Dear Parents and Caregivers

Last week I wrote about the danger of taking our educational opportunities for granted and during the week I spoke with each of the Year 5 classes, basically, about the same thing.

Failure to take full advantage of life’s learning opportunities, whether as adults or children, is akin to missing one’s own life. Whether it be formal educational opportunities presented by work or school or the opportunities for growth that present themselves daily, it’s easy to move through these experiences unconsciously, superﬁcially and in uncommitted fashion. Perhaps that is why it is often the case that we ﬁnd it so hard to learn, even from our repeated mistakes. We go through the motions of living, failing to expose our experiences to an inner life where meaning is made and resilience, a sense of purpose and healthy perspective potentially developed. We fail to learn ‘what makes us tick’ – why I do what I do and why I react as I do - which leaves us vulnerable to reliving our mistakes instead of learning from them.

Somewhere along the line, the conscious decision to learn and grow through the many experiences life sends our way needs to be made. Richness, meaning and purpose can be found in the most diﬃcult and stressful circumstances, growing our strength and resilience of spirit along the way. At the other end of the spectrum lies a sense of hopelessness or apathy, denial, resentfulness and even, despair. It takes mindfulness (or call it awareness or consciousness) to keep the moments in our day (waiting in line, a brief illness, waiting in trafﬁc…) as spontaneous opportunities for quiet reﬂection – we ignore or belittle our strengths rather than fully prizing them as a pathway to serve others and grow.

Personally, I think of this mindful state as being in tune with my true self made possible through my relationship with God. This deep knowledge fundamentally changes one’s perspective – on oneself, others, circumstances and life itself. I can put my tiny life in perspective and not take myself or my problems too seriously. All of which adds up to that inner life that I mentioned earlier. That inner life, however, needs space, time, quiet time and even solitude - commodities that are no longer valued and nurtured, not recognised as precious and necessary. If we look around, we see that the western world is reaping the results of their absence from our individual and communal lives. Fear of being alone. Lack of meaning and purpose. Misuse of alcohol and drugs. The need to be surrounded by noise, activity, constant stimulation and entertainment to keep boredom at bay. No time for a family spirituality. No time to really ‘see’ each other. Caring more for what we have than who we are intrinsically. No time to talk about the things that matter. All spaces are ﬁlled.

Perhaps it’s time to create some space – inside and out. Perhaps it’s time to ﬁgure out what’s really important in life and give those things the time and attention they deserve.

In my recent reading of ‘Bounce’ by Robert J. Wicks, Psy.D., I came across a long list of behaviours we tend to exhibit when we are not living mindfully. Here are some of them. Like me, I’m sure you’ll recognise a few favourites:

- ‘We get upset over too many things
- We let compulsions, rhythms and resistances rule out more and more of living, sapping it of freshness
- We yearn for, and daydream about, having greater simplicity in our lives – without taking any actions to achieve this
- We fail to let our defences down and instead reject any negative feedback we get rather than trying to really learn from it
- We use our rare quiet moments to ruminate, be resentful, worry, become discouraged, feel lost, bored or confused instead of ﬁnding the renewal that comes from mindfulness practice
- We waste an inordinate amount of time on the trivial – prestige, money, inﬂuence, fame, security and pleasure – while the essential joys of life are downplayed as elusive
- We replace a deep respect for patience and pacing one’s journey with a need to hurry, achieve and ‘ﬁnally arrive’
- We fail to see the moments in our day (waiting in line, a cancellation of an appointment, a brief illness, waiting in traﬃc…) as spontaneous opportunities for quiet reﬂection
- We ignore or belittle our strengths rather than fully prizing them as a pathway to serve others
- We allow our interactions with others to become hackneyed, sprinkled with pat phrases, hollow comments and worn stories
- We have forgotten the major role of courage, the value of simplicity and the need for transparency in how we lead our lives
- We fall prey to attitudes of arrogance (projection), ignorance (self-condemnation), or discouragement (the need for immediate gratiﬁcation) rather than being filled with a spirit of intrigue about our talents, growing edges and resistances.’

Yes, it appears that the path to positive change is lit by self-awareness which goes hand in hand with the cultivation of a rich interior or inner life. I wish us all the courage and commitment necessary to move in this direction and to help our children do the same. We cannot pass on to them what we do not know and practise ourselves. Have a great week everyone.  

Glenda

Are you able to support Kellie Elder, our Fair Convenor, in preparations this year with a view to taking a lead role next year? Would love to hear from you if so. Perhaps more than one?
School Traffic, Safety, Patience and Courtesy - With only one entry point for vehicles, 840 students and their families, numerous buses and up to 90 staff to get in and out of the school grounds each day, I believe we manage remarkably well under the circumstances. Traffic flows quite smoothly in the mornings as arrival is spaced more broadly, while afternoon sees greater convergence of traffic. Nevertheless, traffic clears in approximately 20 mins (3.05–3.25) - not a bad effort. It doesn't hurt though to give a reminder of the importance of patience and courtesy especially in busy times and wet weather. Really, what does an extra minute or two matter in comparison to safety and community cohesion? Thank you to the vast majority of parents and caregivers who keep their cool, take their time, smile and follow the guidelines which allows for the efficient and safe use of school grounds.

Parked - A reminder that there is no parking or leaving vehicles in the following places: the drop-off, pick-up zones, the curb-side lane into the school, the disabled parks (except those who qualify for use), the P&E Raffle winner’s car park, and the by-pass lanes to 4-7 pick-up where the inner lane closer to the crossing to Prep is used for drop-off and pick-up only. At no time should parents leave their cars to get gear from the boot, collect students or to kiss children goodbye. If parents need to do any of these things, parking should be in the designated parks where time can be taken. Where parents are concerned about younger children crossing alone, they should use the major drop-off area at P-3 where crossing of roads is not required. This allows traffic to flow smoothly and efficiently and cuts down the niggles that occur between parents when someone is not following the parking rules within the school grounds. Thank you for your cooperation.

National Walk Safely to School Day - This Friday is National Walk Safely to School Day. With fine weather, perhaps families can think about walking instead of driving? If you live too far to walk, perhaps drive, park and walk the remainder to school?

Back Gate Pick-up - In the interest of safety, students must remain inside the school grounds where they are then collected by parents. The teacher on duty may accompany students outside the gate to wait for parents and supervise departure, however, students are not to leave the grounds unaccompanied. Last week we had a very young boy crossing Tepequar Drive, unaccompanied in the rain. Thank you for reinforcing this message with your children and collecting them from the school grounds.

Excessive Speed in the School Grounds - Members of the school community – parents and staff - continue to be concerned about the speed with which some drive through the grounds. Please slow down; children are unpredictable and we have many very young and not so young ones whose safety is in our hands. Once again, for the want of a few extra seconds, a life could be lost or serious injury caused.

Ins and Outs - LIFE EDUCATION VAN all week for class lessons Monday 19 May
- Emily Kosior (5D) and Kari Scott (Prep D) at Qld Catholic Schools Netball Competition in Brisbane
- Anthony Graham (2B) attending Graduation

Tuesday 20 May
Meetings with Support Teacher – Inclusive Education
- Alanna Curtis (Prep C) 8.45-10.45
- Sally Heffernan (6C) 11.25-1.25
- Kim Hughes (6B) 1.45-3.05
Maths Project Team 8.45-1.25 with Eileen Coghill BCE Consultant
- Suzette Ellis (Prep A), Frais Marrinon (1D)
- Anthony Graham (2B), Larissa Livermore (3C)
- Therese Lecompte (4A), Danielle Ramia (5C)
- Kim Hughes (6B), Jeffery Ross (7A)

Friday 23 May
Lorella Armini (3A) and Mary Johnson (4D) RE Planning 8.45-1.25
WHS Audit by BCE – Kerri Cassidy conducting Audit

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

It takes courage and commitment to step aside for a time each day and, with the grace of the Spirit, attend to what is really going on in our life.

This Saturday, 24th May, we celebrate the feast day of Mary, Help of Christians, the Patroness of Australia, which has been celebrated in Australia since 1844. The infant church in Australia had a special reason for turning to Mary. No priests were sent to the colony in its early days and Mass was not allowed except for one brief year until 1820. It was largely the Rosary in those early days that kept the faith alive. The Australian Catholic community remained faithful to Mary and Australia was the first nation to choose her under the title, ‘Mary Help of Christians’ as principle Patroness. Perhaps you may wish to join us for Rosary on the previous Thursday morning at 8am in the Chapel to pray the rosary in honour of Mary and this special Feast Day.

The following Monday, is National Sorry Day, which is held on 26th May each year to acknowledge and recognise members of the Stolen Generations. We commemorate National Sorry Day before beginning National Reconciliation Week from next Tuesday, 27th May, to the following Tuesday, 3rd June. Both of these events remind us that we need to have courage, wisdom and insight to renew our commitment to reconciliation and redress the continuing disadvantage experienced by our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters. As this week’s Virtue is Courage, and it takes much courage to stand for something in which one believes and to be an advocate, I thought I would share with you the thoughts of Charles Passi, a Dauaree tribesman from the Mer Island group in the Torres Straits, and Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation on the importance of National Sorry Day:

“National Sorry Day is important to us as an organisation, but also to us as Australia’s First Peoples because we use it to remember and recognise our Stolen Generations. Most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people I know have been affected either directly or indirectly by this terrible part of our history since European colonisation. With no disrespect intended, I am a strong advocate for turning our hurt from the past into something positive for our community and for our future generations, as a sign of taking our destiny into our own hands. That’s why I was very happy to hear the recommendation from the Bringing Them Home report (tabled in Federal Parliament on 26 May 1997) that a National Sorry Day be celebrated each year. And that’s what we’ve been doing since 1998. I see this as a positive contribution to our healing journey, just as the national Apology was five years ago”.

The Virtues Project talks about Courage as the virtue that transforms fear into determination and enables us to embrace life fully, without holding back. It allows us to face adversity with confidence and opens us to new possibilities, giving us the strength to sacrifice our own desires for those we love. At times we need courage to accept the truth, to pick ourselves up after making a mistake, to say sorry and be ready to make amends and try again. Courage gives the strength to make this journey with all of one’s heart. May we travel with Courage this week as we do what we can to work towards making our community more cognisant of the needs of our indigenous brothers and sisters.

God bless,

Judith

AN INVITATION to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet with other parents of Stella Maris community on the FIRST MONDAY of each month at 2.45pm – 3pm. Meet in the Chapel. Please phone Co-ordinator: Julia 0408 538 990

RAINFIBS PROGRAM

Starts next Wednesday May 28.
Forms still available at the office.
**MUSIC NOTES**

**QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

“Life is like Music; it must be composed by ear, feeling, and instinct, not by rule.”

~ Samuel Butler ~

**TIP OF THE WEEK**

If you have a busy week ahead, try and catch up on practice by doing a little extra each time. Try doing your practice before you go to school.

**MUSIC FACTS**

The following are four interesting facts about music for you to consider.

1. Listening to music while working out measurably improves physical performance.
2. You don't like the original version of the song because it’s better. You like it because it's the one you heard first.
3. Warner Music collected over US $2 million in royalties in 2008 for public usage of the ‘Happy Birthday’ song. Your favourite song is probably your favourite because you associate it with an emotional event in your life.

**MUSICAL NEWS**

Students and parents are reminded to check the weekly rehearsal schedule to ensure all cast are present for a productive rehearsal.

Weekly emails are sent to all parents of the musical cast each Sunday afternoon with the rehearsal schedule attached. If you do not receive this email, please email Mrs Durrer to ensure your email is correct. A copy is also placed on the board outside the Music Room each Monday morning.

**INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC NEWS**

Parents are reminded to contact your child's tutor when they are not able to attend scheduled lessons – this includes due to being absent from school. There have been many school events in recent weeks and the weeks ahead and rescheduling times can be very difficult. Missed lessons without an email, letter, phone call or text cannot be rescheduled. Your support with this is much appreciated.

**DATE CLAIMER**

Stella Maris Recital Week is coming at the end of this term. Information will start to come out during lessons over the next two weeks. Dates are Monday 16, 17 and 19 June in the Hall. Concert Band and Piccolo Choir will also be performing on Assembly on Thursday 19 June. Sensational Strings (all violin, viola, cello and double bass students) will be held at Stella Maris in the Hall on Monday 23 June.

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

**LIBRARY NEWS**

**BOOK FAIR**

26th - 29th May
8am - 4pm

**Principal's Awards**

May 22 2014


**Tucked News**

Wed 21/05
Thurs 22/05
Fri 23/05
Mon 26/05
Tues 27/05

T Goring
J Coghlan

L Corcoran HELP NEEDED
A Schofield
D Stubbs

**Ingredients Roster**

Fruit Salad items Please

Group 1
MAY IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION MONTH

Centacare’s Suncoast Cooloola Outreach Prevention and Education is a lead agency on the Sunshine Coast dealing with domestic violence.
Contact 07 5430 9300 for more information.

Set the Pace for Peace

A walk for everyone to bring awareness about domestic and family violence. By participating in the ‘Setting the Pace for Peace Walk’ you are making a difference in the lives of women, children, and men who have experienced domestic violence.

22nd May from 12pm—1pm
Bulcock Street, Caloundra.
Contact Karen from Centacare SCOPE on 5430 9300.