FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to the new school term. On Tuesday morning the children were greeted by lots of “bubbling” and not just from the torrential rain. There was a sea of bubbles blowing across the yard. These bubbles were to highlight our term 2 theme of “Be Creative in Your Learning”. All creativity begins with ideas and the bubbles symbolized our thought bubbles flying across the school. The children certainly enjoyed the new theme. Teachers used the start of the new term to reset goals with the children as well as discuss what being creative means.

I hope that your Easter break was restful, reflective and holy – a time for more than just the Easter Show and chocolate. By this stage most of the Show bags will have disappeared and the chocolates have been eaten leaving some remnants of foil wrappings under the couch. But we are still in the Church’s Easter season and will be for the next 2 weeks as well. As Christians it is not just these 6 weeks of Easter that we celebrate, Easter is the core of our faith and lives in Jesus Christ. Without Easter we would have no Christianity. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead fulfilled God’s plan of love for us. Jesus died so that we may have an eternal life in him and the Father. His suffering and death ensured that our sinfulness and mortal lives will not be a barrier to life everlasting in God’s love. Jesus’ glorious resurrection then proved that nothing, not even death, can contain God’s love for us. This is the message of Easter, the message of Christianity, that we are all loved by God and that we can have eternity with him.

Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

Have a great week,

Attila
Principal

INFORMING ABOUT ABSENCES VIA SKOOLBAG

We are reaching nearly 600 devices through our Skoolbag app! Some parents have also discovered an easy way to inform the school of their child’s absences via the app. This function will generate an email that will be sent directly to our school office with the particulars of your child’s absence.

To do this you must firstly ensure that you have the LATEST version / UPDATE of Skoolbag. (You can check if you need to update via the notifications in the App Store) The latest version has a space to ‘sign’ the absentee note. Then proceed through the steps shown:

1. Go to the HOME page of Skoolbag

   ![Skoolbag app screen](image)

Phone: 9631 5283
Principal: Mr Attila Lendvai
Assistant Principal: Ms Linda Ducksbury
www.stanthonysgirraween.catholic.edu.au

Parish Office: 9631 3316
Parish Priest: Rev Dr Arthur Bridge, AM
Rev James Phelan & Rev Leon Decena
www.stanthonysschool.org.au
Mr Barden’s Pilgrimage Update

Greetings from Rome! It will only be about 48 hours now until I get back on the plane to Sydney after a very busy and enriching pilgrimage.

It is hard to begin to describe what we have all seen and heard over that time. We began in Jordan, visiting Mount Nebo (where Moses ended his life looking over the Promised Land) and doing the obligatory swim in the Dead Sea. While I didn’t cover myself in the mud of the sea like some do, the buoyancy is remarkable. The waves coming into shore really pick you up and carry you.

Visiting the site of the Baptism of Jesus at Bethany beyond the River Jordan seemed to change the tone of things within the group and really set us into pilgrim mode (a good night’s sleep probably helped too). It really seemed to strike us that we were following in the footsteps of Christ himself. After our short, one-night visit to Jordan, we completed the nearly two-hour long border crossing into Israel. The security is tight and you are asked lots of seeming strange questions over and over again, but eventually they let you through. The Galilee region is beautiful, even if we did have to trudge through the rain for much of our stay. The Church of the Transfiguration greeted us through the mist on the top of Mount Tabor, really giving me a sense of the awe and mystery that Peter, James and John would have experienced. Our voices echoed through the church as we sang at Mass. Fr Chris De Souza has been such a blessing to have with us on our trip. He provides such a wealth of knowledge and spiritual guidance, and is a lot of fun to have along for the ride as well.

There is so much to try and recall from the time in the Galilee. Visiting the Mount of the Beatitudes, the Basilica of the Annunciation with Mary’s House in Nazareth and witnessing the renewal of wedding vows at Cana were all moving experiences. The rain stopped and the waters on the Sea of Galilee calmed just at the right time as we went out on the boat to celebrate Mass. Then there was Capernaum with the remains of the home of Peter’s mother-in-law and Tabgha, where the feeding of the multitudes is celebrated. It has given us all such a new perspective on what we believe and what we teach.

Jerusalem was an un-missable contrast to the slower, calmer North. The holy sites are often chaotic, but like nothing else on earth. The Church of the Nativity, a short drive away in Bethlehem is a contradiction in so many ways, with politeness often put aside and politics getting in the way of a passionately guarded and sought-after place. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem is more orderly, but again the passionate devotion of multiple Christian traditions is on display. Being in the place where Christ lay for but a short time is something that cannot be described, and singing Psalm 22 at our Mass there was phenomenal. We had a unique opportunity for private prayer and silent reflection at Gethsemane. Praying the Stations of the Cross along the Via Dolorosa was powerful for many of us. It was amazing how we moved through the narrow streets we haggled in just the afternoon before, ignoring the largely non-Christian crowds around us as we remembered the sacrifice of Christ. Jericho is not far away either. We saw the Mount of Temptation, the/a Sycamore tree (think Zacchaeus), and stopped along the old road to stand on the mountains, take in the amazing landscape and understand the meaning of “the valley of the shadow of death”. It was here that I finally understood how so many biblical figures have sought God’s presence in the wilderness.

We were blessed in Israel to meet such lovely people. Our guide, Rami, was unbelievable. His knowledge of the places, and his ability to connect them all with the scriptures would, I dare say, put us all to shame. He enriched our experience and was crucial to us leaving the Holy Land as changed people. We also met in Jericho, Gabriel, who founded the pilgrimage tour company Harvest works with in Israel. His story was so deeply touching and moving that so many of us only started to realise for the first time the struggles Christians face living in the Holy Land every day. While it was safe and peaceful there our entire time, it is still a sadly divided land. The Christians of the Holy Land need our continued prayers.

Library News

Welcome back to term 2. This term we have a wonderful ANZAC display on offer as well as our ‘Be Creative in Your Learning’ display and lots of new books! This term some students from St Paul’s College, Greystanes will be teaching our Chess Club children the finer points of Chess. The St Paul’s boys will be doing this as a part of their sport time each Thursday afternoon. A BIG thank you to their Principal Mr David Bourne for this generous offer. There will be a Chess Club meeting on Friday 24th April during lunch time in the library.

Keep up with all the latest news and information

http://www.stanthonysskirwareen.catholic.edu.au facebook.com/StAnthonysG twitter @StAnthonys_G

Join the conversation #stanthonyssg
ARRIVING AT SCHOOL LATE
There are always those very rare occasions when we’re running late however we have MANY children consistently arriving to school after 9am. It is IMPERATIVE that ALL children are at school BEFORE 9am each day. Arriving even 2 minutes after 9am means that your child is LATE. Please ensure that your child can be ready for learning each day by being on time. If you are late, parents SHOULD bring their child into the school office to complete the late slip. A parent needs to SIGN off the reason for the lateness. Thank you for cooperating.

COFFEE & CHAT MORNINGS
Coffee and Chat morning begin again each Monday fortnight after the 9am Monday assembly. Please join the SCG, Mr Lendvai and Ms Ducksbury for an informal chat and cuppa. This term’s dates are in the Skoolbag calendar and here: 27/4/15; 11/5/15; 25/5/15; 8/6/15; 22/6/15.

STUDENTS OF THE TERM AWARDS
Our Students of the Term for term 1 will be awarded tomorrow, Friday 24th April at 9am. All parents are warmly invited. Recipients and their families will then be invited for a short morning tea afterwards in the library.

SCG TRIVIA NIGHT
Did you know that the word “typewriter” is the longest word in the English Language that can be spelled with the top of the keyboard? Our “World Cup” themed Trivia Night is drawing close! Make sure that you keep Friday 22nd May free for this fun-filled night of adult fun! Tables will be of 8, but singles and couples are great as well. Meet new friends and have a fun time. Tickets available soon.

NAPLAN 2015
A reminder to all Year 3 and 5 parents that the 2015 National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy will be conducted on 12th, 13th & 14th May this term.

JOKE DAY
Next Monday is Year 6’s Joke Day.

PARENTS IN YARD BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS OR FINISHES
Parents bringing their children to school in the mornings or who wait in the afternoons should stay in the undercover shade area. This is for Child Protection reasons. Please help us keep our children safe.

DEVELOPING RESPONSIBILITY
In order to build responsibility within our children, parents are asked NOT to carry their children’s bags in or out of the school. Looking after our own things and carrying these develops independence and responsibility. Even at the earliest ages, we should be encouraging these practices within our children. Thank you for helping us with these important skills.

FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM
K-6 ANTI-BULLYING ‘SPEAKING UP’
This Thursday and Friday our Year 6 students will participate in leadership training for their role as peer support leaders. Miranda from Peer Support Australia came out to speak with Year 6 to kick start the two-day program. It was a busy day of learning and they are looking forward to tomorrow.

Throughout term 2, we will be running our Peer Support program K-6 on a Friday afternoon. All students across the school will participate in sessions focused around the anti-bullying module, ‘SPEAKING UP’. There will be 7-8 students in each group and they will meet weekly for activities, discussions and games focusing on anti-bullying.

Peer Support Australia’s anti-bullying training focuses on a whole school approach, inclusive of school staff, students and parents. The program includes a range of strategies for all members of the school community to make a positive contribution to reducing the incidence of bullying behaviours and supports students to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to make a positive contribution to the creation and maintenance of a safe school environment.

Look out for the anti-bullying and social skill messages in each week’s newsletter that you can use to discuss these themes with your child at home. You are also invited to join us on Friday afternoons for our whole school assembly at 3.00-3.15pm.

SOCIAL SKILLS
Next week’s social skill is: PUTTING A SMILE ON SOMEONE’S DIAL

At St Anthony’s, we love to put a smile on everyone’s dial! We all know it feels great when people make us smile or laugh. But isn’t it so rewarding when you are the person responsible for putting that big smile, giggle or
laugh on the face of another. Smiling and happiness is infectious so smile yourself and make it your mission every day to put a smile on someone’s dial and notice the joy that it spreads!

DANCE FEVER RETURNS TO ST ANTHONY’S! ......
Matty and Rach from Dance Fever started their dance classes yesterday. Each grade K-6 will participate in dance lessons each Wednesday. They are lots of fun and the children learn valuable dance and movement skills. It is great to watch the student’s dance skills improve over the term. Dance Fever will culminate with a Dance Spectacular at Homebush in the final weeks of school. All parents will be warmly invited to attend this fantastic display. Details next week. (Keep an eye on your child’s grade blog for Dance Fever photos.

ICAS – INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS AND ASSESSMENTS FOR SCHOOLS
Information about 2015 ICAS competitions is being sent home today. This year we are offering Science, Spelling, English and Mathematics. Students in Years 3-6 are eligible to participate. Please note the testing dates as the tests are administered on these days and there are no catch ups. If your child will be registering for one or more of these competitions, please complete and return the note by Friday 1st May. Notes returned after this date may prevent students from participating as they will not be registered.

Kind Regards
Linda Ducksbury
Assistant Principal

CURRICULUM OVERVIEWS
With today’s newsletter, you will also receive your child’s grade Curriculum Overview. Please take time to read the overview and then keep it somewhere prominent so you can refer back to the learning that is happening across the term. This is a great way to initiate good learning conversations with your child rather than “What did you do at school today?”

WINTER UNIFORM
All students should have returned to school in their winter uniform however the first 2 weeks of term 2 are always a grace period where parents can choose which uniform they would prefer their child to wear according to the weather conditions. By Monday 4th May ALL children should be in their WINTER uniform. A new very warm WINTER ‘bomber’ style jacket is now available for children who may need added warmth during winter. Uniform shop is open on Mondays between 2:45pm and 3:15pm otherwise use the pre-order form system – much easier and convenient especially for working parents.

SPRING FAIR 2015
Unfortunately due to the torrential weather conditions last Tuesday, it was decided to postpone the first Spring Fair meeting. A new date will be found and communicated very soon. We want to make this year’s Fair the best fair ever but we need YOU to help! The Spring Fair is our MAJOR fundraiser and a community tradition. Please ensure that your family will be able to contribute to helping us.

BOOK CLUB
Please note Scholastic have changed the way they are running Bookclub, our school is now part of the Loop (LOOP) Ordering System. What this means is that you can now only pay by credit card online and you should be redirected to a website where you can easily enter your order and pay via scholastic’s secure Westpac payment gateway. You then do not need to return anything to school as we are able to see the orders as they come through and will validate them. If however, you are paying by cash or cheque you still need to fill in the order form, which is now located towards the back of the brochure (not the back page) and return this with your money to school ON Wednesday 30th April, 2015.

CANTEEN ROSTER
27th APRIL – 1st MAY

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<th>Monday</th>
<th>Biddy O'Malley</th>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Biddy O'Malley, Margaret Sainsbury</td>
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<td>Sue Adams</td>
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Reminder to Years 1 & 3 that your Morning Tea Hashbrown Meal Deal orders are due back tomorrow, Friday 24th April, 29015.

ENROLMENTS FOR 2016
Applications for enrolment at St Anthony’s are now available until Friday 29th May. Application forms and information packages will be available from the school office during that period. Please contact the office on 9631 5283 if you have any questions.

Please note that, even if an older child is attending St Anthony’s, forms must still be returned by 29th May.

Keep up with all the latest news and information
www.stanthonysgirraween.catholic.edu.au facebook.com/StAnthony'sG twitter @StAnthony's_G
Join the conversation #stanthonysg