



NEWSLETTER

No. 10 Date: 18/12/2015 Week 11 Term 4

Dear St Thomas Aquinas Families,

The Christmas season in our modern world is often referred to as the "silly season". The frenetic activity and obligations of our lives often tend to build to a crescendo during this time and cause us to feel stressed, overwhelmed, and downright exhausted.

We can find ourselves losing the real essence of Christmastide - a time that should be one of innocence, simplicity, wonder, joy, love, forgiveness, family, community, and giving. The gift of Christmas is that it gives us time to appreciate what is special in our ordinary lives.

The birth of Christ as a baby inside a humble stable is God's antidote to our cynical hearts.

The theologian Fr Ron Rolheiser puts it as follows:

Like the shepherds we're asked to watch in the night and we're watching when, in our hearts, there is more wonder than familiarity, more childlike trust than cynicism, more love than indifference, more forgiveness than bitterness, more joy in our innocence than in our sophistication, and more focus on others than ourselves.

On behalf of all who have worked with dedication this year to educate the children in our community I wish you and your loved ones a holy, safe and peace-filled Christmas. May your homes be places of love, compassion and hospitality. May we remember and pray for all those whose homes are missing a loved one at this time.

Until next year,

A Rosato

Sergio Rosato
Principal

As the School Year Draws to a Close

The last weeks of the school year have been an incredibly fulfilling time for our school community in so many ways and at so many levels. Amongst the daily occurrences at this point of the school cycle four events stand out as ones to appreciate and savour as we conclude 2015: The Annual School Awards Ceremony, the Christmas Pageant/Concert, the Year 6 Farewell Mass and the Whole School Thanksgiving Mass.

It is events such as these that allow us to reflect on **and remember all the worthwhile things in which we have been involved. They allow us to celebrate success because we have achieved a goal, or passed a milestone. They allow us to acknowledge** disappointments and mistakes because we know they provide an opportunity for learning and growth. And they allow us to aspire to be better than we were before. They enrich, enliven and inspire our students, staff and parents to continue to strive for excellence and contribute in a purposeful way to all that we are called to do.

As the year draws to a close I take this opportunity to thank all who have worked this year to make this school a better place. I would like to acknowledge the contribution and loving support of parents, carers and extended family members. It does take a village to raise a child and we are blessed that our "village" sees this as its collective responsibility. We all have a part to play in modelling and teaching our children to be the best they can be.

A fond farewell particularly to those families whose children move onto high school ending an association with the school after many years – thank you for your unstinting contribution in helping to make our school a better place.

Our gratitude finally, to the entire staff for their commitment, their energy and professionalism in educating your children in mind, body and heart. **Sergio Rosato, Principal**

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www.stthomas.parramatta.catholic.edu.au | Parish Priest: Father Paul Slyney

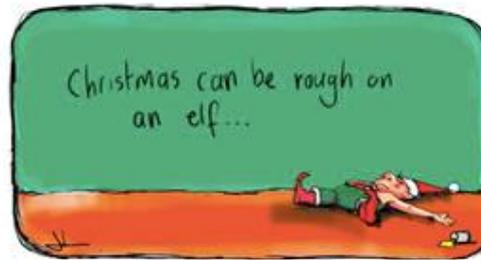


Photo courtesy of St Columba's Students Fundraising Santa Photos last Weekend



Mr Viv Llewellyn Retirement

We acknowledge and celebrate the precious gift that the Spirit has given to our community, Viv Llewellyn's labour of love, his vocation as a teacher.

At the end of last year Mr Llewellyn elected to scale back his duties at our school as he handed over the teaching of music to the very able and talented Mrs Leigha Wills. This year he has still been involved in teaching by coordinating our junior and senior school choirs, playing at the occasional liturgy, entering a representative choir into the Penrith Eisteddfod and on a couple of occasions, even taught at the school as a casual teacher.

Viv has now decided that it is the right time for him to hand over the remaining part of his work and devote his time fully to his many other passions and interests in life.

The philosopher Plato once wrote:

- o Music is a moral law.
- o It gives soul to the universe,
- o wings to the mind,
- o flight to the imagination,
- o and charm and joy to life and to everything.

For more than 12 years Mr Llewellyn has been a much-admired member of our school and devoted to teaching this moral law. Viv's contribution in this regard has been extraordinary. He is a music teacher of incredible knowledge and ability. He passionately believes that music is vital to the education of the whole child – mind, body and heart.

His love of, and skill in teaching music and the creative arts has helped build a culture at our school where music is seen as a vital part of learning and daily life. His philosophy of music is also steeped in the belief that music and spirituality is co-dependant - like a melody and a harmony.

Mr Llewellyn's career as a teacher spans almost half a century and two distant homelands – The United Kingdom and Australia. Mr Llewellyn was born in Porthcawl, Wales. The town of Porthcawl is situated about 40 km west of Cardiff on the coast of South Wales.

Wales has a reputation the world over as the 'land of song'. When people speak of Wales, they commonly think of voice choirs. These choirs had their roots in the competitive choral singing and heavy industry of the 19th century. Often a group of miners working together would form a choir to enter a competition. This form of communal singing was inspired by the harshness of their daily work life. Music was both an escape and inspiration from the gloom of the mines.

Mr Llewellyn was born into a family of teachers and musicians – his grandfather was a school principal at the very young age of 27 years old. As well as working in education his grandfather was also an accomplished church organist. Music was always a central part Viv Llewellyn's family and its from this formation that his love of music developed.

As a young boy Mr Llewellyn was a keen soprano in local eisteddfods. Later after leaving school he trained as teacher at Trinity College, Camarthen in West Wales. Upon graduating from college he taught in London as general primary teacher. During this time as a general primary school teacher he met a lass named Avril Lambert who happened to be teaching at the same school and not long after they were married. Two years later the newly married couple immigrated to Australia to start a new life, this time in New South Wales.

In Australia Viv trained as specialist music teacher at University of Technology Sydney, and subsequently taught in all three schooling systems – state, independent and catholic – teaching both in primary school and in high school. His teaching experience has encompassed teaching grades from Kindergarten up to Year 10.

An accomplished singer, actor, multi-instrumentalist, dancer and director in amateur theatre and musical theatre. Mr Llewellyn has been a member of the Sydney Welsh Choir since 1999, music director of the Choir since 2002. His directorship of the choir has taken him across the state, interstate as well as overseas including returning to perform in his own native Wales.

Viv is a true professional and genuinely cares about students and staff. His consideration of others, his wisdom and sense of fun has been a positive and uplifting influence in our school. We applaud and thank Viv for his distinguished service to education and to our community. We wish him all of God's blessings as he embarks on this next phase of his life. A phase that promises more time for travel, caravanning, hobbies, leisure, singing, playing and time spent with his family including doting on his much loved granddaughter, Poppy.

'Well done, good and faithful servant, Mr Llewellyn - you have been faithful to your vocation. Now enter into the joy of your Lord as you embrace the next part of your life. *Sergio Rosato, Principal*



PARISH NEWS

St Thomas Aquinas Christmas Children's Mass – Christmas Eve at 6.00pm

This year the Parish Christmas Children's Mass will be held in the **Kevin Manning Learning Centre (School Hall) at 6.00pm**. Children are encouraged to dress up as Nativity characters. All welcome!

Christmas Mass times: Christmas Eve – 6.00pm **Children's Mass – St Thomas Aquinas School Hall**
8.00pm **Vigil Mass – in the Church**

Christmas Day – 9.45am

NO EVENING MASS ON CHRISTMAS DAY



Student Awards

Congratulations to the following students, who received Merit Awards at our last School Assembly. Well done on your efforts everyone – keep up the good work!



Zachary Batcock	Jessica Ellis	Oliver Ligteringen	Charles Shingles
Isabelle Blacklock	Katelyn Ellis	Amber Lovric	Liam Sibbald
Asher Bogg	Leonie Ellis	Shyelo Malim-Martinez	Adam Sypka
Emanuel Borg	Mischa Evans	Bryden McLeod	Ethan Szmytka
Cooper Brown	Sienna Evans	Diesel Moore	Jack Thomas
Keeli Brown	Benjamin Giannakis	Patrick Moore	Riley Thompson
Lillian Burke	Benjamin Gomez	Thomas Neil	Nathan Treble
Anabel Caristo	Luke Harrison	Aiden O'Brien	Tristan Wade-Ferrell
Liam Carr	Isabel Hill	Dylan O'Flanagan	Lara Wallace
Max Carroll	Audrey Hodgins	Riley Pagitz	Matthew Ward
Ruanii Claudino	Erin Hutchinson	Billie Papatotiriou	Mia Watson
Grace Costigan	Ebony Kent	Emma Pospischil	Chelsea Willingham
Joel Crouch	Sophie Kerrison	Cooper Potter	Hayden Willingham
Finn Cullinane	Hayley Kime	Siobhan Rafter	Saffi Wilson
Ella Danks	Ella Laurent	Sophie Rayner	Cameron Winfield
Noah Edwards	Melissa Lee	Sahara Rodemark	Alexander Young
Audrey Ellem	Prudence Lia	Taleah Rust	Goran Zunic

Class Placement Process

During the last few weeks all class teachers, learning support teachers and school leadership have been involved in the process of placing students in classes for next year. This process seeks to inform students and families of their class placement before the years end. Many schools choose to do this during the first weeks of the new school year in an arbitrary way.

The process is incredibly complex and time consuming and seeks to do the best for each child and to place them in a balanced class cohort. Teachers and Leadership consider each child's learning needs and make their placement decisions on a range of learning and pastoral considerations. Parental requests are one of these considerations.

Be assured that the interests of all children have been carefully considered by the current grade teachers and the school leadership. We ask you to place trust in our professional judgment.

Class Groupings and Teachers for 2016

The Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta has approved 22 classes for next year (currently 21) plus 1 Aspect Satellite class making a total of 23 classes. The increased number of classes is due to increased enrolments. The classes will be structured as follows:

KB Elizabeth Bamford (Mon-Thur), Carolyn Edwards (Fri)	4B Beth Carroll
KD Deborah Mitchell	4CH Christopher Chenoweth
KM Megan Mann	4SB Bernie Sierra (Mon-Wed), Amy Blom (Thur & Fri)
1C Belinda Carroll	5C David Conroy
1D Maria Dodd	5H Blanche Hortense
1N Jeanette Noonan (Mon-Wed), Joan Noney (Thur & Fri)	5N Michelle Nightingale
2C Elaine Collier	5RP Jennifer Robson (Mon-Wed), Nicole Pospischil (Thu & Fri)
2D Shedden Dunncliffe	6C James Costigan
2W Kylie Williamson	6F Virginia Fortunat
3G Tanya Graham	6M Kate Mackenzie
3L Annabelle Leroy	
3S Megan Strutt (Mon-Thur), Michelle Hinchliff (Fri)	

Christmas Hand painted Tea towel Fundraiser

Over many weeks during Term 4 our dedicated Craft Group has been working with our students towards completing the very creative Christmas Tea towels to raise valuable funds for the school. Due to the healthy response to this initiative \$1250 was raised. Sincere thanks to this wonderful and diligent group of parents, led by Mrs Trish Young, for all their hard work throughout the year and many thanks to you, our very generous parent community, for your support with this and all our fundraisers during 2015.



FREE Movie Night at St Thomas Aquinas School

A FREE family movie night will be held at St Thomas Aquinas School on **Saturday 23 January, 2016**. This event is open to the whole community. Everyone is welcome even if your children do not attend STA. Bring a picnic blanket or some fold up chairs and join us **from 6.30pm** for a great night of school holiday family fun. **Screening will commence at 7.45pm**. Sausage sizzle, popcorn and drinks by donation. Proudly supported by CCSS and St Thomas Aquinas Parish Family Groups. **For more information call 4751 4956.**

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New School Opal Card - Reminder

From 2016 paper bus passes will be replaced by the new School Opal card. Parents of students progressing from Year 2 into Year 3 are reminded that they must apply for the School Opal card. If you have filled out a blue paper application form, please destroy it and **complete your application online** as the **previous forms are no longer valid**. To apply go to www.transportnsw.info/school-students; in the **concessions area of the website** you can complete the application; print, **sign** and submit form to the school for endorsement. **During the holidays, applications may be posted to the school to: PO Box 199, SPRINGWOOD, 2777.** The application may take several weeks and the applicant's email address is required. The School Opal cards will be issued to eligible students early in Term 1 2016. Visit the above website for further information.

DIARY DATES

2016 TERM 1 Week 1	Monday 25 January	Christmas School Holidays
	26	Australia Day Public Holiday
	27	Staff Commence for 2016
	28	EYA/MAI Testing Appointments K/1 – 6 Event Code: MM2ZP
	29	EYA/MAI Testing Appointments K/1 – 6 Event Code: MM2ZP
Week 2	Monday 1 February	Grades 1-6 Commence for 2016 EYA Testing Appointments continue for Kinder Event Code: MM2ZP
	2	EYA Testing Appointments continue for Kinder Event Code: MM2ZP
	3	Kindergarten Commence
	4	
	5	School Swimming Carnival for Years 3 - 6

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Jackeroo Ranch Horse Riding Camps: Located at Bingletree Station in the beautiful Turon Valley (in the Bathurst area) Jackeroo Ranch (established 54 years) is running their popular **summer school holiday** horse riding camps. **1st Week: Saturday 2 January – Saturday 9 January, 2016 (am arrival); 2nd Week: Saturday 9 January – Sunday 17 January, 2016 (pm arrival).** Shorter stays are possible if camps are not fully booked. These camps are for 'horse mad' children aged 6 to 16 years. Five to six hours per day are devoted to horse activities including a one hour lesson and three hours trail riding – with tuition still being given. As well, campers are taught grooming, saddling, haltering, catching a horse, safety aspects and many other facets of horsemanship. Catered for beginners to advanced riders. We specialise in teaching nervous riders and developing their confidence. Other activities include gold panning, cattle feeding/checking, cattle mustering, camp fires and native wildlife spotting. (The property abounds with kangaroos, wallabies, wombats, wonderful bird life as well as being a working cattle farm and Quarter Horse Stud. There are Poll Hereford calves and Quarter Horse foals now being born.) This is not just a 7173 (nights are best). Further information at www.jackerooranch.com.au

Springwood United Football Club Registrations: Registrations for the 2016 season opens on 2 January at www.myfootballclub.com.au for all players from the Under 5's to O35's. New players more than welcome! Form your own team or we can help you find new friends. Players must be registered prior to trialling for 2016 teams. All players must be registered to secure a place in a team. All enquiries to admin@springwoodunited.com.au or follow us on Facebook for updates and further information.

Kids Can Act Holiday Drama Workshops: Kids Can Act Drama Studio at "Springwood Court", 133 Macquarie Road, Springwood (next to Domino's) is offering the following school holiday workshops: **Lights Camera Action: Take Two – Wed 13 January, 9.30am – 2.30pm; A Pirates Life For Me – Thurs 14 January, 9.30am – 2.30pm; Puppetry No 3 – Mon 18 January, 9.30am – 2.30pm; Fairy Tale Jumble – Tues 19 January, 9.30am – 2.30pm and Drama Games & Scenarios – Wed 20 January, 9.30am – 2.30pm.** More workshops also available in South Penrith. Check out the website www.kidscanact.com.au for more details and to enrol or contact Cathie on 0414 475 158.

Counselling Course 2016: The St John of God Institute of Counselling, established in 1969, offers a course designed to develop skills in personal growth, communication, parenting and general counselling principles. Participants can learn new skills in dealing with daily personal challenges and the issues that arise within families, the school environment, pastoral care and in the workplace. It is conducted on Tuesday evenings within the school term between 7.30pm – 9.45pm at Holy Cross College, Victoria Road, Ryde commencing on Tuesday 2 February 2016. Enrolments are accepted up to the end of March. The cost for the course is \$450.00 for the year with an early bird offer of \$400.00 if paid in full by the end of February 2016. For enquires please contact: Michael Hill - 9869 3774 or 0410 774 432 (7.00 to 9.00 p.m. Mon to Fri); Carol Harding - 0408 705 848 (anytime); Janelle Carlile - 0431 598 004 (5.30 to 8.30pm Mon to Fri); or Email: counselling1969@gmail.com

Springwood Cricket Club MILO T20 Blast FREE Come & Try: Springwood Cricket Club, in conjunction with the Cricket NSW, will be running an 8-week MILO T20 Blast program in February. Participants will be involved in games of MILO T20 Blast, whilst developing their skills through fun activities. The program is open to **girls and boys between the ages of 7 and 12 years.** The FREE Come & Try day will be held on **Friday 5 February, 2016 at Lomatia Park, Springwood.** **Program dates:** Friday 12 February to Friday 8 April, 2016, from 5.00 – 6.30pm. **Cost:** \$99. For more information visit the Springwood Cricket Club website at www.springwoodcc.com.au.

Sent Home Recently:

- MAI Online Booking Note (pink)

*Wishing one and all a safe and happy
Christmas and holidays!*



Scan with your smartphone
or tablet for more
information.

www.staspringwood.catholic.edu.au

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