



St Oliver's Mini Newsletter

Term 2

Week 3

2016

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Gospel

Luke 24:46-53 The Ascension of the Lord – Year C

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

While blessing them, he was taken to heaven.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'You see how it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all the nations, beginning from *Jerusalem*. You are witnesses to this.

'And now I am sending down to you what the Father has promised. Stay in the city then, until you are clothed with the power from on high.' Then he took them out as far as the outskirts of *Bethany*, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. Now as he blessed them, he withdrew from them and was carried up to heaven. They worshipped him and then went back to *Jerusalem* full of joy; and they were continually in the Temple praising God.



Reflection

First, Jesus' prayer reaffirms the complete union between Jesus and the Father. We are reminded that Christ is the source of Christian unity. Through Christ, we are united with one another and with God our Father. Jesus knows that what he started – preaching about the Kingdom, which led to his death, then his resurrection and finally his ascension into heaven – will be continued by the disciples. He knows that they are going to need a lot of help. He knows that the Holy Spirit will come to them and they will be strong. The Holy Spirit comes to us too. We received the Holy Spirit during baptism. The Spirit is always with us, and can help us be strong and to be good. All we have to do is be open and ask for God's help.

IN BRIEF

Jesus is always with us
The Holy Spirit is sent to help
We make up the body of Christ
We continue to do God's work

We were not abandoned when Jesus ascended into heaven. The Holy Spirit is with us to strengthen us and empower us to spread the Good News of our salvation. The message preached and practised by Jesus made salvation available to all people. At times in the gospel some of the Jewish audience became quite angry at Jesus because he said that pagans and gentiles were also included in the salvation he promised – something they regarded as exclusive to the 'chosen' people. The two accounts of the Ascension make very clear that the message and ministry of Jesus are to be carried to *all* nations – even to the ends of the earth! Christ who ascended into heaven in his body carries on what he began on earth through his new body, the community of believers. He teaches through its apostles and evangelists. He ministers through its prophets and pastors. We have not been left alone; we have his power, the same power with which he performed marvels when he walked the earth. We have not been left alone; we have each other. Together we make up the new body of Christ.

Praise: Thank you God for sending us Jesus who showed that your love is for all people.

Repent: I am sorry for the times I have not been loving to others as you love us.

Ask: Help me to notice the Holy Spirit in my daily life recognise the Holy spirit as a helper in my every day life.

Yes: I want to be more loving that requires me to engage in self-sacrificing love. Amen

Franca Bonserio / Religious Education Coordinator



Congratulations to Carmen and Matt on the safe arrival of their daughter Liliana Iovannella



Congratulations to Renee and Scott Henebery on the safe arrival of their daughter Piper Louise a new granddaughter for Mrs Small.

Athletics Carnival – Monday 16 May at Holroyd Sports Ground Holroyd. All Children are required to be at school by 9am ready to board the buses to the ground. If you are taking your child home please sign them out with their class teacher at the end of the day. **Children can wear a t-shirt of their house colour.** There will be a sausage sizzle available on the day at no cost.

Whole School Assembly – Please note time change! Friday 20 May 2016 at 2:15pm

Last day of Term 2 will be Thursday 30 June 2016 due to a STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY on Friday 1st July 2016

School Uniform – All children should be in their full school winter uniform. Thank you for attending to this matter.

Kindergarten Enrolments 2017 – We are now taking enrolments for 2017. Enrolment forms are available in the office.

Dates to Remember

May

- 10th After School Sports begin for Infants
- 13th Stage 3 @ Parish Mass
- 16th Athletics Carnival
- 17th After School Sports for Infants
- 20th Kinder, Year 1 and Year 2 @ Parish mass
- 20th Whole School Assembly Stage 1 @ **2:15pm**
- 24th After School Sports for Infants
- 25th Soccer Gala Day – Stage 3
- 30th Athletics Carnival (Back up)
- 31st After School Sports for Infants

June

- 3rd Whole School Mass **“The Most Sacred Heart Mass”**
- 7th After School Sports for Infants
- 10th Year 3 and Year 4 @ Parish Mass
- 14th After School Sports for Infants
- 17th Kinder, Year 1 and Year 2 @ Parish Mass
- 17th Whole School Assembly Kinder @ 2:30pm
- 21st After School Sports for Infants
- 13th **PUBLIC HOLIDAY**
- 24th Year 5 and Year 6 @ Parish Mass
- 30th Soccer Gala Day – Stage 2

July

- 1st **Staff Development day – NO SCHOOL**

Focus On Learning



Home Learning

Home Learning at St Oliver's

As we begin a new term it is a good time to revisit our Learning at Home procedures. As you are aware the staff at St Oliver's made the decision last year to alter our approach to homework. Our shift in emphasis from homework to **home learning** reflects our belief that the tasks completed at home should be meaningful, challenging, involve a level of independence and be interesting and motivating for each individual student. We believe this more contemporary approach supports the needs of the 21st century learner and current educational research as outlined in the below article.

At St Oliver's we have embedded an increased emphasis on Reading and the development of highly effective readers. Reading is a foundational skill to powerful learning. Research tells us that regular, sustained reading and being read to has powerful benefits to the learner. These include:

- Improved comprehension - students who read extensively learn reading strategies and increase their reading rates.
- Improvements in overall language proficiency
- Increased vocabulary knowledge
- Improved writing skills
- Improved understanding of mathematical concepts and problem-solving

'The more that you READ the more you will know. The more that you LEARN the more places you'll go'
Dr. Seuss

We have also made the decision to **sight** rather than **mark** student learning. This supports our belief that the benefit of the home learning tasks is in the doing and having a go. By placing less emphasis on accuracy we aim to allow students the freedom to challenge themselves to take risks and to extend themselves beyond their comfort zone. Rather than focusing on whether the attempt is right or wrong, which provides a more narrow view of learning, we want to encourage our students to explore different approaches to learning. This exploration is where the real learning takes place.

Attached is a reading shared with you last year that explores the homework debate. If you would like additional information the following books further explore the homework debate:

- [*The End of Homework*](#) – Etta Kralovec and John Buell
- [*The Homework Myth*](#) - Alfie Kohn
- [*The Case Against Homework*](#) - Sara Bennett and Nancy Kalish

Please feel free to contact your child's class teacher or myself if you have any questions relating to Home Learning at St Oliver's.

Natalie Mifsud/Assistant Principal

Homework – What are the benefits?

The debate about the benefits of homework has been around for more than a century and remains a contentious issue for parents, students and educational researchers alike. Assessing the benefits of homework requires a close look at what homework is supposed to do, and whether it achieves these goals.

The most comprehensive list of reasons for setting homework has been compiled by American researcher Joyce Epstein. These include:

- The practice of already learnt skills
- Preparation for the next lesson
- Parent-child communication about school activities
- The requirements of school or education department policies

Most research into homework focuses on these three main issues:

- Does homework enhance student learning and achievement outcomes?
- Does homework help students to develop the skills of independent, self-directed learning?
- Does homework involve parents in the educational activities of their children in ways that are beneficial?

While the research is complex the following broad conclusions can be drawn. In terms of academic achievement, homework has no benefit for children in the early years of primary school and negligible benefits for children in the later years of primary school.

Sound research has demonstrated that spending more time on homework is associated with lower student achievement; this finding is complemented by research showing that in countries with high homework demands, student performance on international tests of achievement is poor.

Self-directed learning skills are associated with doing homework but the research indicates that the development of these skills occurs only when parents are able to assist upper primary and junior secondary school students with their homework. Parental involvement in their children's homework activities can be both beneficial and detrimental. It can be detrimental when parents are over-controlling or interfering, but can be beneficial to student motivation when parents provide autonomy and a supporting learning environment for their children.

One overwhelming conclusion to this research is the understanding that homework needs to be reformed. We need to consider the sort of homework students need ensuring that it is challenging for students but not too challenging, and it needs to be interesting and motivating.

The routine of completing homework (if done well) can help with self-management, planning and organising skills. The sort of homework tasks that promote learning these skills will not focus on drill and practice but require homework tasks where students make some decisions and choices and also exercise some autonomy.

In essence, homework *can* help children but perhaps not in the ways we think. Overall, there should be less homework, especially homework that emphasises drill and practice and more emphasis on tasks that support student autonomy and interest.

Authors

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Disclosure statement

Richard Walker and Mike Horsley are the co-authors of *Reforming Homework: Practices, Learning and Policy*.