



NEWSLETTER

No. 9 Date: 20/12/2019 Week 10 Term 4

Dear St Thomas Aquinas Families,

The Annual Awards Ceremony held in our parish church recently acknowledged the many students who this year have distinguished themselves in a variety of areas of school life. Some have **excelled** by **striving to live out our motto**, Love One Another, others have **excelled in their academic achievement**, and some have **excelled in their consistent effort with learning** or in their outstanding achievement in other areas of school life.

At the commencement of the ceremony I had the opportunity to share some thoughts on an important aspect of life – maintaining healthy relationships. A few Christmas' ago one of the teachers at STA gave me a plaque to hang in my office as a gift. The plaque had the following quote on it:

Before you abuse, criticise and accuse, walk a mile in my shoes.

The words are from the chorus of a song released in the 1960s that talks about trying to understand other people rather than judging them. What it is saying is "Before you get cranky with someone, try to understand what is making them do or say the things they do". Pretend you are them. These words to the song were actually used centuries ago by North American Indian tribes as pearls of wisdom passed onto their young to help teach about **empathy**.

What is empathy?

Empathy is being able to understand how someone else is feeling or to understand the situation they are in. It is the ability to "put yourself in someone else's shoes" and to understand the way they might be feeling about something that is happening to them. Without empathy, we would be like ants or fish or lizards, aware of each other as simply bodies in space, but with no sense at all of the inner lives of each other – of our hearts.

Empathy has two parts: sharing an emotion and seeing someone else's point of view.

The first part - **sharing an emotion with someone** is about trying to understand the way they feel, even if you aren't in the same situation. When you feel an emotion along with someone else, even if you aren't directly affected by whatever is causing their situation, **that's empathy**. The second part of empathy is **seeing someone else's point of view**. This means being able to understand someone else's way of looking at a situation, even if you see it differently. This is the "**putting yourself in someone else's shoes**" part of the quote and it means you see things from their point of view, or from their perspective. Having empathy means you can step back from the way you see a situation and think about how someone else might feel from their side of the story.

Empathy is more than kindness. Kindness is wonderful, but empathy goes beyond being nice to someone. Empathy means you are kind, but you are also really trying to understand what it is like to be another person. Empathy is really important for how we get along with other people. Whether you can be a good friend, get a job; be successful with a team of others... all of those things depend on being able to understand how other people might see a situation and how they are feeling. Empathy is really important in all healthy relationships. It helps you know how your actions and behaviours affect others, what actions you need to take to be a good friend or teammate, and it helps you understand more about the people and the world around you.

The best example of empathy is Jesus Christ. In his life, he treated everyone he met with empathy. Jesus was always sensitive to the plight of others particular the outsiders of his community. Jesus teaches us that if we show empathy to others, we can help to create peace in the world.

(Continued over.)



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FROM THE PRINCIPAL – cont'd

Farewell and Heartfelt Thanks

The last three weeks have been both immensely joyful and at the same time overwhelming. The love, warmth and generosity of students, staff and families (past and present) have been something that will remain with me forever.

After 24 years of being part of this beautiful school community saying goodbye was always going to be bittersweet.

When called 17 years ago to serve as Principal of STA my two desires were to be truly present to all I encountered each day and to work as best I could to create a sense of family within a school. This may seem a rather naïve mission statement but I learnt along the way that the **Blessed Trinity** takes care of the rest. Put in another way, **God comes to us daily disguised as our lives.**

It has been an honour, a delight and a privilege to serve within a Catholic school community with such amazing students who are nurtured by outstanding parents and a staff who work with such passion, diligence and generosity for the greater good.

This school community has always had a unique sense of love, joy and resilience as its distinguishing hallmark and this, I am certain, will continue to be fostered.

**You remain in my heart and prayers.
Arrivederci e grazie con tutto il cuore.**

On behalf of all who have worked "in the vineyard of the Lord" with dedication this year to educate and nurture the children in our community, we wish you and your loved ones a holy, safe and peace-filled Christmas.

May your homes be places of love, compassion and hospitality this Christmastide. May we also remember all those whose homes are missing a loved one and those who are on the front line in helping to protect property and life during this time.

Buon Natale.

ARosato

Sergio Rosato
Principal



Bruce Buds



Catholic Out of School Hours Care (COSHC) at STA in 2020

As previously announced, STA will host a before and after school care facility commencing in Term 1 2020. Enrolment for COSHC is handled directly between families and the COSHC centre management. **Please direct all enquiries to the email address below not to school staff.** Families wishing to enrol their child/ren in COSHC can click on the link provided here or email the centre directly at: coshcstthomaspringwood@parra.catholic.edu.au. Enrolment is **done online**.



2020 COSHC
Enrolment Form V6.1

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Annual Awards 2019

Congratulations to the following St Thomas Aquinas 2019 Awards recipients.

	Love One Another Award	Outstanding Effort Award	Academic Achievement Award
K6A	Daniel Woods	Thomas Chapple	Ashton Cooper
KB	Indyana Duffy	Amelie Hucknall	Annabel Hall
KD	Isabella Glew	Peter Godsell	Charli Burton
1C	Claire Thomas	Ryan Sykes	Gemma Boersma
1S	Piper Jeffers	Benjamin Devitt	Ellie Kermodie
2D	Lila Hagelburg	Bonnie Phuntsok	Zoe Papasotiriou
2W	Olivia O'Brien	Sebastian Hickey	Kate Giannakis
3BN	Oscar Kirton	Emilie Dempsey	Connor Willis
3E	Emily Daw	Arabella Fuge	Dylan Cantwell
3L	Alana Prior	Florence Rooney	Eli Schroeder
4C	Mieke Watson	Asher Bogg	Nathan Broadhead
4G	Lily Boersma	Grace Wardle	Luke Pospischil
4W	Mollie Malone	Samuel Lister	Sophia Cantwell
5C	Sienna Curley	Grace Ryan	Amelia Crouch
5N	Ethan Ashtyn-Smith	Penelope Edmonds	Alexander Kerkham
5RP	Analise Mafi	Leo Borg	Samantha Bourke
6C	Luke Harrison	Mia Rodemark	Jessica Kennedy
6H	Jack Reynolds	Jordan Kime	Hayden Willingham
6M	Zoe Cini	Alana Mathew	Oliver Savage
	Outstanding Effort & Achievement in Italian	St Mary of the Cross MacKillop Award (& a perpetual)	Matthew Dyer Sportsperson of the Year (& a perpetual)
	Oliver Savage	James Watson Larissa An U	Jessica Gomez Ashton McLeod
	Llewellyn Creative Arts Award (& a perpetual)	Belfanti Family Award (& a perpetual)	Ursula and Eugene O'Carrigan Award for Social Justice (& a perpetual)
	Samantha Schroeder	Alexis Hodge	Thomas Brosnan
	Geraldine Lohan Award for Academic Excellence (& a perpetual)	Molly Hurley Award for Citizenship	
	Chelsea Willingham	Samuel McGrath	
	Principal's Award for Consistent Effort	St Thomas Aquinas Servant Leadership	Principal's Award for Living Out the School Motto
	Katelyn Ellis Emilia Buhs	Olivia Byrnes	Baxter Ellem
	Outstanding Effort & Achievement in Music	Robert Mullen Award for School Spirit (& a perpetual)	Principal's Award for Leadership
	Cameron Hickey	Emily Jones	Lachlan Steadman
Student Representative Council 2019			
	Lucy Brown	Zoe Cini	Brendan Golby
	Emily Jones	Luke Harrison	Lachlan Steadman
	James Watson	Samantha Schroeder	Hayden Willingham
	Daniel Woods	Annalise Blattman	Amelia Steadman
	Charlotte De Bono		
	Chess Awards		
	Year 3 Champion	Heidi Willingham	
	Year 4 Champion	Luke Pospischil	
	Year 5 Champion	Kyle Delfsma	
	Year 6 Champion	Samuel Graham	
	Year 6 Most Improved Player over 4 years	Brendan McMaster Alana Mathew	
	The George Shewchuk Chess Championship Award (& a perpetual)	Lachlan Steadman	
	2019 Handball Champion		
	Tobie Payens		

PARISH NEWS

St Thomas Aquinas Christmas Mass Times

Christmas Children's Mass:	5.00pm Tuesday 24 December (Christmas Eve)
Christmas Vigil:	8.00pm Tuesday 24 December (Christmas Eve)
Christmas Day:	9.30am Wednesday 25 December NO MIDNIGHT MASS

Children are encouraged to join us at the Christmas Eve Children's Mass dressed as angels or shepherds.

DIARY DATES

2019	18	Last Day for Students for 2019
	19	STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY Last day for Staff for 2019
TERM 4		
Week 10		
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS		
2020	Monday 27 January	AUSTRALIA DAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY
	28	Staff Only Commence 1.30pm MAI's K-6
	29	K-6 MAI's
	30	Grades 1-6 Students Commence Kindergarten MAI's Continue
	31	Kindergarten MAI's Continue
TERM 1		
Week 1		
Week 2	Monday 3 February	Kindergarten Commence

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Beating stress during the Holidays: How to Create an Easy Routine by Daniel Sherman

Beating stress during the holidays can be tricky, especially when you have a full schedule and a family who needs your time and attention. For parents of small children, the holiday season goes hand in hand with more sweets and excitement than usual, and summer holiday routine changes that can make for stir crazy children (can my friends come over? Or the ubiquitous: are we there yet??). In short, it's a constant challenge to keep the routine that keeps your household running smoothly and ensures everyone gets the rest they need intact.

However, it's important to take time for yourself when you need it and to figure out a way to stay organised and on task while keeping stress and anxiety at bay. Mornings are often the hardest; many families have trouble getting ready and out the door without a little chaos and if you're travelling we all know it can be like herding cats. Creating a solid morning routine will help you and your loved ones get through that initial part of the day without adding to your stress. For more information and helpful tips go to service@parentshop.com.au or call 1300 738 278.

Tweens and Teens Worry Most About Their Family - From the Australian Institute of Families Studies - <https://aifs.gov.au/>. The Growing Up In Australia Longitudinal Study of Australian Children found the issues of greatest concern among 10-11 year-olds and 12-13 year-olds were their families, followed by terrorism, the use of drugs and alcohol and school related matters. Australian Institute of Family Studies Director, Anne Hollands said it was important to understand what children and young people worry about in order to support and deal with their concerns effectively.

"As young people move through childhood and adolescence, they experience many changes and it can be a worrying time as they learn to deal with changes in their bodies, relationships and moving from primary to secondary school," she said. "As young people get older, friends become more important but in their 'tweens' and early teenage years, most still rely greatly on their families for financial, practical and emotional support and guidance. "Our study found two-thirds of 10-11 year-olds were worried about a family member becoming seriously ill or injured, more than half were concerned about fighting in their family and nearly half were worried about their parents losing their job. For more information and helpful tips go to service@parentshop.com.au or call 1300 738 278.

Sent Home Recently:

- MAI (Mathematical Assessment Interview) Note for Years 1-6
- STA Start of Year Calendar Dates for 2020 Note

*Wishing all our STA families a safe,
peace-filled and happy Christmas.
See you next year!*

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