



St Oliver's Primary Newsletter

Term 1

Week 4

2015

33 Wigram Street, Harris Park 2150

www.stoliversharrisparc.catholic.edu.au

Ph: 9682 1244

Dear Families of St Oliver's,

Yesterday, Ash Wednesday, we commenced the liturgical season of Lent. Lent is often a time given over to "holy" words of repentance and promises of self-reform but "However many words you speak, what good will they do if you do not act on them?" Buddha

The challenges of our times are not only political and social, they are spiritual. The modern person must rediscover a deeper source of personal spiritual life. It is difficult to grow spiritually, morally or ethically, if we fail to give due recognition that all people are equally valuable and important. We can't grow spiritually, morally or ethically if we belittle people different to us in their appearance, manner and customs in order to make us feel more important as human beings. We will begin to grow spiritually, morally and ethically, when we are ready to sincerely embrace the truth and fascination of our differences and welcome the common yearnings we have about life.

Whatever our culture, religion or language, we want food, shelter and good health. We want to be able to get up in the morning, enthusiastically, and sleep safely at night. We want health, safety and happiness for our loved ones. We want to know that our lives are purposeful and sometimes gracious. We want to feel part of something greater than ourselves. We want and need inspiration and meaning.

Our spirituality is as personal as our breath or our fingerprint, but, as we move through the forty days of Lent, we might on occasion, surrender freely to the quiet within us, to rediscover the resources and strengths that are there. We might begin to see better and appreciate more, the value of our existence, to see ourselves with more gratitude and respect and to see others in a like manner.

Peace and best wishes,

Mr Anthony McElhone
Principal

Dates to Remember!

Friday 20th February 2015
Week 4

Staff Development Day
no children at school on this day
COSHHC is available on this day

Monday 23rd February 2015
Week 5

Awards will be given out at morning assembly due to SDD

Catholic Schools Week
Week 7

An invitation will be sent home

Assembly
in the hall
Week 8
Friday at 2:30pm



School News

Cumberland Zone Swimming Carnival

Congratulations to Jonas, Joseph S, Seth, Joaquin, Eloise, Miranda and Sarah who represented St Oliver's in fine style at the Cumberland Zone Swimming Carnival. It was great to see the children supporting their peers and achieving many personal best times.



Parent Information Evening

Thank you to the parents and carers who attended the Parent Information Evening earlier this week. The teachers shared an insight into how learning is evolving in the 21st century. In addition each teacher distributed a new copy of the 2015 Parent Handbook and the Curriculum Overview. If you were unable to attend this information session a copy of these documents will be sent home with the eldest child in each family. If you have not received a copy, please contact the office or your child's class teacher.

Personal devices e.g. mobile phones/iPods/iPads

Students are not permitted to have personal devices at school unless prior arrangements have been made by the parents with the Principal or Assistant Principal. Personal devices are to be kept in the school office for the day and collected at the end of the day. If prior arrangements have not been made the personal device will be confiscated and the parents contacted to collect it. A permission form to carry a personal device is available from the office and must be returned, signed by the parent and the student, before it can be brought to school – every mobile phone must have the student's name attached.

School Attendance

St Oliver's has received a directive from the Catholic Education Commission concerning Changes to School Attendance register procedures from the beginning of the 2015 school year. The Minister for Education has approved changes to the use of Attendance Register codes for 2015. The most notable change is to holidays taken by students outside of school vacation periods. Such holidays will now be included in class rolls as absences from school. **A Certificate of Exemption can no longer be granted for this purpose.**

Families are encouraged to holiday or travel during school vacations. If travel during school term is necessary the following applies:-

- Parents complete the **Application for Extended Leave - Travel** form (available on the website or at the office) to request *Principal approved* leave for the duration of the vacation. If approved, this is recorded as being absent from school. The duration of the absence will appear on the student's school report.
- Parents will receive written notification from the principal regarding the status of the application
- If parents do not request *Principal approved leave*, the absence is recorded as an unjustified absence from school. The duration of the absence will appear on the student's school report.

Uniform

It was mentioned in the last newsletter that the children looked wonderful in their uniforms and the importance of taking pride in their uniform. One area that does need addressing in some grades is the children's sports shoes. Many children are wearing brightly coloured shoes and our uniform policy states that sports shoes should be predominantly white.

Reminder

Staff Development Day this Friday 20th February 2015



The leprosy left him and he was cured.

A leper came to Jesus and pleaded on his knees: 'If you want to' he said 'you can cure me.' Feeling sorry for him, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. 'Of course I want to!' he said. 'Be cured!' And the leprosy left him at once and he was cured. Jesus immediately sent him away and sternly ordered him, 'Mind you say nothing to anyone, but go and show yourself to the priest, and make the offering for your healing prescribed by Moses as evidence of your recovery.' The man went away, but then started talking about it freely and telling the story everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer go openly into any town, but had to stay outside in places where nobody lived. Even so, people from all around would come to him.

Reflection

To be a leper in first century Palestine was to be utterly rejected from society. They were not permitted to engage in religious practice as they were permanently regarded as being ritually unclean and, indeed, unable to become clean as long as their disease lasted. A major theme of the Scripture readings is 'Turn to the Lord to be healed'. The first reading relates an old Jewish practice of branding as unclean those who have leprosy and setting them apart from the community. It may also symbolise current practices of labelling persons and groups and excluding them from the community. The psalmist then tells us that we can attain acceptance and healing if we turn to the Lord. In the reading from the First Letter to the Corinthians, Paul calls upon the people to build up the community by imitating him, who imitates Christ. The leper in the Gospel reading did not wait for Jesus to come to him; he recognised his affliction and turned to Jesus for healing. Jesus healed him and sent him back to the community. We too can go to Jesus who is there always waiting for us. -

In Brief

- We all need forgiveness.
- Turn to the Lord.
- Imitate Christ.
- Don't be afraid to ask God for help.
- God will heal our body and spirit.

Answering Jesus' Call There is a story of Francis of Assisi in which he encountered a horribly disfigured leper. Initially, Francis was repulsed by the man but remembered that this man too was a child of God and made in the image and likeness of God. Overcoming his fears, Francis ran forward and embraced the man. Rather than seeing the disease, Francis saw the person. We can ask the question, Who is your leper? Who is the person in your life that you need to embrace rather than reject? Who would benefit from you viewing them with different eyes? Following Jesus means that we are to be accepting and caring of others. Everyone is beloved by God, just as they are. But we can choose to be better. Just as Jesus helped the man who asked to be cured of his leprosy, with Jesus' help, we can work to overcome bad habits and flaws.

Lent: Lent is a time to give up something and consider giving alms to support others. Have you ever thought about giving something up? Maybe it's chocolate, food, watching TV, playing games on digital devices and eating out. Another way is it can be a time where we can try to be a better person, not gossip but be generous, forgive and be kind to others. Lent is a time when we have a change of heart and become a better person. Each year we can learn to improve ourselves as we are given a chance to repent, re-turn, re-cover, re-pair, re-new. All are called to repentance. Lent is a season of hope. It ends not with the death of God's Son on the Cross but with His rising from the dead for our salvation that gives us new life. The Lenten booklet was sent last week.

Project Compassion and Caritas:

The theme for Project Compassion 2015 is "Food for Life". Food is essential for all life, yet many of the world's poorest people do not have food security. That means they live from day-to-day, uncertain of how to afford or how to access their next meal. Without food, the rest of life is impossible to contemplate: how can you plan for the future or educate your children when you fear you will be hungry? As Pope Francis says: **"It is a well-known fact that current levels of production are sufficient, yet millions of people are still suffering and dying of starvation. This is truly scandalous."**



Project Compassion 2015 explores how Caritas Australia is helping the world's poorest people establish sustainable food, walking with them as they free themselves from the burden of food insecurity and develop new, improved income streams for a better future. Stories from Fiji, Niger, Indonesia, Peru, Nepal and Australia show how our supporters help people to grow and access food for life. Please click on this link to learn more <http://www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion>

"Aspire not to have more but to be more" - Archbishop Oscar Romero

Mrs Franca Bonserio Religious Education Coordinator

InfoZone

Welcome to the Library and Technology section of the St Oliver's Newsletter

MONITORS

Congratulations to the 2015 St Oliver's Library and Technology Monitors. Their assistance enables our Library and the technology needs of the school to run smoothly and efficiently.

Library Monitors: Leyot , Nick, Nehal, Sarah, Dhoon, Miranda, Layla, Eloise

Technology Monitors: Joaquin, Prisha, Rishabh , Henry, Aishik, Leila.

From Catholic Education Office Parramatta Diocese:

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

The Executive Director's Summer Reading Challenge has had another successful year with over 620 students reading 10,000 books over the school holidays – that's a new competition record!

The competition closed on 6 February and four winners were drawn at random, winning an iPad Mini.

Age 5-8 category: Andrea Clouston from Mary Immaculate Primary, Quakers Hill and Tyler Carabetta from St Madeleine's Primary, Kenthurst

Age 9+ category: Lachlan Urschel from Holy Family Primary, Emerton and Cheryl Kumar from Nagle College, Blacktown South

PREMIER'S READING CHALLENGE

The 2015 Premier's Reading Challenge officially opens on 2nd March, 2015 when the online records are available. However, all children can start reading now. Any PRC listed books that have been read since the start of the year may be included in the Students Reading Record.



ST OLIVER'S LIBRARY BORROWING

Children in Years 1 – 6 have a regular borrowing day on Monday. Kindergarten children borrow on Thursday. The Library is also open for extra borrowing on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Mrs Lesley Quinn
Teacher Librarian