



St Oliver's Mini Newsletter

Term 4

Week 10

2013

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Gospel Mt 3:1-12 A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand

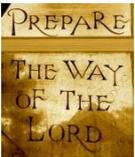
In due course John the Baptist appeared; he preached in the wilderness of Judaea and this was his message: 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' This was the man the prophet Isaiah spoke of when he said:

A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight. This man John wore a garment made of camel-hair with a leather belt round his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judaea and the whole Jordan district made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. But when he saw a number of Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism he said to them, 'Brood of vipers, who warned you to fly from the retribution that is coming? But if you are repentant, produce the appropriate fruit, and do not presume to tell yourselves, "We have Abraham for our father," because, I tell you, God can raise children for Abraham from these stones. Even now the axe is laid to the roots of the trees, so that any tree which fails to produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown on the fire. I baptise you in water for repentance, but the one who follows me is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to carry his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand; he will clear his threshing-floor and gather his wheat into the barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.'



Reflection

When John the Baptist performed baptism it was for the forgiveness of sin. The baptism he gave was a mark of the desire to enter into a new life of right action. It was not a baptism of initiation into community that is the case today. John had two key words that he is recorded as preaching: repent and prepare. His call for repentance was a call to turn away from sin; a call to have a change of heart; a call to turn one's life around and make a fresh start. His call for preparation is in the long line of prophets that includes the great prophet Isaiah from whom we take today's first reading. All of the prophets urged the people towards hope in the future. John the Baptist's call to 'Prepare the way of the Lord' is a summary of the purpose of the season of Advent. Every year, as we celebrate the Nativity, we celebrate once again the presence of God in our world. God became incarnate in the world through Jesus but also always was and continues to be incarnate in the world through each person. If we are to accept this reality and live it out, we need to remind ourselves this Advent to prepare the way for the Lord to be present in and through us every day of our lives. John the Baptist told people they must be sorry for the things they had done wrong so they could be ready to meet Jesus. What things do we need to be sorry for? How can we change our ways so that we can be ready to meet Jesus.



The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary falls on the 9th December, this feast day speaks of the power of God and the action of God in sending Jesus into the world to confront the powers of evil that prevent us and our world from a full flourishing of life. The Gospels affirm the ultimate victory of Jesus and as a consequence of this victory, the freeing of God's gracious love in the world. This feast affirms the power of God, manifest in Jesus, and expresses a belief that this action of God was anticipated in the life of Mary because of the role she was to play in being the mother of Jesus – the *theotokos*, the God-bearer.

December 12th is the feast day of Blessed Mother, Our Lady of Guadalupe. We invoke your intercession; you appear to us in ways we cannot understand. We pray for all our Catholic Christian brethren who suffer religious persecution for their faith. We ask you to cover them in your mantle, give them courage of heart and firm faith in the presence of your Son in their suffering.

Thanksgiving & Farewell Mass

Takes place on Friday 13th at 9.15am to say thank you for a wonderful school year and also to farewell all our students, families and teachers who are leaving St Oliver's. All are welcome.

Hampers

Thank you for your generosity with your donations for the Christmas Hampers. I am sure the needy families in our community will appreciate your generosity. May you have blessed Christmas!

Dates to Remember!

13th December
Thanksgiving/Graduation Mass – 9.15am
Parent Helper Brunch – 10.30am
Graduation & Awards Assembly
– 11.30am

16th December
Year 6 Social Evening – 6.00-8.30pm

17th December
Year 6 Day Out

18th December
Students Last Day

29th January 2014
Year 1-6 return to school

3rd February 2014
Kindergarten start school



Christmas Raffle

Thank you for your generous support of the Christmas raffle, we raised a fantastic \$2000 for school funds!

Olies Café News

The canteen will not be open on Wednesday 18th December (last week of term) or Wednesday 29th January (first week of term). The Canteen will be open again on 5th February 2014 with some new and exciting flavours.

Lost Property

Silver coloured religious medal found on the playground, please see office staff.

2014 Staffing Arrangements

At this time of the year many parents and students are asking who their child's teacher will be in 2014. Following are the staffing arrangements for next year.

Kindergarten: Mrs Bonserio (Mon-Wed & Fri) Mrs Grubisic (Thurs)
Year 1: Ms Tripodi
Year 2: Mrs Jean-Louis
Year 3: Ms Sandersan (Mon – Thurs) Mrs Grubisic (Fri)
Year 4: Mrs Henebery
Year 5: Ms Isaac
Year 6: Mrs Bessounian (Mon-Wed), Mrs Spiro (Thurs-Fri).

Executive Director's Summer Reading Challenge



Read to learn...Read for fun...Read to win - Read 10 or more age-appropriate books during the summer holidays to go into the draw to win one of four iPad Minis. Entries close Friday 7 February 2014.

Enter online <http://www.parra.catholic.edu.au/summer-reading-challenge>

School Zone Reminder to all Families

A reminder to all our parents ahead of the break at the end of Term 4 that school zones remain in place for the safety of our children and families.

School zones operate on all gazetted schools days, which are all days the school is open, even pupil free days.

School zones for our school will end on 20 December 2013 and resume on 28 January 2014.

For most NSW Catholic schools, school zones operate as normal until (and include) Friday 20 December and resume on Tuesday 28 January 2014.

NOTE: Double Demerits Points over the Christmas period will apply from Friday 20 December 2013 to Wednesday 1 January 2014 inclusive. Since Friday 20 December is a gazetted school day, Double Demerit Points will apply on this day in all school zones in NSW, whether students are present or not.