Dear Parents and Caregivers

Weren’t all the Mums rewarded with the most glorious day last Sunday after such a mixed bag of weather recently? Thoroughly deserved! I hope you were all spoiled while enjoying the blue skies and sunshine.

We were fortunate on Friday, as well, to complete the Caritas Walkathon in fine weather after heavy rain the previous night. Thank you to everyone who supported the walkathon and raised money for a very worthy cause. I also thank Judith for her promotion of this annual event and for developing a growing understanding of walking in solidarity with the children of the world who must walk long distances to access water for their families. It is hard to comprehend that this remains the case in very many places around the world.

It is equally hard to comprehend that universal education for children is not yet a reality and that girls, in particular, in some parts of the world, are not seen as needing an education or indeed, not worthy of one. The recent abduction of over 200 Nigerian school girls is an example, in the extreme, as was the shooting of Malala Yousafzai in Pakistan in October 2012.

Of course, there are a variety of reasons why girls face incredible odds in getting an education: lack of opportunity can be attributed to poverty with not enough to extend beyond education of the boys in the family. A further cause is the cultural oppression of girls and women which often results in violence against those who embrace an alternate vision or who simple want the opportunity to learn and to self-determination. Violence against girls and those who seek to educate them is not uncommon in a number of countries including Afghanistan, Somalia, Mali and Syria where arson, explosions, gas attacks, suicide bombings and the threat of these horrors, dissuade families from educating their daughters.

As the Nigerian abductions bring this injustice into focus yet again, we are left wondering what we can do, here in Australia where every child has the opportunity to safely attend school and learn. Yes, we can provide the necessary financial support to educate a child through a variety of agencies such as World Vision and Caritas; but generally it is beyond our resources to bring about the drastic economic, political and cultural change that is necessary. Cultural change, in particular, often involves struggle, resistance and persistence over many, many decades; it is never a simple matter.

So what can we do to turn our feelings of helplessness to improving the situation not only for those beyond our reach in faraway places but also for those who are right here beside us every day? I believe that showing solidarity with the whole human family must contribute towards a more just and peaceful world. We do this by drawing attention to injustice. Firstly, we raise our own awareness of the plight of others and grow our appreciation for the opportunities, the amenities and services we take for granted every day. As we raise our own awareness and gratitude, we also raise the awareness of our children, not to depress them, but rather to support their growth as socially-aware and socially-responsible, global citizens. The alternative is a movement towards self-absorption, parochialism and narrow-mindedness. With all our opportunities we have an obligation to be better than that. As John F Kennedy said, ‘To those whom much is given, much is expected.’ Or going even further back, from Luke 12.48: ‘From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.’ Once awareness has been heightened we act, to the extent that we are able, enlisting the necessary support to make a positive difference.

That’s a long-term project but we can make a start right here, right now. And where better than helping our children appreciate the incredible gift they have been given in their education? I wonder how many of us, in our own schooling, wasted this opportunity through lack of appreciation of its significance? I know I was guilty of this for many years. Nowadays, rarely a day goes by that I don’t envisage schools where all students and staff are fully engaged in their learning, knowing that in so doing they are making a difference for themselves and each other. Place this learning in the context of a community that lives close to the imperatives of the Gospel and we are truly on the road to a more just future for all – a future beyond ‘me’ and beyond ‘this minute.’

So how can we let our children know that this educational opportunity they’ve been given is to be grasped wholeheartedly and not grudgingly or as it suits? Here’s where we adults need to be mindful ourselves because young ones read the subtle indicators of our own commitment (or lack) very well. Arrive late at school regularly? Pick-up students early without a substantial reason? Allow days off for little or no cause? Make excuses for student learning commitments not met? Fail to attend learning events when it is possible to attend? Talk negatively about school and/or teachers in front of children? Rarely show interest in their learning? Emphasise achievement over effort? These are some of the ways we unintentionally reveal where schooling sits in the scheme of things and children don’t miss the point.

I’ll end this week’s piece with a reminder of our Stella Maris motto, ‘Act justly, love tenderly, walk humbly with our God’. Spot on advice, in a nutshell, for a better world! Our Virtue of the Fortnight, thankfulness, also keeps us on the right track.

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

The Virtue for this fortnight is Thankfulness, chosen to coincide with Mother’s Day last Sunday. I hope all the mothers in our school community had a wonderful day, whether you celebrated it with family or with a lovely phone call, card or special memory.

In reading ‘Jesus Calling’ devotional this morning, the focus was on ‘Thankfulness’ in trusting God to orchestrate our lives for the good of all. I include it here for your thoughtful reflection:

THANK ME IN THE MIDST of the crucible. When things seem all wrong, look for growth opportunities. Especially, look for areas where you need to let go, leaving your cares in My able hands. Do you trust Me to orchestrate your life events as I choose, or are you still trying to make things go according to your will? If you keep trying to carry out your intentions while I am leading you in another direction; you defy your desires. Be on the lookout for what I am doing in your life. Worship Me by living close to Me, thanking Me in all circumstances.” (based on 1 Peter 5:6-7; 1 Thessalonians 5:18). (From The Virtues Project – Family Virtues Guide – L.K.Popov)

The real message for me in this reading is that if we are grateful for growth opportunities, our lives will be much richer for it. In bringing the Virtue of Thankfulness to all of life events, be they seemingly positive or negative, we demonstrate that we rely on God to turn all events into good. Without thankfulness, we would stay focused on negativity. We would miss out on the beauty of life and power of learning, especially during difficult times. No matter how difficult or how dark things become, there is always light. There is something to learn in every painful situation. In fact, sometimes when we look back at a really hard time in our lives and realize what we have learned, thankfulness soothes our sadness and restores our hope. It gives us perspective.

Thankfulness is being grateful for what you have. It is an attitude of gratitude for learning, loving and being. Thankfulness is being glad for the special things that come along. It is also being grateful for the little things which happen around you and within you every day. It is an openness and willingness to receive each of God’s gifts which leads to optimism, helping you find the often small but wondrous gifts that life has to offer.

There is an old adage that we seldom hear nowadays – Count your blessings. I think that we could see past the trials and tribulations, Thankfulness would enable us to see life from another perspective altogether. Another old proverb that people may be familiar with is, ‘Every cloud has a silver lining.’ My interpretation of this is that from hardship comes blessings. While we can’t always see the blessings immediately, with hindsight we often can see that the struggle we went though was very worthwhile indeed. God bless you all.

Sincerely,

Judith

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School Fee Reminder - Parents I must give a reminder that school fees are now charged monthly across 10 months of the year, February to November. Obviously then they will not fall neatly into term dates. We made this move to monthly billing to allow families to manage their budget more realistically, and to avoid the accumulation of debt as fees owing mount across the terms. With the tremendous assistance of Margo Edwards, we are trying to get our community into regular, organised payments which also benefits the education of your children.

Fees are our major source of income to resource learning and teaching, meet maintenance and capital costs and capital debt repayment and running costs of the school. We simply cannot continue to do our job without your regular and reliable payment of school fees. Keeping these commitments helps you avoid difficulties and it helps us and your children’s learning. For this reason we ask that you adhere to the due dates on invoices wherever possible.

Additionally, we continue to ask that you simply communicate with us if you are having difficulties keeping the commitment to fee payment which you signed at time of enrolment. Presently we are facing the possibility of termination of enrolment for a small number of families, not because of inability to pay but because, despite multiple opportunities and our best efforts, parents have refused to communicate with us. Where does this leave us?

Sincere thanks to all families who assist us with prompt and regular payment of fees by the due date and to those who pay us the courtesy of communication where this is difficult. We appreciate your understanding, commitment and support in this matter.

NAPLAN Testing - Years 3, 5 and 7 Tuesday 13, Wednesday 14 and Thursday 15 May. A good night’s sleep, healthy breakfast, at school in plenty of time, relaxed but focussed attention all make for the best opportunity to do one’s best. Tuesday—Language Conventions and Writing, Wednesday - Reading and Viewing, Thursday—Maths

Ins and Outs
All week, Terry, Judith and Glenda conducting Prep Enrolments with families for 2015.

Monday 12 May
Glenda at Master Class Speaker, Dr Robert Wicks, O’Shea Centre, Brisbane (11am-4pm)
Life Education for Prep classes

Tuesday 13 May
Life Education for Year 1 classes

Wednesday 14 May
Life Education for Year 2 classes

Thursday 15 May
Life Education for 4B and 4A

Friday 16 May
Ashleigh from DanceFever for Year 4-7 Refresher prior to Interschool Dance Challenge on Wed 25 June (see letter accompanying this newsletter)
Life Education for Year 6


NO ASSEMBLY THIS THURSDAY DUE TO NAPLAN

P&F Meeting is tonight, Tuesday 12th May commencing at 6:30p.m. in the staffroom. Everyone welcome.
MUSIC NOTES

QUOTE OF THE WEEK
“Music is well said to be the speech of angels.”
~ Thomas Carlyle, Essays, “The Opera”~

TIP OF THE WEEK
Compose your own music. Be sure to include a time signature, and use a variety of different pitches and rhythms. Now play it!!

MUSICAL NEWS
Due to numbers involved in the musical this year and seating availability in our Hall, we have now added a fourth performance of our musical. Please add the following dates to your calendar:
Wednesday 15 October - School Daytime Performance (student audience only)
Thursday 16 October - Evening Performance
Friday 17 October - Evening Performance
Saturday 18 October - Evening Performance

We are still looking for assistance sewing, cutting, or gathering bits and pieces for our costumes. If you can help in any way, even for short periods of time, please let us know.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC NEWS
With NAPLAN happening on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday this week, many music lessons may not happen as timetabled. Tutors will work hard to re-schedule lessons around the test times for students in year 3, 5 and 7. These changes may also result in changes to all student lesson times. Please check your emails for messages from tutors to ensure your child is prepared. Where lessons are not able to happen this week, please rest assured tutors will get to them during the term. If you have enquiries about lesson numbers please contact your child’s tutors.

APPS and EXPERIENCES
Parents often tell us they can’t help their students as they aren’t musical!! Here are a few ways you can help:
For beginners, have a quick read through the first pages of the tutor book and see what your child is learning – you will understand it!
Listen to your child practice and take an interest in what they are doing.
If family and friends come to visit, ask your child to play their favourite pieces – it won’t take too long, it will build your child’s confidence and they will be practicing at the same time.
Download useful apps to your iPhone, iPod, iPad, smartphone or tablet – good ones to start with are metronomes, tuners, aural quiz, Garage Band, note reading skills and a musical dictionary!
Take your child to concert by a community or professional group. There are many community groups who perform regularly on the coast with reasonable ticket prices or head to Brisbane to see international artists and musicals:
Sunshine Coast Concert Band www.sccb.org.au
Sunshine Coast Symphony Orchestra www.scso.com.au
Scream Big Band www.screambigband.net
Chamber Music www.cellodreaming.com.au
Queensland Performing Arts Centre, Brisbane www.qpac.com.au
Events Centre, Caloundra www.theeventscentre.com.au

Remember, if you need to contact your child’s tutor, details are shown on the top left corner of their lesson timetable. 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,
Inez Durrer
Classroom Music Specialist
idurrer@bne.catholic.edu.au

Todd Wynyard
Instrumental Music Coordinator
twynyard@bne.catholic.edu.au

UNIFORM SHOP

UNIFORM SHOP TEMPORARY CHANGE OF HOURS
Due to unforeseen circumstances Uniform Shop opening hours will temporarily change. I apologise for any inconvenience.

Regards,
Leanne.

Temporary Open Hours are as follow:
Wednesday 14th May 8am - 3.15pm.
Thursday 15th May closed
Monday 19th May closed
Wednesday 21st May 8am - 3.15pm.
Thursday 20th May closed
Monday 26th May closed
Wednesday 28th May 8am - 3.15pm.
Thursday 29th May closed

Congratulations to Noah Jeffs, Alex Duncan and Dominic Carmody who competed at the Maroochydore High School Cross Country in the 13 Yrs Age Division. The boys placed 4th, 6th and 8th respectively. Well Done Boys!

Congratulations to Willem Johnstone and Jake Edgar who were selected in the Coastal Districts Boys Touch Team. They will now compete at the Regional trials on 15 & 16th June at Glasshouse Mountains. Well Done and Good Luck!

Congratulations to Jada Cleary who was selected in the 12 Yrs District Touch team. Jada will now compete at the Regional trials on 15 & 16th June at Glasshouse Mountains. Well Done and Good Luck!

Tuckshop News...

Ingredients Roster

Group 6
A Scanlon, C Maloney, C Spink, E Roberts, G Firth-Taylor, J Housego, K Young, K Vagg, L Coghlan, M Sinclair, M Austin, N Burrows, P Mitchell, S Murray, S wall, T Carmody, V Jones, T Donovan, K Lewis.
Volunteering Australia is proud to announce the 25th Anniversary of National Volunteer Week (NVW). This year, we consider what it means to be a volunteer and reflect on the ‘best bits’ of the last 25 years.

Volunteers have a power in today’s society and a drive that enables them to make a true difference in the world – can you imagine what it would be like without them? We invite you to consider this as you celebrate the volunteers powering your community.

This NVW, go the extra mile to say ‘thank you’. Thank you to everyone taking part in NVW 2014. The power of volunteers starts with a single step, giving us the strength to walk for miles ... together.

Prayer for Volunteers

Thank you Lord for all volunteers around the world who give of their time, talents and gifts. The world is a better place because of their dedication. We especially ask for your blessings on our dedicated prayer volunteers who tirelessly pray for others and ask for your intervention in the affairs of life.

We thank you for the lives that have been transformed through your faithfulness to answer when they are called. We pray that as volunteers give of themselves for others that you would sustain them with your mighty power and strong hand so that their giving to others is refreshing for them as well.

Amen.

Christine Craig - Guidance Counsellor/ Psychologist
email: ccraig@bne.catholic.edu.au