Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Two weeks ago, on the eve of the Orientation mornings, I wrote about the need for clarity around the sort of community we seek to create here at Stella Maris. I finished that front page with the following paragraph which describes a little of what our School Vision, 'We aim to be an inclusive, high quality learning community in which faith inspires action' looks like in practice.

‘….we walk our talk especially when the going gets tough. We choose hope over despair. We seek to understand what God wants us to learn/do in each situation and we do God’s will before our own. When someone is in difficulty we rally behind them or walk with them or clear the way ahead of them. We act from a place of deep knowing that God loves us and everyone else, even the people we find hardest to like. When we make mistakes, as we surely will, we take responsibility, seek forgiveness and make amends as best we can. We forgive others when they falter. We think, speak and act from a place of kindness, compassion and respect for the dignity of each and every person, not just the people like us. We use our time, talent and treasure to contribute positively and to assist those who need it. We choose solidarity with our human family over individual and group selfishness. We develop our skills to the best of our ability, so that we have more to offer. In a nutshell, we live from a place of love.’

I refer to this passage because I am hearing of ill-informed speculation and even unkind talk in relation to the multi-age 1-2 class we are introducing in 2015 in order to decrease class sizes in those respective grades.

So here are the facts. This class, like all others at Stella Maris, will be made up of children of all achievement levels, all interests, all capabilities. Each student will have a range of strengths and weaknesses, just like every other student in every other class. This is no ‘special’ class; these are wonderful children whose abilities will be developed, by teacher, Tegan Burr, whether they currently are excelling, struggling, coping or other class. This is no ‘special’ class; these are wonderful children with abilities who will be developed, by teacher, Tegan Burr, whether they currently are excelling, struggling, coping or

As I explained at Wednesday evening’s meeting, multi-age is simply a philosophy that believes children learn best in a mixed age environment, in much the same way families operate, older and younger helping each other and bringing out the best in each other. Let’s be clear – every class is, in effect, a multi-age class, not only from a birthdate point of view but also developmentally - socially, spiritually, emotionally, physically and academically. We teach children first and subjects second – the children and their needs are always the starting points but yes, we do aim to get each, at least, to the expected standard regardless of starting point. For some, that achievement will come easily and quickly while for others progress will be slower and more laboured but progress is what we are after – doing one’s best, not giving up, keeping faith and building confidence, celebrating gains, setting the next goal. 

As I told the prep parents at Orientation, there is no level playing field to the exclusionary words and tactics in school playgrounds and car-parks, this ‘I take care of me and mine and who cares about the rest’ world view is in total conflict with Jesus’ call to a broader, deeper, richer vision of solidarity with the whole human family not just one’s narrow part of it. Group selfishness, indeed, sucks the life out of community and, what’s more, simply does not make sense. Selfishness never creates harmony or happiness.

Secondly, the issue of individual or group selfishness is one that continues to tear our communities and our world apart. From overconsumption and indulgent use of resources by the developed world, to the violence inflicted as a result of sectarian and religious factionalism, to the division and false sense-of-belonging of tribalism and gang culture, to the exclusionary words and tactics in school playgrounds and car-parks, this ‘I take care of me and mine and who cares about the rest’ world view is in total conflict with Jesus’ call to a broader, deeper, richer vision of solidarity with the whole human family not just one’s narrow part of it. Group selfishness, indeed, sucks the life out of community and, what’s more, simply does not make sense. Selfishness never creates harmony or happiness.

Recently I read a beautiful example of that unselfish worldview. When Connie Johnson was told she had terminal cancer, her brother, Sam asked her what legacy she would like to leave. Connie wanted to make a difference to the lives of others at the idea that the multi-age class would receive more school officer time and thus take time away from their own child in a non-multi-age class. Two things – firstly, we allocate a base-line number of hours across each year level and then, over and above this, hours are determined by need. As the great theologian, Karl Rahner wrote, ‘There is nothing so unjust as the equal treatment of unequals.’ So, yes if the need is greater in the multi-age class, this class will receive additional hours but will these hours be ‘taken from other classes’? No, because if the other classes do not have the same level of need they would not be receiving the extra hours anyway. This is not a multi-age issue; this is a justice issue regardless of class.

So let me address another of the issues – that of some parents’ indignation at the idea that the multi-age class would receive more school officer time and thus take time away from their own child in a non-multi-age class. Two things – firstly, we allocate a base-line number of hours across each year level and then, over and above this, hours are determined by need. As the great theologian, Karl Rahner wrote, ‘There is nothing so unjust as the equal treatment of unequals.’ So, yes if the need is greater in the multi-age class, this class will receive additional hours but will these hours be ‘taken from other classes’? No, because if the other classes do not have the same level of need they would not be receiving the extra hours anyway. This is not a multi-age issue; this is a justice issue regardless of class.

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Recently I read a beautiful example of that unselfish worldview. When Connie Johnson was told she had terminal cancer, her brother, Sam asked her what legacy she would like to leave. Connie wanted to make a difference to the lives of others; she would be happy if even one family was saved from the heartache of losing a loved one. To cut a long story short, in response, Sam has ridden his unicycle 15 000 kilometres around Australia and raised over one million dollars for research while raising awareness for the need for health checks. But the part of the story I really want to share is Connie’s inspiration. ‘It wasn’t enough for her to fight silently for her kids. No, Connie wanted to be bigger than that. Connie’s kids needed to know that when ‘the fit hit the shan’, their mum fought for more than one family.’ (extract from Love Your Sister by Connie and Samuel Johnson).

Once again, these are the platforms upon which this community stands. Have a great week everyone. Glenda
**School Fees and Levies 2015** - We are pleased to announce that all school fees and levies for 2015 will remain at 2014 levels. No increase next year. Also we will return to billing by term but ask that you seriously consider regular Centrepay or Direct Debit deductions in your budget plans for the year.

**With four weeks school to go, please make sure that fee payment is finalised or repayment plan is in place before the end of this month.** We really appreciate your support in this matter.

**Thanks for a great evening** - A big thank you to the P&F, in particular, Michelle Macdonald and Tracey Carmody for organisation of Saturday night’s Stella by Twilight – a resounding success! Thanks to all parents and staff who ran or contributed items to stalls or raffle, to Kelly for organisation of the movie, to Bernie, Dennis and Santa Tim for the carols. The weather couldn’t have been better, attendance numbers exceeded expectation, parental support was outstanding, the kids had a great time and family members could relax together and with others in a simple setting. Thank you one and all for a great community event.

**Ins and Outs**

**Thursday 13 November**  
Area Supervisor, Paul Blundell for term visit.  
Kurt Ludeke, new staff member 2015 and Peter Whalan (Lions Writing Challenge) at Assembly. 

**Tuesday 18 November**  
Terry Grogan at Primary Timetabling at North Lakes

**Year 6 and 7 Graduation Information** - Parents, the letter has been given to all Year 6 and 7 students and we ask for your speedy response to allow for the organisation of seating at both Family Dinner Dances. This seating has caused some angst over the years when last minute requests and changes have been made. The timely return of your form will allow staff to do a better job with arrangements.

**NSW University Maths Competition**  
Forty-four Stella Maris children participated in the NSW University Maths Competition in August. The following students received either a Credit or Merit.  
CREDIT: Nicholas Nikov, Marko Romero, Sophie Crowe, Teddy Huby, Jayden Hall, Samuel Henrick, Jun Lee, Lachelin Tickle, Olivia Caddy and Christopher Hall.

**MERIT: Lily Henningsen, Makedde Cranley, William Brown, Sarun Lamb, Brandon Roberts and Mitchell Santoro.**  
Congratulations to all students who participated. Certificates will be awarded at Thursday’s Assembly.

**Principal’s Award**  
November 13 2014  
Eva Lennox, Jacob Teale, Lauren Meacle Murray, Marley Bishop, Walter Nichols, Brenique Dufty, Eddie Charlesworth, Joshua Tully-Smith, Ryan Bastick, Allanah Lennon, Ashleigh Annand, Claire Jones, Mischa Judd, Kyan Beardwood, Mia Victorsen, Matthew Stitt, Georgia Mason, Kendall Marinic, Wahida Kelm, Finlay Cleaver, Jed Lane, Sienna Cameron, Summah Low, Lucy Wills, Jackson Bartholomew, Koby Young, Ethan Mare, Keira Pennman, Luke Pitt, Kyal Moloney, Jessie Cantarella, Jacob Barbuto, Henry Wright, Claire Walsh, Isaac Pace, Jayden Caruana, Nicholas MacDonald, Hannah Gleeson, Anastasia Butorina.

**Parish News**

**POSITION VACANT:** A part time secretary (15 hours per week) at Stella Maris Parish office. Familiar with Microsoft Office.  
Good rapport with parents and children doing sacramental preparation.  
Phone or SMS Fr Joe 0419544335 to express your interest.

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**Dear Parents/Caregivers,**

**Today is Remembrance Day** when every year on 11 November at 11 am – the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month – we pause to observe one minute’s silence to remember those men and women who have died or suffered in all wars, conflicts and peace operations in the service of our country.

Four of our students very fittingly represented Stella Maris School in laying a wreath at the Cenotaph at Maroochydore this morning—a very moving ceremony which honoured those who paid the ultimate price to secure the peace which we enjoy.

The following, adapted from the Department of Veterans Affairs website, outlines the significance of this celebration for all Australians ([http://www.dva.gov.au/commemoration/commemorations/commemorative_events/remembrance_day/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.dva.gov.au/commemoration/commemorations/commemorative_events/remembrance_day/Pages/index.aspx)):

This year, marks the 96th anniversary of the Armistice which ended the First World War (1914–18). At 11 am on 11 November 1918 the guns of the Western Front fell silent after more than four years of continuous warfare. The allied armies had driven the German invaders back, having inflicted heavy defeats upon them over the preceding four months. In November the Germans called for a suspension of fighting in order to secure a peace settlement. They accepted the allied terms of unconditional surrender.

This first modern world conflict had brought about the mobilization of over 70 million people and left between 9 and 13 million dead, perhaps as many as one-third of them with no known grave. After the end of the Second World War, the Australian and British governments changed the name to Remembrance Day. Armistice Day was no longer an appropriate title for a day which would commemorate all war dead.

On the 75th anniversary of the armistice in 1993, the remains of an unknown Australian soldier, exhumed from a First World War military cemetery in France, were ceremonially entombed in the Memorial's Hall of Memory. Remembrance Day ceremonies were conducted simultaneously in towns and cities all over the country, culminating at the moment of burial at 11 am and coinciding with the traditional two minutes' silence.

This ceremony, which touched a chord across the Australian nation, re-established Remembrance Day as a significant day of commemoration. Four years later, Governor-General Sir William Deane issued a proclamation formally declaring 11 November to be Remembrance Day, urging all Australians to observe one minute’s silence at 11 am on 11 November each year to remember those who died or suffered for Australia’s cause in all wars and armed conflicts.

Lest we forget.

Judith

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**The CARE PANTRY will be open this week from 8.30am-8.45am for donations for families in need in our community. Your donation would be most welcome!**

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**Just a thought**

This is my country, that is your country, these are the conceptions of narrow souls, to the liberal minded the whole world is a family.

~ Virchand Gandhi (1864-1901)
**MUSIC NOTES**

**QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

“There is only one better thing than music - live music.”

~ Jacek Bukowski ~

**ASSEMBLY**

Congratulations to SM Singers who performed wonderfully on assembly last week. Thank you Miss Worthy for working with the girls each week and to Ms Quaglio for accompanying them at this performance.

**MUSICAL NEWS – ‘THE WIZARD OF OZ’**

**LAST CALL** for DVD orders! Order forms are also available in the office for those who have not received one but would still like to place an order and must be returned to school ASAP.

**BLACK PANTS**

If your child has outgrown their black pants/leotard/leggings and they are still in good condition, please consider sending them in so that we may add them to our costume collection. We would be most grateful for any donations and these can be dropped off at the office or brought to the Music Room.

**DATE CLAIMERS**

Bonza Band Bash – Thursday 13 November at Siena Primary all day till 5pm (info was emailed to all families last week)

Music Assembly – Thursday 20 November – String Ensemble

Strings Concert (Mrs Salmon and Miss Ostenfeld) – Thursday 20 November, Hall from 6pm

Percussion Lunchtime Concert (Mr Burr) – Friday 21 November, Music Room from 10.45am

Piano Soiree (Miss Worthy) – Monday 25 November, Hall from 6pm to 7pm

Music Assembly – Thursday 27 November – Stella Fellas and Guitar Ensemble

Piano Soiree (Ms Quaglio) - Thursday 27 November, Hall from 6pm

**INSTRUMENTAL NEWS**

Congratulations to our Woodwind, Piano, Singing and Speech and Drama students on their soiree performances last week. Thanks to Ms Bond, Mrs Dean and Ms Beattle for their work with these students. Many more events in coming weeks and all are welcome to attend!

Recruitment – last week, Mr Wynyard and Mrs Salmon demonstrated various instruments to students in Year 2, 3 and 4 regarding opportunities to join the program in 2013. Tuition is not available to students who will be in Prep or Year 1 in 2015. Should places be available, places will be offered to current Year 1 students to begin next year. Please contact Mr Wynyard if you are interested. Students currently in Year 5 and 6 who would like to learn an instrument in 2015 should collect an enrolment form from Mr Wynyard. For any other enquiries, please email StellaMarisMusic@bne.catholic.edu.au.

**A note re lessons and ensemble rehearsals** - as the year draws to an end, students will begin to conclude music, singing and speech lessons once the quota of 9 lessons per term have the year have been provided. Please contact your child’s tutors if you would like further advice on when your child’s lessons may be ending for the year. Ensemble rehearsals will still be happening and Individual ensemble leaders will advise when rehearsals will end. Your continued support of these groups is encouraged and appreciated.

Musically Yours,

Inez Durrer  
Classroom Music Specialist  
idurrer@bne.catholic.edu.au

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

**Stella Maris P & F AGM**

Stella Maris P & F AGM will be held at 6.30pm on Tuesday 18th November in the school staff room.

Nominations are still open for all the executive positions including President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and School Fair Convenor. This year there will be a few other roles that we would love to see someone take on including PR Officer, Social Media Officer and Grants Officer.

Please give the idea of taking on one of these roles or getting involved in 2015 some thought – we are in desperate need of new people to come on board.

All Welcome.

Thanks The P & F

**BOOKLISTS**

Any late Booklist orders cannot be accepted at the school and must be lodged directly with Swan Newsagency at the Plaza

N.B. December pick-up date will be Wednesday 3rd December.

**St John’s College, Nambour**

Year 5s, 2014, from Stella Maris will visit St John’s College on Monday 1 December to experience a day at our secondary school. This cohort will be starting Year 7 in 2016. Year 5s will arrive by bus from Stella Maris with their teachers at approximately 9.30am and will be at St John’s until 1.00pm. Students are asked to bring their morning tea or they can make a purchase from our new tuckshop. A lunch of sausage on bread and a juice will be provided for them.

**Tuckshop News**

**THIS WEEK’S SPECIAL**

Fried Rice & Chicken $4.00

Gluten Free Available $1.00 extra

Pie & Popper Special $3.50

Sauce 20c extra

**Ingredients Roster**

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**Stella Maris Community Cup**

Wet’n’Wild Years 6 and 7 ends 12 noon

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We are entering the last phase of schooling for 2014. If you (parent) find yourself having to walk your child to the classroom, carry their bag, put in their tuckshop order, pack their lunch you might like to take the opportunity of these last few weeks to give yourself a break and let them take some responsibility for looking after their own needs. Drop off is a great way to stop any lingering “hanging on to mum” scenes which really should be over by now. Any difficulty just hand your child over to the teacher and go! Parents, take these last few weeks to enjoy your routine before the demands of the long summer holidays come upon you.

In everyday situations (where children/adults can reasonably be expected to cope), avoiding addressing a situation can be unhelpful because it means that next time it will seem even harder to manage. It also means that children may miss out on an opportunity to learn that they can actually cope with the challenge. Supporting your child to develop coping strategies can help them to approach challenges with more confidence.

A first step in helping children gain some control over any lingering anxiety is recognising when it occurs and how it affects them.

Model helpful coping - Being a good model involves showing children how to cope with emotions (not just telling them). Show children with anxiety how you use helpful self-talk in a difficult situation (eg “This looks a bit scary, but I’ll give it a go”).

Discourage avoidance - Sometimes when children say they feel sick, they are describing feeling anxious. It is important that children do not avoid things like school or homework unnecessarily.

Praise having a go - Encourage children who are anxious to attempt new things and praise them for trying. It is very important to emphasise trying rather than success when anxiety is an area of difficulty.

Introduce challenges gradually - Children build strength and resilience by learning to face challenges. It is important to begin with small challenges that children can meet. For example, a child who is frightened of dogs might start by walking past the house when the dog is barking without having to cross the road. This improves confidence for taking on more challenging steps.

Start small - Help the child to choose goals for becoming braver and to take small steps towards achieving them. Celebrate his or her success at each step. Experiencing even small successes helps to reduce anxious behaviours.

Practise coping skills - Practise using coping strategies for challenging situations. Help children talk about problems and support them to come up with possible solutions.

Try not to get angry - If a child simply refuses to do something even after you have encouraged him/her and broken the task into steps, it may simply be overwhelming at that time. Sometimes, you need to back off and praise the child for doing as much as he or she could. Later, try again with smaller steps and encourage your child to have a go, one small step at a time making sure you tell them what they need to do. Don’t suddenly change your behaviour.

This resource is part of a range of KidsMatter Primary information www.kidsmatter.edu.au

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

Thankyou to our sponsors: