



Every Student, Every Day at STA

Our School Attendance Goal for 2017 is 90%.

Our current School Attendance is 86%.

Our 2017 School Learning Goals

- * All students will deepen their understanding of Christian **scripture**.
- * All students will improve the quality of their **writing**.
- * All students will improve their **problem-solving** skills.

NEWSLETTER

No. 5 Date: 08/05/2017 Week 3 Term 2

Dear St Thomas Aquinas Families,

Our new term at STA is now certainly in full swing. Visiting classrooms each day is a reminder of the incredible power of education to unlock the imagination and potential in our children.

John Bede Polding is often credited with laying the foundations of Catholic education in Australia. He also started two missionary orders, one being The Sisters of the Good Samaritan of which our own Sister Monica is a member. Passion and compassion are two words, which are often used to describe him. He had a passion for God and immense compassion for the people of God. The Sisters of the Good Samaritan, including Monica, exhibit this charism as they go about their missionary work.

Passion - we recognise by its enthusiasm, energy, eagerness and commitment. The word itself comes from the Latin root word, *patior*, which means to suffer. The root word of passion expresses the idea of being moved to action where there is pain and suffering. It often has religious associations such as the "Passion of Christ" or the "Passion of the Christian martyrs".

On first glance the modern definition has little in common with the initial uses of the word. Although the modern use of passion seems disconnected from its roots, a closer look reveals more about how passion really works. Consider that passion is engaging in an intense desire to the point where it hurts. When you are truly passionate, you are pushed along by your desire to the point where you are willing to endure pain, suffering and loss for the object which is the focus of your attention.

Compassion - differs from empathy. The critical element in compassion that differentiates it from empathy is its behavioural component. Empathy is thinking and feeling what others are thinking and feeling. Compassion combines the deep awareness of the sufferings of others with a desire that leads, eventually, to an action to relieve the suffering. This is exhibited through care, concern, humility and gentleness.

Compassion is a component of love. Love is what we do, not just what we feel, for the good and welfare of others. How can we love, how can we work for the good and welfare of others, if we are not aware of their suffering nor have a desire to relieve it? We love others only if we can first sense their needs.

The knowledge, skills and attitudes we teach need to always be considered within the scope of how they ultimately influence a child's passion and compassion as a person. In visiting classes to honour and celebrate the wonderful learning taking place I am always in search of signs of that passion and compassion.

Until next time,

S Rosato

Sergio Rosato
Principal

Kindergarten 2018 Enrolment Open Days

The school is currently hosting Open Days for prospective families for enrolment in 2018. If you or someone you know would like to find out more about our school please join us for a tour to see *learning in action* on one of the following:

Morning Tours: 9.30am – 10.30am

Tuesdays – 9, 16, 23 & 30 May 2017

Wednesday – 24 May 2017

Thursdays – 18 & 25 May and 1 June 2017

Fridays – 19 May and 2 June 2017

Afternoon Tours: 2.15pm – 3.00pm

Wednesdays – 17, 24 & 31 May 2017

Thursdays – 25 May and 1 June 2017

For further information and school enrolment packs telephone the School Office on 4754 2554 or collect material on the day. **Kindergarten 2018 enrolments close on 31 May, 2017.** Late enrolments will be considered if vacancies exist.

No student will be refused enrolment because of a family's genuine inability to pay fees.

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a: 168 Hawkesbury Rd Springwood 2777 | p: 02 4754 2554 | f: 02 4754 3562

www.stthomas.parra.catholic.edu.au | Parish Priest: Father Paul Slyney



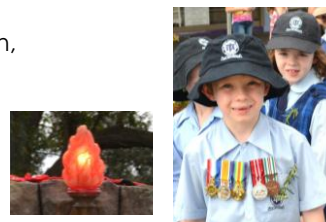
Love is
given to
the one
who does
the work
of love,
and
salvation
begins in
the small
things.



Springwood Anzac Day Parade & Wreath-laying Ceremony

More than 150 students and staff from our school attended the Springwood Anzac Day Parade and Wreath-Laying Service on April 25 2017. Anzac Day seeks to raise our minds and hearts to the past and current service of many who have given themselves selflessly for the cause of peace and freedom. Christ demonstrated this same example as he washed his disciples' feet and as he gave himself to us on the cross at Calvary.

Thank you to the many students for attending the Parade and Service and participating with reverence and respect. During our school assembly last Monday these students received a special commemorative certificate of recognition. Thank you also to the following staff for their attendance and supervision of the students on the day – Michelle Nightingale, Nicole Pospichil, James Costigan, Virginia Fortunat, Cassie Wotherspoon, Carolyn Edwards, Tanya Graham, Annabelle Leroy, Deb Mitchell and Mary Clark.



School Attendance Target – Every Child, Every Day at STA

Every primary and secondary school in the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta has a **student attendance target of 90%** this year. Our current school attendance rate is currently slightly below this at 86%. Research tells us that every day of school attendance contributes to a child's success both academically and socially. Together, teachers and families play an important role in ensuring your child attends school every day in order to maximize their learning.

We also know that when students are absent from school it can cause them to fall behind. The more absences a child has, the harder it is for them to catch up on missed learning and to remain connected to their peers and school community. Even a small number of absences accumulate over time as is shown in the diagram below.

Unless there is a medical or other circumstance which means absence is unavoidable, students should be at school every day.

Feel free to contact your child's teacher, Assistant Principal or Principal regarding your child's attendance and how we can work together in making sure your child attends school each day.



Volunteer Award Recognition-Pam Clark

On Saturday 29 April during the Opening Ceremony for Springwood Foundation Day one of our longstanding school volunteers, Pam Clark was presented with a Community Award for her outstanding service. Amongst the many facets of volunteer work that Pam quietly carries out in the local community is her service to STA, namely the tuition of many children with their Reading over more than a decade. As a retired teacher Pam has dedicated her time to helping children with their literacy. Pam comes to the school each week and works with individual students supplementing the support that they receive from teachers and families. We thank and congratulate Pam for her dedication and generosity.



Year 6 Asia Unit Study – Asia Day

Congratulations to our Year 6 students, teachers and families for hosting a really engaging and informative Asia Day on Friday 28 April. The Asia Day event was the culmination of the grade's learning focusing on Asia. The day comprised of guest speakers, artefact displays, citizenship ceremony and an Asian Culinary experience. Congratulations to all involved particularly the many families who contributed to the day.

Special thanks to Randall Noney (St Columba's teacher) for sharing his personal story of migration from India to Australia, Mrs Colleen Kime for her fantastic display of Japanese artefacts and culture and to the parents who assisted with the serving and preparation of food on the day.

Staff News

Our Religious Education Coordinator **Joanne Toohey** is on leave from STA and teaching in Wilcannia from 24 April to 19 May 2017. **Virginia Fortunat (6F)** has been appointed by CEDP into this leadership role during the period of Joanne's leave. **Jenni Robson (5RP)** is on Long Service Leave from 1 May to 10 May 2017. Her position is being assumed by Nicole Pospichil (co-teacher of the class). **Ann Gippel** is replacing **Robert Mullen** for Sport for Term 2.

School Fees

School Fee Invoices for Term Two have now been issued and are due by 25 May 2017. If you are having difficulties paying the school fees please do not hesitate to contact me to organise a payment arrangement or to discuss the options that are available to you. **Cheree Brown, School Finance Secretary**

Book Club

The first issue for Term 2 has been distributed to the students. Orders are now due back (as of 8 May).



Student Awards

Congratulations to the following students, who received Merit Awards at our last School Assembly. Well done on your efforts everyone – keep up the good work!



Isabella Ambrozic	Bentley Colburn	Loralei Heape-Wright	Charlotte Priest
Ryan Andrews	Xanthe Connell Badics	Alexis Hodge	Cherinda Rawlings
Vincent Applebee	Ella Danks	Sienna Hughes	Henry Re
Willow Barker	Patrick Dawson	Hayden Keogh	Abigail Richards
Emanuel Borg	Erin DeBono	Talyka Kime	Mark Rubelj
Emilia Buhs	Cameron Dempsey	Scarlett Lia	Noah Samoluk
Lara Buhs	Robert Doorey	Seth Loughton	Bella Ticehurst
Sophia Cantwell	Gus Forbutt	Jessica Mace	Sophia Viera
Anabel Caristo	Aiden Francis	Preston Mamo	Chelsea Willingham
Chiara Carlino	Matilda Gauci	Gela Moss	Saffi Wilson
Thomas Chapple	Blake Gough	Eydie Peake	Tom Withers
Luke Clunes	Emily Hall	Florencia Perez-Eaton	Angus Young
Isla Coburn	Luke Harrison	Maria Pochukaeva	

Diocesan Cross Country

The Diocesan Cross Country Competition was held at Eastern Creek on Tuesday 2 May.

Congratulations to our STA team for their outstanding effort on the day and especially to the following students on gaining a place in the top 6 in their respective races –

Annaliese Blattman, Abbey Gomez, Chyna Moore, Amelia Peake and Mia Watson and

also to **Claire Williamson** and **Liam Murphy** who finished in the top 10. Thank you to our parents for their support on the day and to Mrs Gippel for coordinating the team.



Rugby League

St Thomas Aquinas entered five teams in the Rugby League competitions on Tuesday 2 May at St Marys. Two teams competed from Year 3 and 4 (STA Dark, STA Light) and three teams from Year 5 and 6 (STA Sky, STA Navy and STA White). STA Dark finished 1st and STA Sky finished runner-up in the Blue Mountains Division. Thank you to Ms MacKenzie, Mr Costigan, Mr Prior and Mr Williamson for all their help and coaching on the day. **Chris Chenoweth**

Easter Show Honour for STA Student

Congratulations to Marlowe Carey (5C) who entered an art piece in this year's Royal Easter Show. Marlowe was awarded a 1st place blue ribbon for her mosaic piece depicting the Woodford Academy of Arts. Marlowe has been attending



weekly art classes under the guidance of mosaic artist Caitlin Hughes at Woodford Academy and spent a term working on her mosaic. Mrs Hughes has been working with our Year 1 students and teachers this term on a ceramics project.



Tennis Success for STA Student

Congratulations to Ashton McLeod (4CH) who recently entered the MacKillop Tennis trials in Wollongong and was selected to participate as part of the MacKillop Inter Diocesan Tennis Team in Newcastle. The MacKillop team were successful in making it to the grand final which ended in a draw. However, MacKillop were judged runners-up on count back. A fantastic achievement!

Annual Curriculum Compliance – Science & Creative Arts

The Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta requires each school to undergo ongoing compliance reviews in relation to teaching and learning. Standards for these annual audits are set by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). Each year elements of the teaching curriculum and other areas are reviewed. Last week our Stage 2 team (Years 3 and 4 teachers) underwent this process focusing on the Key Learning Areas of Science and Creative Arts.

We commend the team comprising of Elizabeth Bamford, Chris Chenoweth, Cassie Wotherspoon, Annabelle Leroy, Tanya Graham, Amy Blom, Joan Noney and Leigha Wills (Music) for their work in preparing for this peer review process. The curriculum materials presented including Scope and Sequence charts, teaching programs and assessments plan were judged overwhelmingly compliant in these two areas.



Italian Forum

Over the last weeks of Term 1, the children in Year 4 participated in our annual Bocce Tournament, which is part of their Italian program. Bocce is an Italian game and pastime, and is played a little like our lawn bowls. It has become a very popular competition at STA and the children have developed quite advanced skills in the game. On the final

Thursday of term, the semi-finalists also challenged a number of our teachers in a hotly contested demonstration match.

I have much pleasure in announcing that our Bocce Champion for 2017 is Macklin Miall (4W), with Ryan May (4CH) being our Runner-Up. Congratulations to all the children in Year 4 for your participation in the tournament. **Jenni Wurf, Teacher of Italian**

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NAPLAN 2017 for Years 3 and 5

NAPLAN will be held at STA this Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Students from Year 3 and Year 5 will be working through 4 assessment tasks over the 3 days:

Tuesday – Writing and Language Conventions, **Wednesday** – Reading and **Thursday** – Numeracy

Year 1 Ceramics Workshop

Our Year 1 classes enjoyed a ceramics workshop last Friday, the final session in a series which commenced in Term 1, making clay dinosaurs under the guidance of Mrs Caitlin Hughes, local artist and STA parent, and with the help of parent volunteers. The students' creations will shortly be fired ready to take home. Thank you to all those who assisted with these sessions, our Year 1 teachers and especially to Caitlin Hughes for hosting the workshops.



PARISH NEWS

Sacrament of First Holy Communion – 17 June 2017 at 4pm

Parent Meeting – Tuesday 9 May at 7.00pm. Cost of program: \$10.00 to be paid at parent meeting. Home groups commence 15 May for 4 weeks. **Practice for First Communion – 14 June at 3.30pm.** For further information contact the St Thomas Aquinas Parish Office on 4754 1052.

DIARY DATES

2017 TERM 2 Week 3	Monday 8 May	9.05am Cuppa & Chat – in the Hall School Band 12.35pm Assembly – 4CH presenting 3.40pm School Leadership Meeting
	9	School Band NAPLAN (Years 3 & 5) – Language & Writing 9.30am Open Day Tour 3.40pm Staff Meeting
	10	Year 6 Camp 8.30am Staff Briefing School Band NAPLAN (Years 3 & 5) – Reading 9.20am Parish Mass – Year 4 attending
	11	Year 6 Camp 8.30am Staff Prayer NAPLAN (Years 3 & 5) – Numeracy Mothers' Day Stall
	12	Year 6 Camp Mothers' Day Stall
Week 4	Monday 15 May	9.05am Cuppa & Chat – in the Hall School Band 12.35pm Assembly – 3L presenting 3.40pm School Leadership Meeting
	16	School Band 9.30am Open Day Tour 3.40pm Staff Meeting
	17	8.30am Staff Briefing School Band 9.20am Parish Mass – Year 3 & K6A attending 2.15pm Open Day Tour
	18	8.30am Staff Prayer 9.30am Open Day Tour
	19	9.30am Open Day Tour

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Springwood East Timor Support Group Trivia Night: On **Saturday 20 May** the Springwood East Timor Support Group will be holding their annual Trivia Night at **St Thomas Aquinas School Hall**. Table bookings are advised with groups of 8 – 10 available. Contact Pam Gorman on 4754 1160 for bookings. **Cost is \$20 per head.** BYO drinks and nibbles for a great night out.

Sent Home Recently: • Wakakiri Note (lilac) • Year 6 Camp Requisites List • Fundraising Invitation (blue)
• Head Lice Notes to Year 1 & Year 3 • School Photo Envelopes

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