FROM THE PRINCIPAL

“You have heard that it was said, 
You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.
But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you”
Matthew 5: 43-48

Dear Parents & Carers,

This Sunday we are faced with quite a tough Gospel at mass. We can often like to get our own back. Who hasn’t ever heard: I’ll get you for that! We know the vengeance of our own country… political and family. An eye for eye… brings no peace but a quiet lull in violence. Sometimes we may even tell our kids to hit others should an altercation start at school. Jesus says, PEACE is the only way although we know the opposite only too well. People see their enemy walking the street and feel the hate rise in them. But the forgiveness of the Gospel is a slow journey. We have the small hurts and the big ones in us. There are many injustices that make our turn to peace even harder. Lies, abuse, teasing, and bullying all strengthen our hate rather than our love. Time heals and prayer helps… but can you really do as Jesus commanded – love your enemies? It can make a difference to our lives. But before we can be so humble – we need to really love ourselves. How hard is that for many of us? God claimed us through our birth and baptism and it is only his love that helps us love our selves. In the normal hurts and grievances of life we are continually challenged to be healing people. But we are people who often hate ourselves for our addictions, our faults both big and small faults and a past that may haunt us. We may find it hard to love our wounded selves but the love of God is a grace. Filling that empty space in ourselves with an openness to love rather than hatred is about accepting the grace of our loving God in ourselves and others. I would urge everyone to work towards perfection by becoming more like God in compassion and in love. This is a wonderful vision for ourselves, our church and our world. The dream of God that all God’s children live in love, peace and justice.

DIOCESAN PASTORAL PLAN, FAITH IN OUR FUTURE

This year marks the launch of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan, Faith in Our Future. It represents the culmination of one of the largest consultation processes conducted in our Diocese, contains announcements about future directions and provides a vision and practical ideas to assist in the renewal of our Catholic life as school and parishes. Bishop Anthony’s personal message, as well as the plan itself, will be available in the March edition of the Catholic Outlook to be delivered soon via your oldest child. You are also invited to visit the new Pastoral Planning website www.faithinourfuture.org.au which includes ideas for growing and sharing our faith across our Diocese.

WINTER UNIFORM FOR KINDER - APPOINTMENTS

A reminder especially for Kindergarten parents to pre-order your child’s winter uniform. The uniform shop is open Wednesday afternoon each week for purchases however winter uniform fitting MUST be done via appointments as these take a longer time. Appointment times are via the on-line system schoolinterview.com.au and you need to enter the code ZB8GLU.

JOKES OF THE WEEK

Next Monday is Year 4’s week!

J. Why is Cinderella such an awful basketball player?
   A. Because she had a pumpkin as a coach.
      Helen Jo

J. What’s brown, hairy, wears dark glasses and carries a pile of exercise books?
   A. A coconut disguised as a teacher.
      Jemma Abdilla

J. Have you heard the joke about the butter?
   A. I better not tell you, it might spread.
      Aaron Franklin

J. Knock Knock, Who’s there
   Cash
   Cash Who
   A. Not Cashews but I’d like some peanuts.
      Daniella Touma
CONGRATULATIONS

If you happened to walk past our veggie garden recently you’d have seen beautiful stands of corn, zucchini, cabbage, basil and other delights. But how does it get that good I hear you say? Well it’s due to our gardener, Anne Grieve, and a dedicated band of composters known as the Wormies. The Wormies collect our veggie and fruit scraps each day to turn these into nutritional compost for our gardens. But for one of our special Wormies, just collecting food scraps wasn’t enough. Year 5 student Tatiana Haddad wanted to raise funds for a new compost tumbler bin as the old one had been showing signs of wear and deterioration. Her great enthusiasm and initiative created an event that raised over $100. Tatiana also raised a similar amount last year. Well done Tatiana for the pride you have in St Anthony’s. Keep up the great effort! (Thanks also to Tatiana’s dad William for his efforts).

OPENING MASS

Thank you to all the parents who joined us at our beautiful opening mass last Friday. Fr Paul commissioned our new staff as well as our Year 6 leaders. Fr Paul went on to say that we need to work at understanding God’s purpose for ourselves. Evangelisation is still integral to Jesus’ message and we can act in a variety of ways to introduce other people to God. He asked us all to be “Andrews” just like the first disciple. Andrew introduced his brother Peter to Jesus and so we must do likewise.

The Sisters of Mercy including Congregational Leader Sr Catherine presented Mr Lendvai with a beautifully hand carved Mercy cross to keep our Mercy heritage alive.

COFFEE MORNINGS

Don’t forget that we have a special coffee and chat morning every Monday fortnight outside the Hub with Mr Lendvai and Ms Ducksbury. The next Coffee & Chat will be on Monday 3rd March. Hope to see you then!

SKOOL IS KOOL

Our school registered for the “Skool is Kool” program with Good Guys Prospect. Under this program, every time you spend $35 at Good Guys Prospect, The Good Guys will donate $1 to our school with your name. So next time you are looking for electrical appliances or gadgets, have a look around Good Guys Prospect – and don’t forget to mention St Anthony’s Girraween School when you pay for your goods.

KINDERGARTEN AND NEW FAMILIES DINNER

Our annual Kindergarten and New Families Dinner will be tomorrow evening from 5:30pm in the school yard.

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

All classes are in great need of additional parent helpers for reading, writing, maths, craft, art etc. See your child’s teacher but ensure that you complete the on-line Child Protection Module available on the Catholic Education website and the Prohibited Persons declaration from the front office before commencing. The module can be accessed via the following web address.


Acknowledgement of your completion will automatically be forwarded to St Anthony’s. It is law that these requirements be adhered to before commencing. See Mr Lendvai or Ms Ducksbury for any further details.

NEW BABY ON THE BLOCK

Congratulations to Sam (Kindergarten) and Rihana (Year 2) BOULOS on the recent birth of their baby brother Jacob. Every blessing to the Boulos family!

JEWELLERY

A reminder that jewellery at school is limited to one pair of plain metal stud or sleeper earrings; one plain signet ring and or a religious medal or cross worn under the shirt or dress. NO other jewellery should be worn. Fashion jewellery, bracelets and bangles are NOT permitted.

SKOOLBAG

Haven't subscribed yet? We now have about 204 downloads of our app. Get now for free and stay in touch with what’s happening at school. Loads of new information has recently been added. Take a closer look!
ENGAGING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY IN CHILDREN’S LITERACY EDUCATION

Decades of research and practice show that when parents engage with their children’s learning, outcomes improve and schools perform better, irrespective of family income or student background. When bridges are built between families and schools, parents and teachers learn more about one another’s strengths, experiences and expectations for children and young people. Children’s literacy develops best with involvement from their families and local communities. Research clearly shows the benefits of family engagement in the whole of a child’s learning, rather than just in their schooling. In addition, family involvement in reading-related activities with children outside of school is strongly related to children’s reading performance. What can you do? Find time to read to your children and listen to them read back. If not you, then a relative, neighbour or friend.

SCHOOL FEES

School fees have been sent out and are due by Friday 7th March. Please contact Mrs Brigden in the school office if you have not received your Statement or if you wish to discuss payment arrangements other than those offered on your Statement. Parents who had agreements with Mrs Brown in 2013 will need to contact the office to make an appointment with Mr Lendvai to discuss 2014 school fee payments.

UNIFORM SHOP TIMES

The Uniform Shop will be open on Monday 24th February, 2014 from 2:30pm – 3:15pm. You can place orders through the office at any time.
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

COMMENCEMENT OF SCHOOL YEAR MASS
Thank you to everyone who participated in our Mass last Friday. It was a prayerful and reverent celebration. Our student leaders were commissioned for the year, and our new staff blessed. We greatly appreciate the involvement of Srs Catherine Ryan, Marie Butcher, Anna Conway and Antoinette Doyle from the Sisters of Mercy. Their presence as we commissioned Mr Lendvai and blessed our new staff is a strong, visible sign of our call to continue the work the Sisters of Mercy began here at St Anthony’s.

SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION
The sacramental process for children in Toongabbie parish will resume next month with the enquiry meeting for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Children in Year 5 and above who have been baptised and celebrated First Communion may prepare for, and celebrate the sacrament this year. Please be on the lookout for further information. If you have any questions about the sacramental process, please contact the parish sacramental coordinator, Kristen Borg, on 9631 3316.

FAITH IN OUR FUTURE
After two years of consultation and preparation, our Diocesan Pastoral Plan, Faith in Our Future, will be launched this weekend. It proposes a number of ways that we as a Diocese - parishes, schools, Diocesan agencies - can work together to Grow in Faith and Share our Faith. More about this plan will be shared in parishes this weekend, in the March edition of Catholic Outlook, and through our school and parish communities over the next four years of the plan. You can learn more about the plan at www.faithinourfuture.org.au

SAFE TRAVELS FR PAUL
Commencing next week, Fr Paul will be taking long service leave until the end of May. He will begin his time away with a month-long retreat, before travelling overseas. After being responsible for the development of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan, along with his many parish responsibilities, this will be a well-deserved break. We hope that he enjoys his leave, and that he returns to us safely and with new energy. Bishop Anthony has appointed an administrator to lead the parish in Fr Paul’s absence, supported by assistant priest Fr Larry.

Upcoming events
Sun 2nd March | School Family Mass, Stage 3, 10am
Wed 5th March | Ash Wednesday
              | Years 3-6 participating in Parish Mass, 9:30am

FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
Join us during Catholic Schools Week (March 9-15) as we celebrate all that is special about St Anthony’s.

‘More Than A Great Education’

What’s happening at St Anthony’s?
- Catholic Schools Week Liturgy
- School Clean Up Day
- Project Compassion Fundraiser (Mufti Day)
- Video Competition – ‘What Makes Our School Great?’
- Cross Country
- Picnic Lunch and Open Classrooms
- SCG Parent Night Out

Please look out for more information and specific dates and times in upcoming newsletters, Skoolbag, Facebook and the website.

Kind Regards
Linda Ducksbury
Assistant Principal
CALENDAR

Fri 21 Feb  Finance Audit
Fri 21 Feb  Kindergarten & New Families Dinner
Fri 28 Feb  St Paul's Year 7 2014 Visit to Year 6 boys
Tues 4 Mar  Shrove Tuesday
Wed 5 Mar  Ash Wednesday
Thurs 6 Mar  Diocesan Education Mass
Sun 9 Mar  Catholic Schools Week begins
Fri 14 Mar  School Cross Country
Fri 14 Mar  SCG – Parent Night Out
Mon 17 Mar  SCG Meeting 7:30pm in the HUB
Wed 2 April  Athletics Carnival
Sat 5 April  Open Day
Mon 7 April  Spring Fair Meeting 7:30pm
Thurs 10 April  Easter Tuesday & Raffle
Fri 11 April  Term 1 concludes
Thurs 17 April  Holy Thursday
Fri 18 April  Good Friday
Fri 25 April  ANZAC Day
Mon 28 April  Term 2 starts

OLMC Parramatta Open Day – Sunday March 2

Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta invites you to its 2014 Open Day on Sunday March 2, 2014. Discover the College’s rich tradition and cutting edge education, enjoy a ‘comfortable cup of tea’ and join in the celebrations as we mark 125 years of Mercy Excellence at OLMC in 2014

Sunday, March 2 10am – 2.00pm. Principal’s welcome at 10.00am and 12.00 noon.

Reservations can be made by visiting www.olmc.nsw.edu.au or phone 8838 1263 to reserve your place or obtain further information.

Catherine McAuley Westmead

Enrolments for Year 7 2015

Catherine McAuley Westmead holds a number of School Open Mornings throughout the year.

There will be an Open Morning specifically for Year 7 2015 enrolments on:

Tuesday 11th March 2013
9.15 – 11am

These mornings will give interested parents and students the opportunity to tour our school on a normal school day. You will be able to view our school grounds and facilities, go into classrooms and meet our students and teachers. Enrolment packs will be available on the day.

To book places for a school tour on one of these tour mornings please contact our School Reception on 9849 9100.

There will also be a Year 7 2015 Enrolment Information Evening on Monday, 17th March from 6.30 – 7.30pm. This evening will provide further information on the school and the enrolment process. Completed enrolment forms may be lodged at this meeting. Prior to the presentations there will be a further opportunity to tour the school with school tours running at 5.30pm and 5.45pm.

Please RSVP for the Year 7 Enrolment Information Evening by phoning the School Reception.