huge thank you to Lisa and Helen and all others who were involved in catering for Pearl Smith’s 90th birthday last Saturday. By all accounts it was a very successful fundraiser for the school.

SHROVE TUESDAY—Another thank you to Lisa Braybrook and family for the yummy pancakes on Tuesday. Lisa offered to make pancakes for the students since we weren’t able to facilitate this at school. The students all enjoyed this treat.

UPCOMING EVENTS—

EXCURSION to DESERT EDGE ART GALLERY—Students will be attending the Desert Edge Art Gallery and Studio from 1.30pm until 3.00pm on Friday. Most students will be transported by bus and a few will travel in Miss Anson’s car. Karen Wiseman currently has exhibits from three indigenous artists and Horsham indigenous artist, Gayle Harradine will work with our students to design possum skin bracelets from three indigenous artists and Horsham indigenous artist, Gayle Harradine will work with our students to design possum skin bracelets.
Cooperation has been the hot topic for Foundation, Year One and Two students this week. We have investigated what cooperation means and what it looks like in our daily lives. The students are practising cooperation every day while working in small groups, sharing materials and playing together outside. In Reading, we have continued to look at the song I Am Australian with a focus on who the Indigenous Australians are. We also learnt all about famous painter Albert Namatjira, thanks to some great research by Jobe. The students have learnt all about nouns and how to recognise them in texts. We have identified a lot of different nouns from many books and have categorised them as people, places or things. In Maths the students have been hard at work practicing skip counting by 25, 55 and 105. They are learning to do this more accurately without a number chart in front of them. This is a skill that we will keep practising throughout the year. While working with the senior class, the students have developed a list of behaviours that they expect everyone to show every day. We have called them our School Norms. While working in small groups, the students demonstrated what each of these norms might look like by writing and performing role plays. It is great to see the students thinking about these norms when they are playing together outside.

**SENIOR CLASS NEWS from Miss Anson**

This week in Literacy, the seniors have been practising their joined handwriting and revisiting contractions and apostrophes. The seniors have also been writing recounts about past experiences with a particular focus on vocabulary. We have focused our shared reading on Indigenous Australians to reflect our work in Inquiry. In Numeracy, the seniors have still been working on place value. The Year 3 students have been writing numbers in expanding forms as well as beginning to write digits in word form and vice versa. The Year 4 students have been learning to round numbers to the nearest hundred and thousand and the Year 5 students have been learning to write decimals in word form. In Inquiry, the seniors have been learning what it means to have a different culture. We are particularly focusing on Indigenous Australians. We have also been working on our responsibilities within the school by reflecting on how we can be collaborative and cooperate. We have done this by playing games such as Chinese whispers, participating in think/pair/share activities and being involved in planning and acting out role plays about our school norms.

**School norms.** Our school norms range from working in small groups, sharing materials and playing together outside to using traditional Aboriginal symbols. The following Friday Gayle will come to St Patrick’s school to create Aboriginal toys using traditional materials. We are very excited about this opportunity and we welcome parents to attend, especially on Friday 19th February. There is limited space at the gallery this week. We would like to thank Karen and Gayle in advance for being willing to share their expertise with our students.

**BEGINNING OF SCHOOL MASS**—10:30am SUNDAY 14 FEBRUARY—Mass to celebrate the beginning of the school year will be held this Sunday 14 February at 10:30am. It is expected all students and families will attend. This is an excellent opportunity to welcome our new students, families and staff members to our school community.

**Extended family members and parishioners are welcome to join us for this special celebration.** Morning tea will follow Mass; please bring a plate of morning tea to share. Students have been given their role.

Unfortunately not every child is able to have a role during our Mass but a child from each family has been given a role. (All Foundation students are in the opening procession.)

**HOCKEY CLINICS**—Hockey Victoria will be conducting hockey clinics on Tuesday 23 February from 9:10am. All junior students will participate from 9:20 until 10:05 and the senior students will be involved in the second session from 10:05 to 10:50am. Helen Cannell and Simon Farmers will be running ‘Hooked into Hockey’ clinics after this event. These clinics provide children the opportunity to ‘try’ hockey and build their skills in a safe and friendly environment. Further information about this will be available later.

**REMINdERS**—

**Crossing Zone Speed Limit**—The safety of our children is of utmost importance. Attached to this week’s newsletter is information about parking around the school. Please remember that the speed limit around St Patrick’s School is 40km AT ALL TIMES. I would appreciate it if you could remind your friends and relatives of this speed limit too.

**School Fees**—Last week this year’s fee statements were attached to the newsletter. There was also a form to nominate how you wish to pay these fees. Please return the nomination to school no later than Friday 26 February.

**Get To Know You Meetings**—Parents are asked to return the reply slips nominating a suitable time slot by tomorrow morning at the latest. These meetings are scheduled for Monday 15 February between 3:30 and 5:40pm. Each interview is 10 minutes in length and it is important that parents respect this time limit so that other families aren’t kept waiting. Families who can’t attend on Monday are encouraged to ring the school, or speak to your child/ren’s teacher/s to organise an alternative mutually suitable time. Please be aware that staff have meetings next Tuesday and Wednesday nights.

**Lunch Orders on Fridays**—Please remember that Friday is lunch order day. The menu is available on our website if you have misplaced it. Please ensure that you enclose correct change with your child.

**Fruit Break**—This year fruit break will occur at 9:55am. It is a 5 minute break during which children can eat a small piece of fruit to revitalise their energy levels. Students can eat fresh or dried fruit or raw vegetables as long as it is easy and quick to eat.

**Frida 12 February Fiesta**—This Friday night children are invited to create fantasy toys and robots at the Nhill Lake. This activity is part of the Nhill Lake Fiesta Fridays in February and is free to all participants. As always please contact the school if you have any questions about what is happening at St Patrick’s School.

Kathryn Bendall, Principal.

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**Be engaged with our school community...**

- Receive instant messages (newsletter, notices, calendar events, reminders).
- Complete student absence details/note.
- Up to date school calendar of events.
- Contact the school with important information.
- Lunch order menu.