LEADERSHIP TEAM REFLECTIONS

Our school staff wishes every member of our school family a holy and blessed Easter. May it be a time of renewal and healing.

RELIGIOUS DIMENSION

Holy Week: This week we begin the journey towards the death and resurrection of Jesus, Holy Week. The students and their teachers prepared one Station of the Cross which was presented today. Each class had the opportunity to pray the stations and reflect on the journey which Jesus travelled as he walked the road to Calvary to the final destination of His crucifixion.

As Catholics, Holy Week is such a significant part of our faith and tradition. It makes us who we are today, what we believe in and why we are Catholics. On Holy Thursday year 6/7R will lead us in the Passion of Jesus, a very moving and reflective prayer time. This will occur at 2pm in the SAMMAT and you are all invited to attend.

Project Compassion: As a school we were invited to take a Project Compassion box home during Lent and invited to make regular contributions leading up to Easter. In anticipation thank you for your generosity. All Project Compassion boxes with the money will need to be returned to school by next Wednesday April 3 (week 10).

Sacramental Candidates: We would like to congratulate the Sacramental Candidates who made their Sacrament of Reconciliation last Wednesday evening at Ss Peter and Paul Church. We ask you continue to pray for these students as they prepare for the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist later this year. Thank you to Fr Brian and Fr John who assisted with Reconciliation.
Leadership Team Reflections cont.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIMENSION

2014 Enrolments: Families are informed that we are now interviewing for 2014 enrolments. If you have children already enrolled at St Brigid’s and wish to enrol younger siblings please contact Mrs Andrea Mackereth immediately to ensure we are able to secure their enrolment.

School Board: We are seeking parent representatives for our School Board. Our School Board meets each month on the third Monday evening 7pm – 9pm. The purpose of the School Board is to support the School Leadership team in ensuring the smooth and effective strategic operation of the school, particularly in the religious, learning, administrative and community dimensions. It is a satisfying role and one which enables the Board members to gain a deeper understanding and provides valuable input into the management structures. It is important that you provide an enthusiastic commitment to St Brigid’s and are passionate about supporting your child’s school to achieve continual improvement. Please see Andrea Mackereth for any further information.

Safety Reminder: Students and families are reminded to be wary of approaches from strangers, especially when they are unaccompanied or travelling to and from school. If they are approached students should not respond and should not accept offers of rides or gifts. Students should seek the assistance of other nearby adults if they feel unsafe and should report the event to a trusted adult (parent or school staff member) as soon as possible. SAPOL advises that taking out a mobile phone and calling police can deter the offender and they recommend the student making a formal report to their closest police station.

School Crossing on Para Road: Families may have seen local media reports about the Gawler and District College seeking to move the old Evanston Primary School Crossing further down Para Road. This may have implications for St Brigid’s family that park on the Western side of Para Road or for families whose children catch the train to school. To ensure that our voice is heard could you please complete the reply slip found in the Newsletter so these concerns can be raised with our local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Sometimes in life we are blessed with the generosity of strangers who give of themselves for no other reason but to give back to a community that so helped them achieve their own hopes and dreams. Such is the case of the story below. Some of you would be aware that as part of our BER/SAMMAT expenditure, the school purchased a second hand Aerial Work Platform (AWP) at a cost of around $6000 to facilitate maintenance and staging activities in the new building. Unfortunately within 12 months the unit was rendered unusable and repair costs were prohibitive. The same unit new, would cost around $18,000. Fortunately we were able to make an insurance claim which returned some cost to our school budget. The normal daily hire fee for an AWP is around $350 for which the school had budgeted for the year ahead; still some $8000 short to purchase a new and vital unit for the school.

Out of desperation, a chance email request for help to an Australian manufacturer of similar units based in Sydney drew a surprising response. The next day a return email confirmed this company’s desire to support our school and a telephone conversation ensued with a Mr. Christopher Teng of Access Holdings International who manufacture ‘UPLIFT’ AWP’s and scissor lifts for worldwide distribution.

In short, their price for a brand new unit came in just above the amount the school was able to fund by about $1400 then in return the company in their generosity provided a donation of $2000! This means the school has been able to acquire this vital piece of equipment under the budget we had available, a saving of some $12000 on the price of the previous new model. As a school we are indebted to and enormously grateful for Mr Teng and his company and wish to formally thank him on behalf of our school community for their professionalism, generosity and commitment to the needs of a school such as ours. The purchase of this unit will allow our students and the wider community to get the most out of the Samaritan Sports Stadium/MacKillop Arts Theatre for many years to come.

LEARNING DIMENSION

Digital Devices Program: We wish to advise families involved in the Digital Devices program that the App ‘Audioboo’ has been removed from our preferred list. After further investigation, Audioboo, no longer meets the standard set by our ICT committee. It appears that recent updates have turned Audioboo from a merely audio recording application into one which now requires the user to upload it onto the web. This application no longer fits into the parameters of applications that we should be using for our school.

Indigenous Education: Those of you who use the main car park will have seen the development of the striking mural painted by mother and daughter Aboriginal artists Raelene and Samantha Snow. Raelene and Sam operate out of Marra Dreaming Aboriginal Art Centre in Salisbury. This week their time with us concluded with the painting of our courtyard cross. Both works help provide a link with the Aboriginal heritage of the Kaurna people of the Adelaide plains whose ancestors walked this country and have a direct connection to the Kaurna people living in our region today.

For our students, the symbols and designs used help them understand the connection Aboriginal people have with the land and the important role it plays in their spirituality. The designs on the cross have been used to connect to our own catholic Christian spirituality through the Celtic tradition of St. Brigid; a woman who had a deep connection with the land. Please take the opportunity to take a closer look at both works and we take this opportunity to thank Raelene and Sam for their wonderful contribution to our school. This work was funded through a Federal Government grant as part of ‘Closing the Gap’ Indigenous education strategy.

COMMUNITY DIMENSION

Sports Day: A separate letter was distributed yesterday in relation to our Sports Day which will be held next Friday, 5th April 12.15pm – 6.15pm. We look forward to our school community gathering together to witness the talents of our children and to share the enthusiasm of our young people as they participate in the range of sporting activities.

Parent teams: Our deep appreciation to the request for assistance for Sports Day and also to those parents who have nominated to become part of the Parent Teams. If you are interested in becoming a regular Parent Team member please contact Andrea White at andreawhite@stbrigidscatholic.edu.au. It is another valuable way of working in partnership with your child's school.
St. Brigid’s Catholic School celebrates the arrival of new educational equipment

Thanks to the support of our school community the Woolworths Earn & Learn 2012 program has recently supplied our school with an array of new learning supplies, including:

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<tr>
<th>Maths equipment</th>
<th>Literacy equipment and games</th>
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<tr>
<td>Letterland posters and books</td>
<td>Jigsaw puzzles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fairytale stories and hand puppets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robotic Bee-bots</td>
<td>Sandpit toys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books and games for the Resource Centre</td>
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These items, worth over $3,500, were selected by staff and SRC students, at no cost to our school. They will be great for all students to use as hands-on/interactive aids in many of their everyday learning experiences.

Once again, a BIG THANKYOU to all school families for collecting Earn and Learn stickers last year.
REASONS TO READ: People read for many different reasons. Learning these reasons helps children to understand why reading is not only an important part of their education, but also a meaningful part of their everyday lives. It does not matter how or where the reading occurs, just so long as children (and adults) READ.

Reading helps to:
- Explore new places
- Understand other points of view
- Experience the past and imagine the future
- Learn something new
- Become a better writer
- Improve vocabulary, spelling and grammar
- Research people and ideas, and also to
- Have fun.

And just a gentle reminder – example is an excellent teacher, so everyone GET READING.

OVERDUE NOTICES: Will be given out in Week 10 – please return all books by the Wednesday of Week 11 (Wednesday 10th April 2013) – THANK YOU.

HOMEWORK CLUB: Join in the fun after school and help your child(ren) with homework in the quiet and conducive environment of the Resource Centre/Library. Open after school during our normal open hours. [Monday - Friday 8.30am-4.00pm]

PARENT/STUDENT READING CHALLENGE: Once again this year we are running the Parent/Student Challenge, in which students read to their parent(s) in the library (before &/or after school) for approximately 15-20 minutes – this needs to be completed at least 20 times throughout the year (before the end of November). This is a great opportunity to combine with the Premier’s Reading Challenge, which can start whenever you are ready.

Some students and their parents are already well on their way. What About You?? There’s no time like the present to get started!!

HELP HELP HELP VOLUNTEERS are really, really, really needed. Any day (except Tuesday), from 9.00am-3.00pm (or anytime in between), to assist with the influx of resources, shelving, covering and repairing of books. So PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE come along and positively utilise your talents to help out in the Library. EVERYONE WELCOME.

?? Quiz Question?? – What Easter book did you borrow from the school library? [First one to tell Mrs White the answer goes into the Quiz Question book – could win a prize…!!!]

Anna CTM White – Teacher/Librarian
18th March, 2013

Dear parents and carers,

We're getting anxious! Will the new funding model deliver? It had better!

The Federation cautiously welcomed the Prime Minister’s September 2012 announcement about funding for schooling into the future.

However, 6 months later...

The fine detail about the funding model and the dollars to fund it is still being negotiated between the federal government, and state/territory governments, the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) and the Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA).

Recent parliamentary inquiries confirm that the NCEC and ISCA have grave concerns about the different models the federal government has presented to them, and the potential implications for our children and our schools, including the impact on fees and the future viability of some schools.

Current federal funding agreements for our schools expire at the end of this year.

It is likely that we won’t know how many dollars the federal government will put in to a new funding model until May. And we don’t know what the South Australian government intends to contribute. We still hold the South Australian government to account regarding its 2010 election commitment to address its unacceptably low level of funding for children in Catholic schools compared to the national average.

This uncertainty is unacceptable.

The Federation, along with Catholic Education SA, will continue to work on your behalf to ensure any new model provides the funding and other support your children need to succeed in their schooling, and for fees to remain affordable.

Over the past few months, Federation representatives have met with Senator Penny Wright (Australian Greens), Senator Don Farrell (Labor) and Shadow Minister for Education, Christopher Pyne. We have also provided support to school delegations to local MPs.

The voice of parents is crucial in this time of significant reform and uncertainty.

Let’s ensure our voices are heard.
Let’s make it clear that we're passionate about our children’s education.
Let’s make it clear that we support Catholic education...and we vote.

http://www.parentfederation.catholic.edu.au

Caz Bosch
President

Ann Bliss
Executive Director