Dear Parents and Caregivers,
In this week leading into the Easter vacation and now only two weeks from the events of Holy Week, this reflection by Father Richard Rohr, whose writing I quoted a couple of weeks ago, is particularly timely. With Easter just around the corner, this passage from ‘Loving the Two Halves of Life: The Further Journey’, can help us all with those age-old questions, ‘Why am I here?’ ‘What is the meaning and purpose of this life?’ I hope you find it helpful – or at least, thought-provoking.

‘Most cultures are first-half-of-life cultures, and even sadder, most organized religion almost necessarily sells a first-half-of-life spirituality. In the first half of life it is all about me. How can I be important? How can I be safe? How can I make money? How can I look attractive? And, in the Christian scenario, how can I think well of myself and go to heaven? How can I be on moral high ground? These are all ego questions. They are not the questions of the soul.

I’m sad to say, I think many Christians have never moved beyond these survival and security questions. Even eternity is securing my future, not even a common future, or a future for humanity; religion becomes a private insurance plan for that future. It’s still all about me, but piously disregarded. Any sense of being part of a cosmos, part of a historical sweep, that God is doing something bigger and better than simply saving individual souls (my soul in particular) is largely of no interest. This becomes apparent in the common disinterest of so many when it comes to Earth care, building real community, and peace and justice issues. For many Christians—stuck in the first half of life—all that is important is my private moral superiority and spiritual “safety,” which is somehow supposed to “save” me.

Once God and grace move us to the second half of life, however, religion becomes much more a mystical matter, rather than a mere moral matter. Then it’s all about union and our participation in and with God, while also seeing my actual moral weakness. Indeed, this is the work of true religion, to help us transition from stage to stage, toward ever-deeper union with God and all things.’

First half of life spirituality – namely, the era of ‘it’s all about me (and mine)’ – speaks for itself. We can all relate and recognise it as truth. Getting our heads around the second half of life approach is another matter. Read again, the last paragraph of the quoted passage when Rohr points out the difference. What does this sort of spirituality look like? How would it impact our lives and the lives of others if we really ‘got it’?

Perhaps the difference can be explained like this: When all the first half of life concerns are stripped away, along with their motives and intentions, what remains is this: “I have no other reason to do anything except love of God and love of neighbour.” That’s it. Looking good, feeling important, being right or superior – none of these matter any longer. What I have or don’t have, no longer matters. What others think of me, no longer matters for there is now a deep awareness of being part of everything – no separation from self, from others, from the natural world and no separation from God. Previous consuming concerns are released and I imagine this is what it means to be truly ‘free’.

In conclusion I’d like to share with you how a common problem at school would be viewed and approached from the standpoint of each of these spiritualities – first and second half of life. Let’s look at the situation of on-going difficulties between two students. The more usual approach (first half of life approach) is, ‘I’m indignant about this!’ ‘Who is to blame?’ ‘Who’s right and who’s wrong?’ ‘How do we punish the wrongdoer?’ Parents see ‘sides’ and ‘take sides’ – my child is right and the other is wrong. No grey areas. Words are emotive and confronting and emotion usually runs high.

With second half of life wisdom, the key question becomes, ‘What conditions are needed to solve this problem?’ This question shifts the focus from placing shame and blame to a resolution of the problem itself. Now, answering this question may very well involve taking ownership of wrongdoing, restoration and forgiveness, but ‘second half of life’ spirituality recognises that we all inhabit this earth (school/ neighbourhood/family), our actions affect all others and, as such, focus moves from division to unity. There is no ‘us’ and ‘them’; we are all part of God’s family.

Recently I caught the end of an interview with chef, Jamie Oliver, and was surprised to hear him conclude by saying that basically he is about unifying people. What a enlightened approach that is—and so needed!

A safe, happy holiday, then, to all our students and families and every blessing for a holy Easter to you all. School returns on Tuesday 22 April, the 21st being Easter Monday. Friday of that same week is Anzac Day (25th) and is a Public Holiday.

Glenda
**Family Picnic Thank You**
A big thank you to members of the P&F for organising the recent Family Picnic. The sausage sizzle was appreciated and the kids of all ages enjoyed the jumping castle. It was a smaller than usual turn-out but those who attended enjoyed meeting new people while appreciating the breeze in the shade of the trees on Hunter Oval. For myself, I thoroughly enjoyed having the time to talk with parents. Thanks to all families who attended and again, special thanks to the P&F.

**Easter Liturgy**
You are invited to attend our Easter Liturgy on Thursday at 2.10pm in the Hall.

**NSW University tests**
A reminder that entries for the NSW University tests close this Friday April 4. No entries after this date. Payment is through the office.

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**SPORT NEWS**

**STELLA MARIS CROSS COUNTRY CARNIVAL**
**FRIDAY APRIL 4th 2014**

Students from all Year Groups will need;
- Sports Uniform with House T-Shirt and Hats.
- Sports shoes.
- Water bottle.
- Sunscreen.
- Asthma Puffer – if required.

**Approximate times ONLY**
- 9.00am - 11 & 12 Yrs Boys & Girls start. – District Trial
- 9.15am - 10 Yrs Boys & Girls start – District Trial
- 9.25am - Yr 7 Boys & Girls start.
- 9.35am - Yr 6 Boys & Girls start.
- 9.45am - Yr 5 Boys & Girls start.
- 9.50am - Yr 4 Boys start.
- 9.55am - Yr 4 Girls start.
- 10.00am - Yr 3 Boys start.
- 10.05am - Yr 3 Girls start.
- 10.10am - Yr 2 Boys start.
- 10.15am - Yr 2 Girls start.
- 10.20am - Yr 1 Boys start.
- 10.25am - Yr 1 Girls start.
- 10.30am - Prep Boys start.
- 10.35am - Prep Girls start.

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**Dear Parents/Caregivers,**

I came across this article by Br Mark O’Connor fms (Archdiocese of Melbourne - Communications Office, Friday 14 March 2014) and thought it well worth including here in the final weeks of Lent and in the lead up to the Easter Celebrations. The parable about the Prodigal Son (Gospel of Luke 15: 11-32) is one of my favourite scripture stories and provides food for thought in our acceptance of a loving and forgiving God.

AS Christians we rejoice that Jesus has risen and saved us through not despite our weaknesses and wounds. But that is ‘Good News’ that many of us find hard to accept. Lent is a good time to reflect on why we all stubbornly resist God’s deep love for each of us.

Strangely, something in us persists in searching for a ‘perfect’ friend, partner, church, priest, parish or family or whatever. It is so very hard to accept this type of ‘acceptance’. For the disease of ‘perfectionism’ eats away at us all in a society that celebrates ‘success’, pleasure and physical beauty as the ultimate goals in life. We want to get it ‘right’, look ‘good’ and please!

Discipleship instead demands ‘Falling in love with God’. It is a vocation, at once simple, yet demanding. Its territory is tolerating messiness and imperfection.

When we proclaim ‘O Happy fault’ in the Easter vigil, we acknowledge that Christ paradoxically saved through our very sins.. They are mysteriously ‘carriers of grace’- if we open ourselves up to the Lord in repentance.

For sooner or later – we must all come to the realisation that only God can save us from our sins, fears and our addictions.

Many of us, like the prodigal son of Luke’s Gospel, need to ‘hit a wall’ in order to have a chance of waking up to the reality that we are living insane lives as long as we believe that we can ‘control’ things on our own.

When we ‘wake up’ to the real world of grace, we find God patiently waiting for us, ready to help, ready to save us and make us whole.

May this Lenten season of 2014 challenge us to ‘fall in love’ with our God who loves us just as we are. Only that deep acceptance of His love can help us change and turn towards Him.

God bless you with every good gift this Easter.

Judith

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**Date Claimer:**

**Ladies Movie Night**
Friday night 2nd May 2014

Movie “The Other Woman” starring Cameron Diaz.

Please pop this date in your diaries. More details will follow and Movie Tickets will be on sale early next term.

Always a great fun night.

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**Stella Maris school Holy Week Liturgy**
This Thursday 3 April
2.10pm in the Hall
All Welcome
MUSICAL NEWS – Auditions for dancers and main singing/speaking roles in the musical should be completed this week. It was our hope that all students will know what role they have been assigned for The Wizard of Oz before the holidays however there will not be a complete list until the start of Term 2. Main roles may find out by Thursday afternoon who has been selected for these roles. There are further roles that will be finalised in Term 2. Rehearsals for all cast will begin early in Term 2 with speaking and singing roles rehearsing in the Music Room and Dancers rehearsing in the Hall each Wednesday.

Dancers are reminded that their auditions will take place again tomorrow, Wednesday 2 April starting at 10:45am in the Hall. Students are asked to meet in the Breezeway outside the Hall with their lunch at 10:45.

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 –
16 –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
28 July – Sunshine Coast Choral Workshop and Concert at Stella Maris
31 July – Grandparents’ Day in the Hall (performing groups to be finalised)
8 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
17 – 19 October – 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

Lesson timetable are in the final stages of being finalised and will be emailed to all enrolled families in the week prior to the start of Term 2. Please look out for this email and print one copy of the timetable for the child’s lesson record folder, one copy for the fridge at home and one copy for the classroom. If you need to update your contact details, please email them to StellaMarisMusic@bne.catholic.edu.au. Lesson timetables will also be displayed on the music noticeboard outside the music room.

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 3
Bruce and Denise Morcombe Visit for Years 3-7
Easter Liturgy 2.10 in Hall

April 4
Stella Maris Cross Country

April 4
Last Day Term 1

April 22
1st Day Term 2

May 26-29
Book Fair

June 9
Queen’s Birthday Holiday

June 13
Nambour Show Holiday

June 16/17
School Photos

June 20
Stella Maris Year 4-7 Athletics Carnival

June 25-27
Year 5 Camp

June 27
Last Day Term 2

July 14
1st Day Term 3

July 31
Grandparents’ Day

August 3
School Fair

August 5
Coastal Districts Track & Field Day 1

August 7
Coastal Districts Track & Field Day 2

August 14
QLD Catholic Schools & Colleges Music Festival

September 10
Musica Viva

September 19
Last Day Term 3

October 7
1st Day Term 4

October 16 - 18
Musical

December 1
Year 7 Dinner Dance

December 2
Year 6 Dinner Dance

December 3
Years 6 & 7 Graduation Liturgy

December 5
School year ends

Congratulations to Thomas McClure, Hunter Kidd, Harrison Kidd, Noah Talbot, Kai Gillies, Rio Leavy and Harry Dreger who have been selected in the U11 Coastal District Rugby League Team. The boys will now compete at the Regional trials at Redcliffe on 7-8 May.

Well done and Good Luck!

Congratulations to Neve Hulsman-Benson who has been selected in the 12 Yrs District Girls Basketball team. Neve will now compete at the Regional trials on 28 & 29th April at Caloundra.

Well done and Good Luck!

Congratulations to Sarah Wallace 6C and Thomas McClure 6B who competed in the 10-12 years State Swimming Trials last week (24-26March). Both did very well and achieved PB’s in their events.

KIDS MATTER

Australian Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative

Tuckshop News

Stock running down due to holiday break.
We will endeavour to fill your orders, however, some lines may not be available.

Wed 02/04
Thurs 03/04
Fri 04/04
Mon 21/04
Tues 22/04

A Spink
L Mancini

S O’Donnell
S Dangerfield

L Burrows
L Martin

Easter Monday
N Hughes

A Schofield

Noah Talbot
Harry Dreger
Thomas McClure,
Kai Gillies, Rio Leavy

A Spink
L Mancini

S O’Donnell
S Dangerfield

L Burrows
L Martin

Easter Monday
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A Spink
L Mancini

S O’Donnell
S Dangerfield

L Burrows
L Martin

Easter Monday
N Hughes

A Schofield
**Stella Maris Parish Triduum 2014**

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- **Have a Blessed Easter**

- **Maroochydore Buderim Coolum Sippy Creek**

- **Stella Maris Parish Triduum 2014**

- **NO ASSEMBLY THIS WEEK**
  - Bruce and Denise Morcombe will visit our school this Thursday April 3rd 9.00AM Yr3-7