



NEWSLETTER

No. 7 Date: 31/07/2018 Week 2 Term 3

Dear St Thomas Aquinas Families,

Welcome back to a new term of learning and community at St Thomas Aquinas Springwood. We trust all families were able to rest and enjoy some time away from school routine.

Brother Bernard Bulfin 1936-2018

On Wednesday 18 July the Catholic education community of Western Sydney lost one of its greats. Brother Bernard was born in the little village of Ballinure in the county of Tipperary, Ireland in 1936. Bernard made his first profession as a Brother of St Patrick in Ireland at the age of 17. Two years later, in 1956, he arrived in Sydney and was appointed as a teacher at the newly established Patrician Brothers College, Blacktown. For the next 10 years Bernard taught at Blacktown and at Holy Cross College Ryde.



Even at this formative time in his vocation, Bernard was being recognised by all as a community leader and as a people person. In 1966, at the age of 29, Bernard was appointed as Principal of Patrician Brothers Blacktown where he served for the next 23 years. Two years after "retiring" from principalship Bernard was appointed as the Principal of Patrician Brothers College Fairfield. He continued to serve and lead the community at Fairfield until 2001.

Upon retiring for the second time from school education and when most would be taking it easy Bernard became the Catholic Prison Chaplain at Parklea Correctional Centre. His motivation for giving himself to society's outcasts was to simply quote Christ's words - **"I was in jail and you visited me"**. Recently, when asked what inspired him to his vocation as a Patrician Brother his answer was practical and simple - **"To work my way to heaven and also to help others work their way to heaven"**.

Brother Bernard was my Principal, Religious Education and Modern History teacher at Patrician Brothers Blacktown during the 1970s. He was also my boss at Patrician Brothers Fairfield during the early 90s. For students and teachers he remained a charismatic, inspirational and formidable figure. Elizabeth Bamford (KB) was a young teacher employed by Bernard at Blacktown - he always recognised talent in others. For working class adolescent young men growing up in Sydney's west, Brother Bernard created a school where community and encounter with Christ was experienced each and every day.

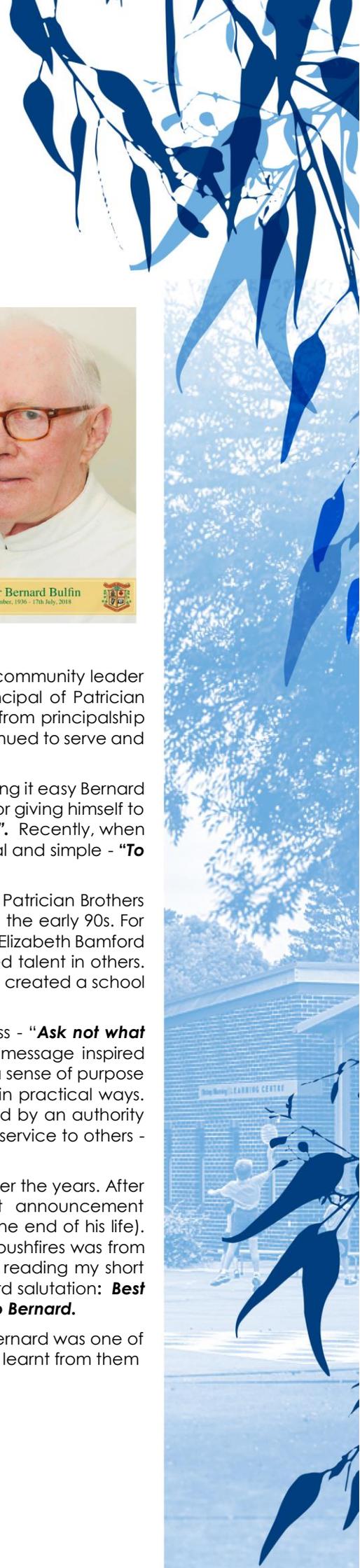
At school assemblies Brother Bernard would often paraphrase JFK's inaugural address - **"Ask not what your school can do for you, but ask what you can do for your school"**. Bernard's message inspired students to a sense of looking beyond ourselves and our own needs. He instilled in us a sense of purpose to serve others and to make a positive difference to the community and the world in practical ways. What made his words ring true for us as students was not that they were pronounced by an authority figure but rather that we saw ample evidence each day of his care, dedication and service to others - his rhetoric was lived not just pronounced.

Brother Bernard remained keenly interested in the lives of former students and their families over the years. After my father passed away in September 2003 he attended the funeral without announcement (coincidentally, his brother, Gerard Bulfin, looked after Dad as a hospital chaplain at the end of his life). The first written message I received from outside the local community after the 2013 bushfires was from Bernard. Earlier this year he once again sent me an email message of support after reading my short opinion piece in the SMH. He concluded that email with the following typically Bernard salutation: **Best wishes to your family and your parents. May God bless you in ways he knows best, Bro Bernard.**

As teachers we all have someone in our lives that inspired us to follow our vocation. Bernard was one of these important figures for me. The Patrician charism, sense of community and lessons learnt from them in my time as a student and later as a teacher still guide my daily work.

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL – cont'd

Congregation Leader, Brother Peter Ryan (Paul Ryan's nephew), now in Bangaluru India, has written:

We have lost a giant in Bernard. He was courageous to the last... We recall his zest for life and interest in people - his perpetual curiosity about every imaginable thing. A journeyman all his life in every respect but grounded in solid faith that released unbounded optimism and a positive view about anyone he should meet along the way. May his soul rest peacefully in the arms of his family, Bishop Delaney, and our compassionate God.

Brother Bernard's funeral took place on Wednesday 25 July at Holy Cross Ryde. (Former Assistant Principal of St Columba's Catholic College, Phil Stewart, is the current Principal).

In an era where the term "leadership" has become almost a cliché, Bernard's lived-out leadership and teaching reminds us that our encounter with Christ through others is in the guise of simple, regular acts of daily kindness, inspiration and interpersonal connection.

May Brother Bernard's inspired vocation continue to live and transform this world in ways "only God knows best". May you Rest in Peace Bernie.



"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." – Maya Angelou

Until next time,

S Rosato

Sergio Rosato
Principal

Clothing Pool – Helpers Required!

Our school Clothing Pool is normally open on Monday mornings at 9-9.30am, Tuesday afternoons at 3-3.30pm and Friday mornings at 9-9.30am. Due to other commitments our parent helpers are unable to continue on Tuesdays and Fridays. Operating the Clothing Pool involves assisting parents with their selections, dealing with clothing donations and tidying and arranging the stock in the Clothing Pool cupboard ready for sale. All sales are dealt with at the Office. If you would like to help on Tuesdays or Fridays or on a day other than the abovementioned times for half an hour, please contact the school Office on 4723 3800. We are very grateful to all our past and present helpers who have made this popular service available to our parent community. Thank you for your consideration.

Reading Your Child's School Report

Reading your child's report can mean anxious times for children. Will my parents be disappointed or proud? This is the main concern of most children. Could try harder . . . always does her best . . . lacks concentration . . . easily distracted . . . Do these comments, taken from a batch of student reports sound familiar?

Student reports bring mixed feelings for parents. Pleasure and pride if they are performing well but considerable angst when children are not progressing as you hoped. Reports can mean anxious times for children too. Will my parents be disappointed or proud? This is the main concern of most children. Kids of all ages take their cues from their parents, so your reaction to their school report can affect the way they see themselves as learners and as people.

Before you read your child's report do a little self-check to see if you are in the right frame of mind:

- 1. Are your expectations for your son or daughter realistic and in line with their ability? Expectations are tricky. If they are too high then kids can be turned off learning. Too low and there is nothing to strive for. Pitch your expectations in line with your child's abilities. A quick check of your child's last report may provide you with a good yardstick.**
- 2. Do you believe that children learn at different rates? There are slow bloomers, late developers and steady-as-you-go kids in every classroom, so avoid comparing your child to siblings, your friends' children and even yourself when you were a child. Instead look for individual progress.**
- 3. Are you willing to safeguard your child's self-esteem rather than deflate it? Self-confidence is a pre-requisite for learning, so be prepared to be as positive and encouraging as possible. Here are some ideas to consider when you open your child's report:**
 - **Focus on strengths.** Do you look for strengths or weaknesses first? The challenge is to focus on strengths even if they are not in the traditional 3Rs or core subjects.
 - **Take into account your child's effort and attitude to learning.** If the report indicates that effort is below standard, then you have something to work on. If your child is putting in the required effort, then you cannot ask any more than that, regardless of the grading.
 - **Broaden your focus away from academic performance to form a picture of your child's progress as a member of a social setting.** How your child gets along with his or her peers will influence his happiness and well-being, as well as give an indicator to his future. The skills of independence and co-operation are highly valued by employers so don't dismiss these as unimportant.
 - **Take note of student self-assessment.** Kids are generally very honest and will give a realistic assessment of their progress. They are generally very perceptive so take note of their opinions.
 - **Discuss the report with your son or daughter talking about strengths first before looking at areas that need improvement.** Ask for their opinion about how they performed and discuss their concerns. After reports are read and discussed celebrate your child's efforts with a special activity or treat.



Further information available at <https://www.parentingideas.com.au/>

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100 DAYS OF SCHOOL!

Celebrating 100 days of Learning in Kindergarten

Last week Kindergarten celebrated 100 days of learning. The students and teachers participated in a variety of rich learning focused on the concept of one hundred. Wednesday was the main day of celebration with everyone dressing up in all sorts of creative outfits to complement the '100' theme. There was even a visit from Sleeping Beauty who issued a number of 100-based challenges to try to wake her up. Each student received a certificate, poem and photo as mementoes of this special time. Congratulations to the Kindy teaching team of Elizabeth Bamford, Megan Mann, Deb Mitchell, Joanne Godsell and Karleen Hutchings for their dedication in enabling this day. A special mention to Lisa Duck (Sleeping Beauty) for her generosity.



Muffi & Bring a Teddy to School Day for Kids Cancer

At the end of last term, the school held a muffi day to raise awareness and funds for the Kids with Cancer Foundation. We thank families for your generosity in supporting this really worthwhile cause. We were able to donate \$850 to the Foundation from funds raised on the day.



Captivate 10th Anniversary Showcase Instrumental Ensemble/Choir & Spoken Choir Performance

Currently a large number of our students are about to commence rehearsals for the Captivate Showcase Performance in Week 5 at the NSW Sports Centre Homebush. Students from STA will be performing as part of an instrumental ensemble, combined school choir and spoken word choir along with students from other Catholic schools.

We wish these talented and dedicated students the very best as they work towards two performances on Tuesday 21 August and Wednesday 22 August, 2018.

Enrolment for 2019 Open Days

Over the coming weeks the school will be hosting School Tours for prospective families for enrolment in 2019. 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* at one of the following:

Morning Tours: 9.30am – 10.15am or Afternoon Tours: 2.30pm – 3.15pm available on - **Tuesdays – 7 & 14 August 2018 and Thursdays – 2, 9 & 16 August 2018**

For further information and school enrolment packs telephone the School Office on 4723 3800 or collect material on the day. No student will be refused enrolment because of a family's genuine inability to pay fees.

Book Club

The first Book Club for Term 3 (Issue 5) has been given out to the students and orders need to be back or finalised online **NO LATER THAN Monday 6 August, 2018**. Please check that order forms are filled out correctly including both the child's name and class. Credit card payments must be made online via the Loop.



School Visitor Electronic Sign-in Returning

In the coming days our school office electronic sign-in system for parents and visitors will be returning. When **using the system for the first time** it may take you up to 10-15 minutes to **register your details** and **a photo of you will be taken by the machine**. Information and photo will be printed onto a sticker for you to wear while on premises. All parents and visitors will still need to sign-out when leaving. **Please remember to allow extra time for this process when visiting the school for any reason.**

Student Sporting Success

Congratulations to Alina Ascencio (2E) on being selected to represent Sydney Gymnastics Club in Acrobatics at the 2018 National Clubs Carnival on the Gold Coast in September. Well done Alina!

DIARY DATES

2018 TERM 3 Week 2	Wednesday 1 August	8.30am Staff Briefing 9.20am Parish Mass – no classes attending 3.30-6.30pm 6F FLCs continuing
	2	8.30am Staff Prayer 9.00am – 1.00pm School Band 9.30am & 2.30pm Kindergarten 2019 Open Day Tours 10.00am – 2.00pm Spoken Word Choir (at St Finbars) – selected students
	3	8.30am – 3.05pm School Band Year 6 Bridges Excursion
Week 3	Monday 6 August	12.30pm Assembly – 3M presenting 3.40pm Leadership Meeting
	7	Kindergarten Excursion to Calmsley Hill City Farm 9.30am & 2.30pm Kindergarten 2019 Open Day Tours 3.40pm Staff Meeting
	8	8.30am Staff Briefing 9.20am Parish Mass – Year 5 attending Feast of Mary MacKillop
	9	8.30am Staff Prayer 9.00am – 1.00pm School Band 9.30am & 2.30pm Kindergarten 2019 Open Day Tours
	10	8.30am – 3.05pm School Band Zone Athletics Carnival – selected students Lifted Live Jnr – selected students

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Drawing Classes for Kids: This course is for kids who love drawing and want to learn the skills they need to create beautiful artwork. We use pastel, coloured pencil, watercolour pencil, charcoal and graphite. All the art materials are provided. Classes cost \$15/hr (paid per term). Minimum age is 8 years. There is a new kids class starting, it will be on **THURSDAYS 4.00-5.30**. Classes are held at Woodford. To see Vanessa's artwork, some of her students work and the course outline go to the website or the facebook page: Vanessa Joret – Drawing Classes. For more info about the new class **call Vanessa on 0409 516 615**. Limited places available (max 8 students/class).

BMCC *Free Child Restraint Checking Morning: Time: 9.00am-1.00pm, Saturday 18 August, 2018. **Location:** Hazelwood Childcare Centre Carpark - 10 Rosedale Avenue, Hazelbrook. **Bookings are essential** as checking mornings fill up quickly. **Contact** Council's Road Safety Officer on 4780 5000. Did you know that according to [national child restraint laws](#) - children up to 7 years old or under 145cm need to be secured in an appropriate child restraint while travelling in a car? Does your child car seat / booster / capsule need adjusting or refitting? Unsure if it is fitted properly or need help to fit a new seat? Experienced RMS authorised fitters will fit child car seats, booster seats, harnesses etc. * The check is free but any parts needed to make the restraint safer will be at the cost of the parent / carer (cash or eftpos will be available). Further advice on how to select an appropriate child restraint can also be found by visiting www.childcarseats.com.au.

Springwood-Winmalee Guides Meet Near You! Pre Junior Guides (for girls 5-7 years old - Thursday 5-6pm; **Junior Guides** (for girls 7-10 years old) - Mondays 6-7.30pm & Tuesdays 5 - 6.30; **Guides** (for girls 10-14) **Senior Guides** (for girls 14-17) Wednesdays 6.15-8.15pm & Tuesdays 7.30-9pm. Contact **Di Strahan** on **0414 406 239** for more information or email to sw.districtmanager@gmail.com

CatholicCare Social Services Springwood Drop-in Centre: The CatholicCare Springwood Drop-in Centre offers a range of services to the local community including counselling, referrals, NDIS help, public computer access and technology help, community information and volunteering, book swap or just come in for a tea, coffee & a chat. Also children's play space and change table, breast feeding friendly. All counselling staff hold professional qualifications, uphold privacy and confidentiality, do not judge and do not dictate what clients should do. Appointments can be made by **phoning 02 4751 4956** or by dropping into the centre. **Hours 10am – 4pm Mon-Fri**. Located **at 3/163 Macquarie Road, Springwood (next to Blooms Chemist)**. Email: springwood@ccss.org.au, website: www.ccss.org.au, Facebook: [facebook.com/catholiccarebm](https://www.facebook.com/catholiccarebm), CatholicCare Social Services is a charitable organisation. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Funded by Catholic Diocese of Parramatta.

Sent Home Recently:

- Calmsley Hill Farm Excursion Note for Kindergarten
- Canberra Excursion Deposit Reminder Note to Year 5
- Lifted Live Jnr Invitation – selected students
- Netball Gala Day Permission Note – selected students
- Year 4 First Footprints Movie Viewing Note (green)
- Note to 6F re Change of FLC Date
- Important Health Notice to Kinder & Years 2-6 (lemon)
- Important Health Notice to Year 1 (gold)
- Milo T20 Cricket School Cup Permission Note – selected students
- Note to 4CH re Reports Delay
- Year 6 Bridges Excursion Helpers Note