



NEWSLETTER

No. 6 Date: 03/09/2019 Week 7 Term 3

Dear St Thomas Aquinas Families,

From Week 7 I will return to my father's village in Italy to spend precious time with family. The township has changed much since my parents migrated to Australia in the mid-1950s.

Village life of that era typically meant that aunts, uncles, grandmothers, grandfathers and cousins would all contribute their wisdom and assistance to the raising of the young. Homes such as the one in which my father was raised (pictured) contained a large extended family unit with multiple generations. Each member of the extended family had defined roles, responsibilities and influence on raising of the young.



Contemporary life is more nuclear, materially more affluent and technologically savvy. What modern families often crave as they set about raising their own children is a sense of community.

A sense of community can look different depending on where you live but there are generally four conditions that 'make' community a reality:

- belonging
- inclusion
- fulfilment
- attachment

More than 20 years ago in 1996, just as the internet was being established, Hillary Rodham Clinton published a book based on the African proverb: *It takes a village to raise a child*. In the book Hillary Clinton points to the village being no longer so much a geographical place as the network of values and relationships that support and affect our lives and the lives of our children. *It Takes a Village* makes it clear that the choices we make today about how we raise our children and how we support families will determine how we will nurture and support communities now and into the future.

As I reflect on the notion of what the "village" looks like to us I think of the countless, often unpublicised acts of compassion, love and generosity that occur within our midst each week and the gracious generosity expressed in very practical ways. These acts not only contribute to raising our young but also provide them with a model of what community looks like.

In our 'STA community' Sister Monica is a wonderful embodiment of what is virtuous about true community values and relationships. For more than 23 years Sister Monica Armstrong sgs has been ministering within our "STA Village".

Each morning Monica is present before school, catching up with students and parents as the school day commences. During the course of the year she visits the homes of all new families to the school as well as re-visiting many other families through invitation. These simple but convivial home visits form a vital link between school, Parish, home and faith. Sister Monica avails herself generously and is compassionate and gracious to all she encounters.

Sister Monica exemplifies the true essence of the 'Good Samaritan' and our school motto 'Love One Another'. May we continue to be inspired to continue to follow Monica's



Sister Monica with ABC's Richard Glover

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL – cont'd

example of inclusive care, concern and empathy towards others. We are immensely grateful for Monica's loving vocational dedication to all those in our school community – we give thanks to the Holy Spirit for this gift to our village.

Until next time,

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Sergio Rosato
Principal

P.S: I will be on long service leave from Monday 2 September until Friday 27 September. Genevieve Smith has been appointed Acting Principal and Virginia Fortunat as Acting Assistant Principal during this period. I know that you will join me in congratulating both Genevieve and Virginia on their appointments. I will keep the STA community in my prayers during my time in Rome and Assisi.

Year 6 Bridges Excursion – 16 August

Year 6 recently headed out on their Bridges Excursion, exploring some significant sites in the lower Mountains and Emu Plains. They were blessed with perfect weather that made a great day for all. One of our parent volunteers, Bec Ellem, sent a message through to the school from the day: "Hi there, kids have walked from M4 bridge along the river to the new pedestrian bridge to walk over it and draw it. Now the groups are split up into 2. Ms MacKenzie's and Ms Hortense' group has climbed the Zig Zag steps and drawing Knapsack Bridge from above. Mr Costigan's group has headed down to the base of the bridge. Fantastic day out!" Thank you to our Year 6 teaching team and our very generous parent volunteers who assisted with driving and helped to make the excursion a great success.



Principal's Morning Tea for Effort in Learning

On **Wednesday 21 August** the following students, nominated by their teachers attended the Principal's Morning Tea for Effort in Learning hosted by Mr Rosato. Congratulations to each student for your effort, attitude and persistence.

Elysia Burchall
Cindy Cantrell
Edward Carr
Ysobel Chalice
Luke Clunes
Alfie Cook
Anthony Daw
Erin DeBono
Benjamin Devitt
Baxter Ellem
Sullivan Forsyth
John Garth

William Ghata
Ruby Hammond
Ella Holdsworth
Keira Holdsworth
Jack Hoppe
Kayden Jeffers
Poppy Jenkins
Hugo Koutsonikolis
Patricia Lia
William Lister
Vanessa Maloney
Samuel McGrath

Brendan McMaster
Caitlin Murphy
Grace O'Brien
Olivia O'Brien
Sophie O'Neill
Erin Phelan
Charlotte Priest
James Rafter
Ari-Kai Rawlings
Sophie Rayner
Jack Reynolds
Abigail Richards

Taiyana Rondo
Samantha Schroeder
Brooke Thomas
Zachary Van Meeuwen
Tyson Verriere
James Watson
Layla Watson
Lola Whitsun-Jones
Heidi Willingham
Kitty Wyld
Andrew Young



School Fees

Just a reminder that school fees were due on 28 August 2019. Thank you to all those families who have paid their fees or are currently in an arrangement in paying fees. If you are having difficulties paying school fees please do not hesitate to contact me or the Principal to discuss options that are available. **Cheree Brown, School Finance Secretary**

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Student Awards

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



Week 4

Sadie Albury
Logan Ballard
Lily Boersma
Lillian Borg
Jacob Burnett
Charli Burton
Alyssa Cantwell
Riley Carpenter
Edward Carr

Bentley Colburn
Ashton Cooper
Matilda Debien
Lotte DeBono
Declan Garvan
Charlotte Harrison
Sebastian Hickey
John Hogan
Jack Hoppe

Sienna Hughes
Connor Leahey
Ruby Lister
Aiden Lloyd Cartwright
Lachlan McAlpine
Kate McIlveen
Peter Moore
Caitlin Murphy
Zoe Papisotiriou

Annabelle Priest
Cherinda Rawlings
Alex Renneberg
Casey Ryan
Darcy Ryan
Grace Ryan
Patrick Thomas
Ruby Wilson
Daniel Woods

Week 5

Larissa An U
Max Bailey
Jordan Banks
Annabell Barr
Montana Barry
Eli Borg
Caleb Byrnes
Sophia Cantwell
Xander Creamer
Xavier Curley
Ayva Dacey
Evelyn Dacey

Tyler Davies
Billy Dean
Baxter Ellem
Katelyn Ellis
Beau Gardiner
Milla Grant
Emma Harrison
James Hicks
Jessie Hicks
Alexis Hodge
Emir Hussein
Emily Jones

Erin Kenn
Edward Kerrison
Analise Mafi
Alana Mathew
Sienna Mathew
Ella Mecham
Mikayla Mercieca
Christopher Mizzi
Keval Naidoo
Lachlan Newport
Felicity Paul

Lilly Phuntsok
Samuel Power
Luke Redmond
Jack Reynolds
Florence Rooney
Amelia Steadman
Jacob Tan
Mia Watson
Tia White
Connor Willis
Hamish Wills

Book Week Book Reviews

During Book Week, at eating time, some of our students treated us to reviews of their favourite books. We had a great mixture of new and classic books, great choices and excellent opinions shared. Thank you to all the students who presented their book review over the school PA system each lunch time.

Book Week 2019

Grandparents' Day 2019 – Friday 6 September – from 11.45am

On Friday 6 September STA will acknowledge the gift of grandparents along with the culmination of our 2019 Book Week celebrations. Chinese Proverbs tell us that "Grandparents are heroes, the precious gem in the centre of the household." Fitting in with this is our theme for Book Week 2019, *Reading is My Secret Power* and we invite all students to come to school dressed-up as either their own super-hero-style 'Secret Power' or their favourite book character.



The day commences at 11.45am with a **special liturgy in the school hall**, followed by a **Wakakirri performance** at 12.00pm, then **open classrooms** from 12.30pm and finishing with a **BYO picnic in the grounds** from 1.00pm. Parents and grandparents are encouraged to bring their picnic chairs and find a spot from 11.35am. Parking is available in the church car park and alongside College Drive.

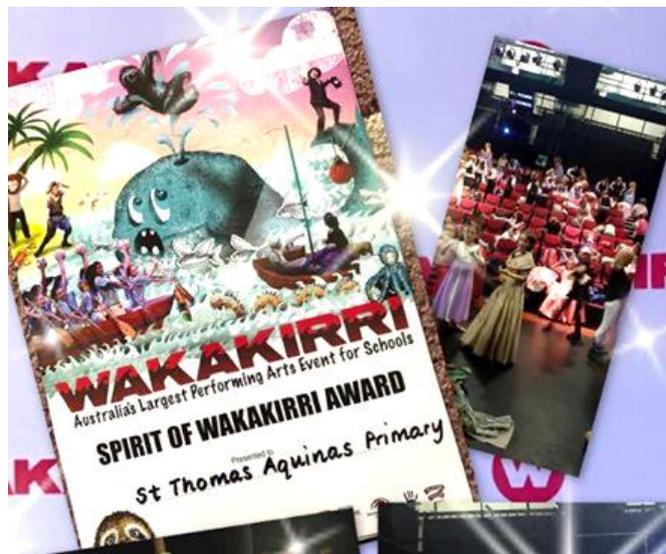
* Remember to bring your picnic rug, food, thermos! etc. *

We hope you can join us. All welcome!



Wakakirri 2019

Congratulations to each of our amazing Wakakirri troupe. Those who experienced their performance at Riverside last Friday night could not but feel extremely proud of them all. Nights like these provide us with an opportunity to celebrate the gift, joy and inspiration of working with students to create memories. To Michelle Nightingale, Karen Bousfield, Nicole Pospischil, Blanche Hortense - supported generously by Amy Blom, Kylie Williamson, Deb Breytenbach, Cheree Brown, Christie Le Breton, Virginia Fortunat and Genevieve Smith we say THANK YOU for enabling our STA kids and our STA community to shine. They thoroughly deserved to be acknowledged as The Spirit of Wakakirri recipients. **Serge Rosato**



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Safe Arrival & Departure by Car

Morning Drop Off

Option 1: Parents may use the Church car park. The area adjacent to the gravel pathway may be only used as a "Kiss & Drop" area – parents are not to park their vehicle in this area. If a parent wishes to park and walk their child, they must use the marked parking spaces in the Church car park. **Important: Parents are not permitted to drive into the school bus bay area at any time.**

Option 2: Parents may choose to park on St Columba's Drive, opposite the school. However, parents **are not** permitted to STOP or PARK their vehicle between the NO STOPPING signs at and near the pedestrian crossing. Infringements may incur a fine or loss of points. Parents are asked to accompany children across the pedestrian crossing and access the school via the small gate and pathway. Children are not to be dropped off in or near the opening of the bus bay, nor enter the school via the bus bay opening. **There is no pedestrian access into the bus bay.**

Afternoon Pick Up

All children being collected from school must be collected from the silver seats adjacent to St Columba's Drive.

Note: Parents must attend the office if collecting children early. Students will be called to the office by admin staff in these instances and must be signed-out of the green book.

Parents may park on St Columba's Drive, on the side opposite the school (adhering to the signage outlined above). Children are not to leave the school via the school bus bay opening. Parents may also park in the marked parking bays in the Church car park, then walk to the silver seats to collect their child/children. **There is no pedestrian access into the bus bay.**

Teacher Supervision of Students – Before and After School

As outlined in the Parent Handbook, teacher supervision commences at 8.35am. Children arriving before this time will not be supervised. Students arriving before 8.35am are required to gather under the school shelter and remain under the shelter until teacher supervision commences. Students understand that the shelter area is a **passive activity area** during this time i.e. sitting, talking etc. **Running activities or ball games are not permitted under the shelter before school.** As also stated, afternoon teacher supervision concludes when the final bus leaves the school premises – approximately 3.40pm. Students who are not collected by parents/carers after this time will be directed to the school office until collected.

Mountains Live

Last week students from Year 5 and 6 experienced Mountains Live event. Following the Voice of Youth competition students from the four mountains Catholic Primary Schools gathered together in our Church for a different experience of 'Church'. The Catholic Youth Team led by James Camden gave the children a Spirit-filled afternoon of song and prayer. All present enjoyed the testimony of Mollie Bauerhuit, St Columba's School Captain and ex-student of STA, who spoke so beautifully of her faith experiences. They all left charged to be witnesses of God in each other's lives, through the gifts of the Holy Spirit.



NSW Write On Competition

Congratulations to Bonnie Phunstok (2D) for gaining a silver award for her writing submission in the NSW Write On Competition. The Write On initiative competition is a most prestigious showcase of student writing across the state. Congratulations Bonnie on your wonderful award!

Diocesan Athletics Carnival

On Friday 23 August 45 STA children were invited to attend the Diocesan Athletics Carnival. All children on the day behaved beautifully and displayed a good sporting attitude. Our school team were involved in a number of events including running, relays, high jump and discus. Our school team were successful in a number of these events including three relay teams, three high jumpers and 1500 metres. Congratulations to the students who now will go on to compete for the Diocese at the Diocese at the NSWPCS Mackillop Track and Field Championships on 16 September.



Penrith Netball Carnival

Last week 50 students took part in the Penrith Invitation Netball Gala Day for Parramatta Diocesan Schools, held at Jamison Park Penrith. Six teams were entered and all children played very well on the day and were great representatives of our school. The Girls U/9 team won their division in first place. Many thanks to our wonderful coaches Karen Bousfield, Amy Blom and Nicole Pospischil for their great supervision of our teams. It was also great to have a huge number of parents there to support us.



Voice of Youth Speech Competition

On Monday 26 August our Year 6 students joined with student speakers from the other three Catholic Schools in the Blue Mountains for this annual speech competition held this year at STA. Our student speakers were Lucy Brown, Lachlan Steadman and Monique Dewhurst. We can be extremely proud of each and all our students for the presentation of each of their topics. Each conveyed their ideas and stories with conviction and passion. Congratulations to Lucy, Lachlan and Monique on their superb efforts.



STA Chess Champions

Our chess team recently competed in the NSW Interschool Regional Finals - Blue Mountains v Nepean Region. Our school team were winners of this competition and therefore Regional Champions. They now proceed to compete against other Western Sydney regions in the next level of the competition. Congratulations to these amazing chess students!



Fathers' Day Stall

Thank you to the generous and dedicated parents who assisted with the wonderful Fathers' Day stall last week. The children from Kindy – Year 6 really appreciated being able to purchase some really lovely surprises to be presented on the weekend. We wish all fathers, grandparents and father-figures a very happy Fathers' Day. We will also include a special acknowledgement in honour of all fathers on Grandparents' Day this week.



Important Safety Reminder: Please do not send glass drink or food containers to school with/for students as they become a safety hazard. We appreciate your understanding.

SkoolBag App

The SkoolBag school app is the best way for parents to stay up-to-date with the school calendar, last-minute forms, newsletters and all school communications. Follow the instructions below to download the SkoolBag app and stay connected with what's happening in your school.



For iPhone and iPad users: Go to the Apple App Store, search for "SkoolBag" and download the free SkoolBag app. After opening the app, add your school(s) and you're ready to go!

For Google Android Users: Go to the Google Play Store, search for "SkoolBag" and download the free SkoolBag app. After opening the app, add your school(s) and you're ready to go!

For troubleshooting with the app try uninstalling and then reinstalling it or visit skoolbag.com.au

DIARY DATES

2019 TERM 3 Week 7	Wednesday 4 September	8.30am Staff Briefing 9.30am Parish Mass – Year 6 attending
	5	8.30am Staff Prayer
	6	11.45am Grandparents' Day & Book Week Dress-up Day
Week 8	Monday 9 September	3.40pm Leadership Meeting
	10	3.40pm Staff Meeting
	11	8.30am Staff Briefing 9.30am Parish Mass – Year 5 attending
	12	8.30am Staff Prayer
	13	Stage 2 Touch Football Gala Day – selected students 12.30pm Assembly – 2W presenting 4.00-6.00pm Spirit in Action Retreat
Week 9	Monday 16 September	NSWPCS Athletics Carnival – selected students 10.00am – 12.00pm Voice of Youth Final 3.40pm Leadership Meeting
	17	3.40pm Staff Meeting 7.00pm Sacrament of Confirmation – in Parish Church
	18	8.30am Staff Briefing 9.30am Parish Mass – Kindergarten attending
	19	8.30am Staff Prayer
	20	12.30pm Assembly – 2D presenting

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Raising Kin – Grandparents Relatives and Kinship Carers Support Group: Raising Kin is a support group for grandparents, relatives and kinship carers who care for a child who is a relative. This group meet on the first Wednesday of the month during school terms. Come along to meet others who are the primary carers of a grandchild. The **next meeting will be on Wednesday 4 September from 10.00am to 12.00pm at Tandra OOSH, 14 Raymond Road, Springwood.** For more information and to RSVP please call **Jenny on 0450 001 393.**

Reflection Day for Women - Saturday 7 September, 9.30am to 3pm: Theme: "Give me the living water, that I may never thirst again." Jn4:15. Speaker: Sr M. Isabell Naumann. **Cost:** \$25 / BYO Lunch, tea and coffee provided. Please **register by calling 4773 8338** or by **emailing: info@schoenstatt.org.au**

Mountains Youth Band Open Rehearsal: Do you play a musical instrument? Are you 10 to 19 years old? You are invited to Mountains Youth Band Open Rehearsal on **Tuesday 24 September at Uniting Church Hall, Lucasville Road, Glenbrook from 5.00-6.00pm.** Come along with your instrument and play some music with our band. All music stands will be provided. Bring a friend! For more information **contact Germaine on 0431 953 217** or email mountainyouthband@gmail.com

Sent Home Recently:

- Netball Gala Day Permission Note – selected students
- Transform-Us Research Project Note to Years 3 & 4
- Wakakirri Performance Permission Note – selected students (*blue*)
- Parvovirus (Slapped Cheek Disease) Alert (*gold*)
- Principal's Morning Tea Certificate – selected students
- Fathers' Day Stall Reminder Note (*green*)
- Year 2 Penrith Lakes Excursion Permission Note
- Parish Mass Note to Year 6 (*green*)
- Parish Mass Note to Year 4 (*green & lemon*)
- Chicken Pox Alert (*orange*)
- Year 3 Influenza A Note
- Grandparents' Day Note (*lilac*)
- Safe Bus Travel Note – selected students (*gold*)
- Reading is My Super Power Note (*lilac*)
- Staff Leave Announcement to 3BN (*lemon*)
- Electronic Communications Note to Families
- Parish Mass Note to Year 5 (*lilac*)

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