Dear Parents and Caregivers,

The NAPLAN results have been published and we will send home the individual result sheets by the end of this week. You receive the original copy of the form and we will keep a photocopy in your child’s on-going folio. Please ask your child/ren to ensure they hand it to you and not leave it in their bags! If this is your first experience of this form of testing then you may have some questions about its meaning. Please ask your child’s teacher as they will consider these results as a small part of the overall assessment they are conducting in order to report your child’s learning progress through the end of year report….. And in the immortal words of Forest Gump, ‘that’s all I have to say about that!’

In last week’s article I wrote about the basic beliefs in Judaeo Christian religions that all humans are born in the image and likeness of God and that God is love. Here’s a bit more of the religious understanding of being fully human, to ponder on. This idea is revealed in another of St Paul’s letters, this time to the Romans (Ch 12 verse 2). The following translation is found in the “Good News” bible we use with the children here at school.

Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God…. (Then you will be Love in the world, my paraphrasing from last week’s thoughts). So this transformation process comes through inner reflection brought about in the same way it happened for Jesus (suffering, death and resurrection….. though hopefully only psychologically and not physically for us.) This is not a popular idea in the modern world. I’d like to see the folks from advertising agencies do a promo for this concept on the Gruen Transfer! How do you pitch this so folks would accept it! Actually that might explain, in part, the decline in attendance at church services in the so-called ‘facebook click’. I have a facebook account so I don’t think that it is ‘evil’!! It’s my way of communicating with younger cousins and members of my extended family…. Ah but I digress!

The Buddhists have this concept of ‘changing the mind’ very firmly in focus in their mindful practices…. we can learn much from their understandings in this area. To reach Nirvana (no not the band) one must develop a state of mind that has perfect lucidity and clarity due to the cessation of involuntary thoughts. In the Christian context to know the will of God or to be Love in this world the unconscious thinking has to cease. That’s also called ‘the ego’ if you recall.

Now so far in my exploration into these concepts I believe we can’t actually function in society without an ego (habitual pattern of thinking) so at best I think we can get a glimpse of the transformed state of being while we’re here on earth. Maybe Eckhart Tolle, some Indian Gurus or Zen Masters have developed their consciousness to a level of Nirvana but I’m pretty sure I won’t quite get there, try as I might!

What I do know from experience is that in being aware of my patterns of thought and meditating to calm my noisy in-head chatter, listening to my gut instincts and behaving from a heartfelt compassionate state I experience a beautiful world where there is a kind of calmness that accepts whatever each moment brings forth blossoming into a form of happiness that is being at peace and free from worry.

The price of admission to this ‘promised land’ was accepting the things I could not change and changing the things I could and along the way gaining the wisdom to know the difference (of course it’s a work in progress). Accepting my emotions are a result of my thinking and not caused by the actions of others was the key that unlocked the chains the ego had over the freedom to see the beauty of life all around me. Realising that sadness isn’t something to be avoided at all cost, that it is an authentic human response to a range of situations and will, like all emotions, pass unless I push the ‘repeat button’ and dwell on the thoughts that manifest in sadness. I have discovered a melancholy sweetness lies within the arms of appropriate sadness (which explains why James Blunt’s, ‘Goodbye my lover’ continues to be a popular download). Taken too far or too often it becomes self-pity and is pitiful to see and experience. The human experience of grief is a necessary, therapeutic, self-healing process. If we seek constant stimulation in an attempt to avoid the dreaded ‘bored’ experience then physical burn out will result and superficiality will be an obvious character trait. So they are some of my thoughts resulting from reading that scripture passage as well as reading several writers thoughts on the subject.

In closing I offer this advice I found in a book of prayers by Michael Leunig, the cartoonist, given to me through Love (remember patience and kindness ….)

“Love one another and you will be happy. It’s as simple and as difficult as that.
There is no other way.
Amen”

Thank you for your patience and kindness during Glenda’s leave. I look forward to hearing about her epic adventure during these past 7 weeks when she returns to school next Monday. I hope you get some time this week to be still and know that the God within you is Love so you can be the change the world around you needs.

Terry

NAPLAN Results will be sent home this week. Please check in your child’s school bag.

Tyler Quaill 4A participated in the Schweppes Tee It Up golf comp and was one of three chosen from Queensland to attend a golf super clinic with some professional golfers at the Australian Masters in Melbourne in November.

Great effort Tyler!

Congratulations to Jack Gillespie, Willem Johnstone, Ethan Petcos and Jarrod Young who competed in the State Athletics Championships last week.

All boys did very well!
Reminder to parents of Prep students please start thinking about fitting your prep student for their year 1 uniform for next year.

Uniform Shop Hours
- Monday 8.00am - 10.00am
- Wednesday 10.15am - 3.15pm
- Thursday 8.00am - 1.00pm

The Virtue for this fortnight is Prayerfulness, chosen to coincide with All Saints’ Day, Fri 1st November, and All Souls’ Day, Sat 2nd Nov. These feast days remind us that we have wonderful role models who have gone before us and we pray that, as they are in God’s presence, they will take a special interest in us and intercede on our behalf, either directly with God or with us. We also remember in prayer our relatives who have died that they rest peacefully in God’s presence. We draw on their story, their wisdom and example so that we may make decisions that are based on Love.

We are practising Prayerfulness when we...
- Take time every day to pray and reflect;
- Talk to God as we would to a really good friend;
- Share our innermost thoughts, hopes, needs and fears in prayer;
- Trust, listen and watch for God’s answer;
- Take action with trust; and
- Have an attitude of gratitude.

“Call me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things which you did not know.”                                      (Jeremiah 33:3)

The following is an extract from ‘Jesus Calling’ by Sarah Young which reminds us of God’s presence in our lives in and through others:

Begin by remembering that I have created this day; it is not a chance occurrence. Recall that I am present with you whether you sense My Presence or not. Then, start talking with Me about whatever is on your mind. Rejoice in the fact that I understand you perfectly and I know exactly what you are experiencing. As you continue communicating with Me, your mood will gradually lighten. Awareness of My marvellous companionship can infuse Joy into the greyest day (Psalm 21:6; Proverbs 2:4).

Please feel free to add the names of friends and relatives who have died to the list of prayer requests in the book in the foyer of the school. During November we remember our loved ones especially in prayer and through prayer.

God bless,

Principal’s Awards
24 October 2013
MUSIC NOTES

QUOTE OF THE WEEK
“Music is very spiritual, it has the power to bring people together.”
– Edgar Winter –

CLASSROOM NEWS - Over the next two weeks, students from Year 2 to 7 will complete a written assessment, consolidating many of the concepts they have been working for the past 9 months. These assessments, together with in-class performances and weekly participation in Music class will assist the students and I with a clearer picture of their personal achievements.

STELLA SPOTLIGHT - Congratulations to all students who performed at Stella Spotlight this past week. We have received many compliments regarding the hard work and awesome stage presence that was demonstrated for each and every performance.

We would like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to the Stella Maris community for your support. Performances such as this one require a great deal of preparation, planning, and assistance to ensure the evening runs smoothly and without support from the school and parent community, the night would have been more of a challenge to present. It is interesting to note that there was 1/4 of the student population performing last night!!! WOW!!!!

Thank you to all of our tutors who work with our instrumental students and to the teachers with children in the various ensembles that performed last night for your ongoing support and encouragement for the students participation in their chosen ensemble(s), especially with weekly rehearsals.

The night was a wonderful celebration of the many music ensembles here at Stella Maris’ and a testament to the hard work of staff and students. Well done to everyone!

ASSEMBLY – THURSDAY 31 OCTOBER - Unfortunately, our wonderful Year 3 soloists for the Stella Spotlight finale song ‘Sing’, were unable to be heard due to technical difficulties. For this reason (and because all of the children did such a fabulous job with the performance), we will sing this song at assembly on Thursday 31 October just before the Music Count Us In song. We look forward to sharing the gift of music with you at this time.

MUSIC COUNT US IN – Thursday 31 October - Stella Maris is rehearsing for the song that stops a nation

The countdown has started and students at Stella Maris are joining school children across Australia warming up their vocal chords to take part in Music: Count Us In. It involves more than 600,000 students, teachers and often parents – from schools all over Australia who sign up to learn, rehearse, then perform the same song, on the same day, at the same time. This is the biggest school initiative in Australia, performing the same song at the same time on the same day. Although the national performance day is Thursday October 31st at 12.30pm AEDT, we will be singing this year’s song at 9:00 during Assembly. We will be accompanied by many of our instrumental students, their tutors, and Ms Worthy on piano.

Please feel free to join us as we sing, play, and sign the song ‘Keep On’. More information regarding the program song and behind-the-scenes videos can be found at www.musiccountusin.org.au.

Winners of the “Keep On’ cd cover contest will be announced this week in class and published in the newsletter next week, rather than today as promised.

DATE CLAIMERS
Musica Viva - Wednesday 30 October All classes
Assembly - Thursday 31 October all Stella Spotlight performers for ‘Sing’, and all students for Music Count Us In
Piano Soiree – Thursday 7 November Ms Worthy’s students – Hall @ 6pm
Singing Soiree – Wednesday 13 November Ms Bond’s students – Hall @ 6pm
Gayndah Excursion – Thursday 21 November Senior Concert Band, SM Singers, String Ensemble

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

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

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC NEWS - Instrumental lessons and ensemble sessions have commenced for Term 4. Please send an email to StellaMarisMusic@bne.catholic.edu.au if you did not receive your lesson timetable via email.

Re-enrolment of current students for 2014 will commence on Monday 28 October.

Recruitment talks will take place in the hall during the day on Tuesday 29 October for all students in year 2, 3 and 4. Students in year 5, 6 and 7 will also be offered information and an expression of interest form on the same day if interested in learning an instrument next year. Tuition is not available to students who will be in Prep and year 1 in 2014. There will also be a parent information night from 6pm on Tuesday 29 October for parent to see and hear the same information and to find out more about what the program involves.

If you have any questions regarding re-enrolment or recruitment please email us.

Remember, if you need to contact your child’s tutor, details are shown on the top left corner of the 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.
Class teachers are organising safety messages this week for their classes.

Safety books and DVD’s are available from the Guidance Counsellor. The Morcombe web page has great resources.

Friday is NOT a free dress day, but a red ribbon or sock would be a lovely way to show support.