

NEWSLETTER

No. 1 Date 20/02/13 Week 4 Term 1

Dear St Thomas Aquinas Families,

The 2013 school year is a fortnight and a half old and already so much has happened in that time.

We welcome in a special way our new **Kindergarten** students and their families. Over the last two weeks they have had many new and wonderful experiences both inside their own classrooms and in the playground. They seem to have taken to their new environment and all the various school activities with confidence and enthusiasm.

We also warmly welcome the many **new students** and their families who have joined our school community in Grades 1-6. Thank you for your trust and confidence in placing your children in our care as co educators.

Tomorrow you will receive the **Term Calendar** that outlines the various special events and celebrations during the term. We look forward to seeing many families being part of these events as the term progresses.

Our school year commenced with a wonderful **Opening School Mass** celebrated by our Parish Priest Father Paul. The students demonstrated a great sense of reverence during the Mass and participated wholeheartedly in every respect – listening attentively, responding, singing and praying. It was an inspiring occasion as we joined together in communion as a community to give thanks. As has been tradition over the last couple of years our Year 6 students sat with the Kindergarten students during the Mass acting as role models and support for their buddies.

Thank you to Father Paul for his words of encouragement during the Homily and to Mr Coley White (Religious Education Coordinator) for his leadership in helping to prepare such a beautiful and memorable Mass.

The sport and Physical Education aspect of school life commenced with students in Grades 3-6 participating in our **School Swimming Carnival** held at Glenbrook Pool. We were blessed with fantastic weather on the day which added to the happy atmosphere. The organizing committee consisting of James Costigan, Karen Bousfield & Ann Gippel were assisted with a great band of parent helpers ensuring for a very well organised event. Thank you also to the many families who attended on the day and supported the students. Congratulations to all students who participated in such a sporting manner on the day. Further congratulations to the students who will go on to represent the school in the Zone Carnival this week.

During the week our school hosted a professional film crew who used our hall as the set for a **television commercial** showcasing Catholic Education. The commercial will feature a selection of students of various ages from as far away as Forbes, Newcastle and Canberra as well as students from our own Diocese of Parramatta. Two students from STA were also part of this project – Isaac Wardle (Year 5) & Jacob Danks (Year 1). It was a wonderful experience for all the students involved and reminded us of the depth of natural talent that our students possess. It is anticipated that the commercial will be screened extensively later in the year on regional television.

Last Wednesday we gathered in our Hall to mark the beginning of the **Joyful Season of Lent**. Lent is a time when we think about how we have been called into a sacred relationship with God and with other people. At the end of the forty days of Lent we celebrate Easter and Jesus rising from the dead. God sent his son Jesus to give his life for us and show us that we need to open the doors of our hearts to love others as God loves us.

Lent is a season full of symbols. These symbols help us to understand the beauty of what God is trying to say to us.

During Lent churches are draped in purple cloth and the priest wears purple vestments. Purple is chosen for two reasons. One is that it is the colour that reminds us of Jesus' Passion-his suffering on the cross. The other reason is that purple is the colour of royalty and so it celebrates Christ's joyful coming as a King.

On Ash Wednesday we are marked with the sign of the ashes on our foreheads. These ashes are burnt from the palms of last year's Palm Sunday. They are a sign of new life. Although ashes give the appearance of being dull and lifeless we know that after a bushfire ashes have the wondrous ability to help new seeds sprout and grow. Ashes also symbolise cleansing. For many years people (including my grandmother) used ash to make cakes of soap to wash themselves. The cross is a sign which reminds us that just as Jesus gave of himself for others we need to share what we have.



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ST THOMAS AQUINAS NEWS

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w: www.staspringwood.catholic.edu.au

Parish Priest:
Father Paul Slyney

p: 02 4754 1052

FROM THE PRINCIPAL – cont'd

During Lent we give thanks for the good things that God has given us and remember that these blessings are not just for us. We must share them and use them to help other people in the world who do not have enough food, clean water and healthcare or love. One way we can do this is by contributing to the Project Compassion Appeal. Another way is by thinking about the needs of others and doing something practical to help them.

In the Gospel reading of the day Jesus asks us to do good deeds, to be kind, compassionate and generous without showing off to others. Therefore, when we give something up this Lent, pray or give to someone in need, we do so with an open and humble heart in preparation for the great feast of Easter.

Let us pray that God will give us the grace to forgive others, to be truthful, to share and turn our heart back to Him during this joyous season.

Until next time,

S Rosato

Sergio Rosato
Principal

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Visit from Bishop Anthony Fisher OP to Blue Mountains Community

On Monday 4 February, Most Rev Anthony Fisher OP, Bishop of Parramatta, visited the Blue Mountains region to outline his hopes and vision in an address to over 150 clergy, principals, parishioners and school families and staff from the Parishes of Katoomba, Lawson, Springwood, Glenbrook and Emu Plains at the Bishop Manning Learning Centre, Springwood.

As part of this visit, Bishop Anthony announced a proposed plan to release a parcel of Diocesan land at the rear of the Springwood parish/primary school site for large residential blocks of land. The proposal is for no more than 50 blocks in keeping with the existing nature of the area.

The Diocese has commenced a process of community consultation and all necessary surveys and reports to ensure preservation of any protected flora and fauna and Aboriginal archaeological sites. The Diocese will release the detailed plans to the Blue Mountains community when finalised in the coming months.

For more information and to download a transcript/podcast of Bishop Anthony's address visit www.parra.catholic.org.au

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Punctuality

We ask families to appreciate that the morning school session particularly between 9.05 and 11.05am is important in the context of the learning day. This period is prime instructional time for teachers and is often where important learning takes place. Please be mindful of student punctuality and its effect on learning.

School Attendance

Consistent attendance is vital in maintaining continuity in a child's education. If your child has to be absent from school due to sickness or pressing family circumstances, you are required to inform the school and state a reason for your child's absence. Families should send a note to the school on the child's return to school from leave. This note is then recorded in the class roll by the teacher. The class roll is a legal register of student attendance for the year. If your child is unwell for a number of days (2 days or more) please notify the school by phone to inform of this situation. It is always necessary to send a note on the child's return to school.

The student school attendance legislation permits Principals to grant leave for short periods relating to family travel. Families are required to make requests for such leave by writing to the Principal. Amazingly, if a child is absent from school for 8 days each term for the extent of their 7 years of Primary School they would have missed an entire year of school!

Sickness and Absenteeism

Families should be prudent in not sending students to school if they are feeling unwell particularly in cases where cross-infection is a risk.



Cuppa and Chat

Parents are invited to our Cuppa & Chat Mornings held each Tuesday from 9.05am in the Bishop Manning Learning Centre (hall) commencing next week, 26 February.

Now Available at STA – My School Lunch Box

My School Lunch Box exists to ensure kids receive the healthiest, freshest lunches in the most convenient way.

- Healthiest food for each child
- Made fresh each day from the finest ingredients
- No preservatives, colours or flavours
- Convenient process for parents
- Kids aren't carrying cash
- Delivery is free
- No volunteers needed



Families can order online for next day delivery at school – Check out the great menu and very reasonable prices at:

<http://www.myschoollunchbox.com.au>

Flyers are also available in the school office foyer.

Student Awards

Congratulations to the following students, who received Merit Awards at this week's and last week's School Assemblies. Well done on your efforts everyone - keep up the good work!



Week 3

Luke Arnold	Summer Harrison	Ebony Manning	Jordan Pagitz
Isaac Bailey	Xavier Hartley	Thomas Manzie	Riley Pagitz
Lauren Beaton	Kyle Hodges	Julia McIlveen	Luca Penserini
Ferris Carey	Audrey Hodgins	Estelle McLellan	Zoe Peters
Brooke Conway	Isaac Hutchinson	Chelsea Muller	Benjamin Prior
Texas Down	Daniel Isaac	Ethan Muller	Jenna Richardson
Elizabeth Duncan	Nathalie Jamnicky	Liam Murphy	Noah Samoluk
Samuel Edwards	Sebastian Jamnicky	Keyuri Naidoo	Bronte Tracey
Baxter Ellem	Molly Jones	Callum Northam	Sarah Wilson
Annabel French	William Jones	Tommy Okladnikov	Daniel Woods
Matilda Gauci	Bridget Lloyd-Williams	Christopher Oliver	Laurence Wynne-Jones
Luke Harrison			

Week 4

Isabella Alves-Jones	Tyler Frost	Christian Lia	Lachlan Steadman
Larissa An U	Ruby Fuhrmann	Isabella Ligteringen	Oliver Stewart
Isaac Bailey	Lachlan Golby	Bridget Lloyd-Williams	Conna Taylor
Talyka Campbell	Willow Hookings	Elizabeth Makepeace	Tahlia Thompson
Lucas Collins	Matthew Hurley	Ashton McLeod	Jemma Tomas
Mitchell Crouch	Corey Hutchings	Sophie Milsom	Samuel Turner
Aden Cullinane	Nyah Hutchings	Patrick Moore	Cameron Waters
Evan Davey	Madison Johns	Lily Quinn	Elanor Williams
Callum Dyer	Declan Klukow-Leavey	Noah Samoluk	Saffi Wilson
Isabel Dyer	Bridie Knibbs	Cooper Selinger	Sarah Wilson
Luke Edwards	Peter Koulouris	Tara Slowey	Alexander Young

SPORTS NEWS



2013 Swimming Champions

At this week's Assembly the following students were presented with awards for their success at our recent school swimming carnival. Our school swimming champions for 2012 are as follows:

	Champion	Runner Up
Senior Boys:	Benjamin Lewsley	Max Peters
11 Yrs Boys: (Equal 1 st)	Jack Graham, Thomas Gawthorne	(Equal 2 nd) Daniel Kime, Michael Christof
Junior Boys:	Jake McSpadden	Ethan Muller
Senior Girls:	Jenna Jones	Teneka Kime
11 Yrs Girls: (Equal 1 st)	Mackenzie Barglik, Annalise Della-Libera	Katelyn Jones
Junior Girls:	Zoe Peters	Ainsley Mann

These students are part of a group of approximately 28 St Thomas Aquinas students who will compete at the Zone Swimming Carnival on Tuesday 26 February at Glenbrook Pool. Congratulations and well done to you all and best wishes at Zone. **Ann Gippel, Acting Sports Coordinator**

CREATIVE ARTS NEWS

Drama and Literacy Program at STA Recommences

Our Year 5 & 6 classes together with their teachers have recommenced working with 2 professional actors each Wednesday. These workshops will culminate in a student performance based on a literature book to take place later in the year. We are most fortunate to have been selected for this initiative by the Catholic Education Office Parramatta through the Captivate program. Research shows that rich learning opportunities such as integrating drama and literacy can have a profound effect on student engagement and learning.

School Band

Last year we commenced weekly tuition in wind and brass instruments to work towards a performance. This initiative facilitated by a music teacher from St Columba's (Emma Nicolson) and assisted by our music teacher (Viv Llewellyn) was most successful.

We will be advancing this program again this year with the opportunity for students in Years 4-6 to be involved. A demonstration of musical instruments was conducted last week with many students registering their interest in being part of the program. There is a hiring fee for the use of the instruments with the music tuition being provided gratis. We are grateful for the support of St Columba's and CEO for this wonderful opportunity.

School Choirs

Once again the school will have 2 school choirs this year – Junior Choir Grades 2 & 3 and Senior Choir Grades 4-6. The choirs will be conducted by our music teacher Viv Llewellyn who has great expertise in this area as the director of the Sydney Welsh Choir.

Springwood School of Music

Small group tuition for students primarily in guitar and keyboard will continue.

creative
arts

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Meet the Teacher Meetings

These took place this week. For teachers this was a **listening night** to enable us to obtain valuable insights about our students – their aptitudes, strengths and areas for further development. As always these meetings provided a valuable initial opportunity for parents and teachers to share insights and valuable information relating to the children. In essence these meetings were about building a relationship between families and teachers for the benefit of each child. Thank you to all who booked their appointment online this year for the first time via the online booking site.

Book Club

The first issue for 2013 has been handed out to the students. All orders need to be returned by **next Monday 25 February**. Please check that order forms are filled out correctly including both the child's name and class. Credit card payments must be made online first and the receipt number needs to be recorded on the order form



Sincere Sympathy for the Simone Family

Our sincere heartfelt condolences to the Simone family on the passing of their beloved husband, father, son and friend Marc Simone. Marc tragically died in a road accident at Emu Plains last Saturday.

Recently Marc was preparing to cycle to Darwin from Springwood to raise money and awareness for homeless youth. Families wishing to contribute to this cause can do so through the Everyday Hero website at – <http://www.everydayhero.com.au/marcsimone/donations/1>

The funeral for Marc Simone will be held this Friday at 11.00am at St Thomas Aquinas Church.



Baby Congratulations

Congratulations to Melissa and Grant Rowe on the birth of new son Finn, brother for Jack in 6/5M and Amber in 2S. We also congratulate Brodie and Brendan Luchetti on the birth of new son Arlo, brother to Isabella in 6L and Eamonn in 4N.

DIARY DATES

2013 TERM 1 Week 4	Thursday 21 February	8.30am Staff Prayer
	22	
Week 5	Monday 25	12.30pm Assembly
	26	9.05am Cuppa and Chat commences Nepean Zone Swimming Carnival – selected students 12.30pm School Band 3.40pm Staff Meeting
	27	8.30am Staff Briefing 9.30am Parish Mass – Year 5 attending 7.00pm Autumn Fair Meeting – in hall (Autumn Fair note to come)
	28	8.30am Staff Prayer Principal's Morning Tea
	1 March	Diocesan Swimming Carnival – selected students
Week 6	Monday 4 March	12.30pm Assembly
	5	9.05am Cuppa and Chat 12.30pm School Band 3.40pm Staff Meeting
	6	8.30am Staff Briefing 9.30am Parish Mass – Year 4 & 4/3C attending
	7	8.30am Staff Prayer
	8	AFL Competition – Stages 2 & 3 – selected students

COMMUNITY NEWS

Post Separation Recovery Program: Catholic Care Social Service Diocese of Parramatta will be holding this series of 7 workshops which help you begin to deal with intense emotions, face and accept your changed life-situation, attend to your grief, learn lessons from the past, redefine yourself, forgive and let go, set new goals and rebuild on a strong foundation. The program allows you to work at your own pace. Each meeting follows a set agenda including video input, personal reflection, journaling, large and small group sharing. Facilitated by accredited staff who have a personal acquaintance with the loss of a spouse or partner through separation or divorce. **Venue:** 2A Villiers Street, North Parramatta. **Time:** 7.30pm-9.45pm (including supper break). **Dates:** Wednesdays, 27 February – 10 April 2013. **Cost:** \$80.00. Bookings essential. Phone 9933 0205 or go to soloparentministry@ccss.org.au

Family Fun Day: Sunday 24 February 2013, 11.00am – 2.00pm at York Public School, Evan Street, Penrith. People with a disability and their families and carers are warmly invited. Promoting recreation and leisure activities for people with a disability. Activities such as bikes, ball games, softball and tee ball, gardening, drumming workshop, face painting, personal trainer, circus performers, petting zoo, swimming centres, sailing and much, much more. **Cost:** FREE. Sausage sizzle BBQ lunch provided. **RSVP:** Wednesday 20 February by calling voicemail 4734 9512. Please leave a message with the following details: names and ages of the people coming and your phone number. Limited transport is available from community buses. Bookings needed.

Sent Home Recently:

- Year 6 Commemorative Shirt note
- Term 1 Weekly Activities note (gold)
- Head lice notes to KB, 2D & 5SW
- Zone Swimming Carnival note – selected students
- School Band note (pink)
- Kinder Play dough Roster (pink)

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