Term 1  Week 9

Dear Parents and Caregivers

I begin this week’s newsletter with an adaptation from Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life, pp. 25-26, written by Richard Rohr, a Franciscan priest, author and speaker.

'I cannot think of a culture in human history (before the present postmodern era) that did not value law, tradition, custom, authority, boundaries, and morality of some clear sort. These containers give us the necessary security, continuity, predictability, impulse control, and ego structure that we need, before the chaos of real life shows up. It is my studied opinion that healthily conservative people tend to grow up more naturally and more happily than those who receive only free-form “build it yourself” worldviews. This is the tragic blind spot of many liberals and free thinkers.

Here is my conviction: without law in some form, and also without butting up against that law, we cannot move forward easily and naturally. The rebellions of two-year-olds and teenagers are in our hardwiring, and we have to have something hard and half-good to rebel against. We need a worthy opponent against which we test our mettle. As Rilke put it, “When we are only victorious over small things, it leaves us feeling small.” Cultures which do not allow any questioning or rebelling might create order, but they pay a huge price for it in terms of inner development. Even the Amish have learned this, and allow their teens the runspringa freedom and rebellion, so they can make a free choice to be Amish. And most do!

Perhaps no one has said it better than the Dalai Lama: “Learn and obey the rules very well, so you will know how to break them properly.” This also sums up Paul’s teaching about the law in Romans and Galatians!

This quote gives us something to think about, especially those of us who share in the responsibility of raising children in a world that, on one hand, sees many suffocating under conditions of oppression and lack of personal freedom, and on the other, cultures that have loosened (and even abandoned) boundaries, traditions and conventional morality.

Many people are confused and unsure of how to proceed. Do they ‘impose’ their values, traditions, beliefs on their children or do they leave a space for children to fill as they see fit - to make up their own minds? Perhaps part of the problem is that increasingly, we don’t know where we stand on what’s important in the first place. How can we teach and share with our young, that which we haven’t worked out for ourselves?

Combine these conditions with hurried family time, extended focus on work, societal and family breakdown or dysfunction and we need to ask, ‘Who is influencing the way our children are growing up? And what messages and values are they selling?’ If parents are reluctant, unwilling or unable to share a life lived by well-articulated and considered values and virtues, then someone else will surely be filling the void. Whether it’s peers or media, it’s happening right now.

We shouldn’t confuse what we eventually want for our young people with what they are capable of at the various stages of their childhood. Yes, we want children to be able to make wise choices but this end will not be served, for example, by giving a four or five year old the responsibility of choosing his or her school – which, by the way, I have frequently witnessed. The child has neither the knowledge nor experience from which to draw in order to make such a decision.

Parents must be prepared to parent – with love, intention and yes, authority - and it is in children’s best interest to learn to listen, obey and be respectful of parents and legitimate authority. We all know the outcome when young people are let loose in the world without a strong ‘container’ of commitments, understandings, values and virtues from which to draw and a strong connectedness to family and other agencies of influence in their lives. They are easy targets for individuals and groups whose intentions are not benevolent and whose motives are not good, true or beautiful in the deeper sense.

Today, more than ever, there is a need for family members to know what they stand for and why. Young people need that sound framework in which to grow and that solid foundation as a springboard to their own healthy, mature identity and community membership. This takes unhurried time to be with, to really discuss/notice/listen; it takes patience, wisdom, consistency and intention; it takes physical and emotional presence; it takes personal investment and detachment. Does preoccupation with money, possessions, prestige, power, position and frenetic activity promote and support these conditions for growth?

Have a great week everyone. Glenda
Dear Parents/Caregivers,

The Virtue for this fortnight is Reverence, chosen to coincide with preparation for the Easter Liturgies, the most important time of the Church year liturgically and spiritually. Reverence is a deep sense of respect for marvels that surround us and that brought us into existence. It is an awareness of ourselves as small beings in an order beyond the grasp of any single human mind.

Rather than rushing about impulsively, we watch and listen with a sense of humility, delight and wonder. We are careful to avoid hasty action that can destroy an intricate or delicate balance that inspires our awe. Reverence calls us to service. It can be expressed in daily acts of kindness for others, especially people with whom we are close. Even a simple act can be sacred if we do it with reverence.

When we have a mindset of reverence, it seem natural to use our life energy to preserve, honor and elevate something greater than ourselves. Whether you are in a place of worship or spending time in a place of silence or beauty, reverence is being still and allowing the wonder you feel to shine through. It can be experienced in moments of prayer and reflection.

Reverence is behaving with an awareness that we are always in the presence of the Creator and that all life is precious. It is showing respect and careful to honour the gifts of life, including other people. In being thankful for the gift of Reverence, our lives are consecrated to the glory of God.

Reverence is practised when we:

- Take time each day to nurture my inner life
- Open my soul to life’s wonders
- Live with an aware of Divine Presence
- Discern the meaning of my experiences
- Allow beauty to nurture my soul
- Respect the value of all life.

Reverence can be experienced in times of prayer, meditation, or communion. Everyone needs time for reflection. It enables us to quieten our minds and spirits to hear the wisdom that comes from deep inside. In concentrating your whole being on the sacredness of that moment, reverence allows you to listen to your heart.

So in the lead up to the holidays, perhaps you may take time to ponder the wonder of your own children and family members and give thanks to God for all the gifts in your life.

Have a wonderful week. God bless,

Judith.
MUSIC NOTES

QUOTE OF THE WEEK
“Music is your own experience, your thoughts, your wisdom. If you don’t live it, it won’t come out of your horn.” ~ Charlie Parker ~

TIP OF THE WEEK - Do you play with correct posture? This is very important during lessons, rehearsals and especially at home when you practice. Ask your teacher to remind you about good posture!!

MUSICAL NEWS – Auditions are keeping everyone busy and we are very excited by the talent here at Stella Maris. We hope to have all students allocated to a part in the musical prior to the end of this term however there will be some fine-tuning of parts into Term 2. If you have not done so already, please return these forms by Wednesday 26th March, not the due date listed on the note, as this was an error on our part.

Auditions this week will include: Dorothy, Tin Woodman, Scarecrow, Lion, Good Witch, and the Wicked Witch. Students are to check the space outside the Music Room for more details at this week. All auditions will be in the Music Room beginning at 10:45am. Students are to bring their lunch with them and prepare to stay for the entire lunch period for their chosen audition.

There will be a parent meeting for anyone interested in assisting with preparations for the musical on Tuesday 29 April at 6.30pm in the staffroom.

Performance Date Claimers - We have many wonderful events planned for the year and look forward to your support. Please mark these dates in your family calendar. Further dates will be advised soon and additional info will come closer to each date.

Date claimers –
20 March – Percussion Lunchtime Concert - Music Room at 10.45am
Monday 16 to Thursday 19 June – SOIREE WEEK in the Hall at 5pm and 6.30pm
19 June – Year 3 Piccolo Choir and Concert Band on Assembly
23 June – Sensational Strings Workshops and Concert at Stella Maris
24 July - Stella Fellas and String Ensemble on Assembly
Monday 28 July – Sunshine Coast Choral Workshop and Concert at Stella Maris
T31 July – Grandparents Day in the Hall (performing groups to be finalised)
6 August – Percussion Lunchtime Concert – Music Room at 10.45am
15 August – QCMF (Choirs, Band and Strings) in Brisbane
11 September – SM Singers and Percussion on Assembly
October 17 – 19 – The Wizard of OZ Musical
5 November – Singing Soiree in the Hall at 6pm
6 November – Speech and Drama Soiree in the Hall at 6.30pm
13 November – Bonza Band Bash at Siena
27 November – Year 2 Piccolo Choir and Guitar Ensemble on Assembly

Any changes to enrolment in instrumental, singing or speech and drama tuition should be advised immediately. Ongoing enrolment in this program is dependent on full payment of each school account, or a regular direct debit or payment plan to cover fees by the end of each school term.

If you have queries regarding anything musical – please feel free to catch up with us before or after school, by contacting us in writing or via email.

Musically Yours,
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Classroom Music Specialist
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Todd Wynyard
Instrumental Music Coordinator
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SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS.

Is it two years since your last Student Protection Training?
Are you going to be a new parent helper at Stella Maris?
Are you going to be a volunteer but are not a parent or relative?

All parent helpers and volunteers must attend Student Protection Training before they are able to work in classrooms. In order to organise the large numbers expected, the last training session will be held on Wednesday 26th March. The session will be conducted at 2pm. All registered volunteers and helpers’ names are kept on record at the front desk. Anyone not an employee must register at the front office and sign in. This is an Occupational Health & Safety requirement as well as important for student protection.

All these processes and responsibilities have your child’s well-being at their heart. It is helpful if you have read the Volunteers Code of Conduct and the Volunteers Student Protection Handbook before you come to training. These are available on our website.

Christine Craig - Guidance Counsellor/ Psychologist
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BRUCE AND DENISE
VISITING OUR SCHOOL THURSDAY APRIL 3rd
9.00AM Yr3-7