

26th March 2020

Issue 8

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School



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The Vine



Principal's Report

A Prayer for Inner Peace and Calmness

*Slow me down, Lord!
Ease the pounding of my heart
By the quieting of my mind.
Steady my harried pace with a vision of the eternal reach of time.
Give me, amidst the confusions of my day,
The calmness of the everlasting hills.
Break the tensions of my nerves with the soothing music
of the singing streams that live in my memory.
Help me to know the magical power of sleep,
Teach me the art of taking minute vacations
Of slowing down to look at a flower;
To chat with an old friend or make a new one;
To pet a dog; To watch a spider build a web; To smile at a child;
Or to read a few lines from a good book.
Remind me each day that the race is not always won by the swift;
That there is more to life than increasing its speed.
Let me look upward into the branches of the towering oak
And know that it grew great and strong because it grew slowly and well.
Slow me down, Lord,
And inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of life's enduring values.
That I may grow toward the stars of our greater destiny.
Amen*



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

I would like to thank you all for your support and understanding in these very difficult times. This is all very new and unprecedented for us, and the staff are working tirelessly in trying to maintain normality for the children attending school, provide face-to-face learning for those still in attendance, all whilst trying to navigate a new way of providing education to our students through remote learning.

Following Premier Mark McGowan's address earlier today, **parents should keep their children at home from now on.** Those families who are in the situation where children cannot be cared for at home due to the provision of essential services or who are vulnerable, may still send their children to school, where they will continue to be taught until April 3rd. From April 6th (Monday Week 10), supervision will only be provided for children who continue to attend school due to parents needing to provide essential services, while staff engage in Professional Development to develop online and remote learning resources for Term 2. Parents are requested to inform me of their intention to send their child to school. This decision has been made to prioritise the health and wellbeing of the Western Australian community and is based on the best national medical advice.

Please be assured that while our school remains open, social distancing will be enforced and cleaning regimes will continue to be completed to the highest possible standards to mitigate risks associated with the spread of the COVID-19 virus. I ask that you also have conversations with your child about the importance of these measures. If your child is feeling unwell in any way, please keep them at home.

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COVID-19 is a changing situation that is affecting many areas of our lives, and it is normal for all of us to feel anxious and worried, your child included. If your children are participating in remote learning, go slow! Your child's mental health is our priority and we feel this is far more important than academics. Do things with them – bake a cake, paint a picture, teach them how to sew a button, learn a dance, give them a cuddle on the couch and read to them (yes ... even if they're in Year 6!). There is a lot going on for most of our families that is causing stress and anxiety, which impacts on our children, no matter how hard we try to hide it. I do urge parents to continue to give your children comfort and love, reassuring them that everything will be ok. Continue to focus on connections and feelings of safety. Unfortunately, stressed and tired adults can't teach stressed kids. It is ok if you don't get through all the work your child's teacher has set. Continue to communicate with your child's teacher – I assure you they are very understanding and accommodating and will offer help and support wherever they can.

As a result of the impact the coronavirus is having on the education sector, the decision has been made to cancel NAPLAN testing this year and the Bishops Religious Literacy Assessment. There will also be impacts on other learning programs and experiences that are usually offered at our school. As communicated via email to parents, our Athletics carnival has been cancelled, along with our Holy Week celebrations, class Masses and Liturgies and school assemblies. We will continue to assess the viability of events planned in the future as to whether they will continue to go ahead or not...only time will tell!

We have some staff who have taken leave – some for short periods and others for more extended times. Mrs Meg Ryan will be taking leave until the end of Term 2. Mrs Merridith Newman and Mrs Alice Tippett will cover her days in the respective Year 1 and Year 3 classrooms. Mr Cameron McRae, Mrs Flic Pascoe, Mrs Kaye Stanley and Mrs Jane Wolf will all be taking leave until the end of the term.

Finally, we farewelled Mrs Dianne Quintrell on Tuesday, as she has made the decision to move to Derby for the remainder of the year to take up a Teacher Assistant position at Derby District High School. I know Dianne made a lot of strong connections with many families in our school and I think it is a testament to the compassion, care and dedication she has always demonstrated to our students and families. Dianne will be sadly missed, and I wish her all the very best for her new adventure. We have been fortunate to have secured Mrs Renae Cummins to replace Dianne, whom I know many of you already know, as she is an ex-staff member of St Thomas More. We welcome Renae back and look forward to working with her for the remainder of the year.

I urge everyone to continue to stay safe, show kindness and compassion to one another, take deep breaths and pray often.

Peace and best wishes,

RUSSELL WYLIE
PRINCIPAL

A Note from the Community Health Nurse

My name is Karen Bryen and I am the Community Health Nurse who visits your school. I work with a team of School Health Nurses (Jill Rogers, Serena Robinson, Rochelle Mead and Danielle Marsden).

Community Health Nurses work in schools to promote healthy development and wellbeing so students may reach their full potential. A major part of my work is focused on early intervention and the School Entry Health Assessment program.

Community Health Nurses serve as a health contact point for children and their families, providing information, assessment, health counselling and referral. The services provided are free and confidential.

If you have a concern about your child's health or development, please contact me on 9753 6476 or
Email: WACHS-SW.NaturalistePrimarySchoolNurses@heath.wa.gov.au

Absentees



A reminder to parents that there is a simple way to let us know your child is absent from school, while providing a note at the same time. Jump on our app or website! There is an easy online form that can be completed and it is directly emailed to the school. Too easy! Either download our school app – **Connected** (password is **Wisdom6285**) or visit our website <https://stmcpss.wa.edu.au/> and go to the Communication tab to select Online Absentee.

You can also ring the school on the Absentee line on 9758 8042 and leave a message of the child's name, class and reason for absence and then send a note in with your child when they return to school.

Assistant Principal News

During these trying times, we need a sense of connection more than ever – connection to each other and connection with God through prayer. Let us pray together for an end to the Covid-19 Corona Virus pandemic:

Dear God,

In this time of illness and worldwide need we seek your intercession for the human family.

We ask for strength in adversity, health in weakness, and comfort in sorrow.

Help us to be filled with confidence and trust in the tender compassion of our God.

*Continue to watch over all who are sick as well as those who care for them
and give wisdom to all who are seeking a cure.*

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Fifth Week of Lent 2020 (Sunday 29 March)

We sometimes use examples from nature to help describe this mystery of our faith. Jesus himself talked about the seed that dies when planted in the ground in order to produce new life (John 12:24). Using that image and others, we find hope and confidence in Jesus, the Resurrection and the life.

Project Compassion – Tawonga from Malawi

Tawonga is a 10-year-old girl, living with a disability. She lives in a village in northern Malawi in a region plagued by food insecurity and poverty. For most of her life, her parents have struggled to put meals on the table. Tawonga often had to miss school because she was too sick from hunger. The family also faced discrimination in their community due to her disability.



Since participating in a Caritas Australia supported program, Tawonga's life has transformed. Her family now grows enough food to provide three meals a day, ending the struggle of malnutrition, and helping her thrive at school.

Tawonga, whose name means 'thank you', says her community is blessed with many resources, like rivers, fertile soil and hills. However, with dry spells followed by floods, armyworm infestations and crop failures, her parents struggled to make a living.

In 2016, Tawonga's parents heard about the A+ program run by Caritas Australia's partner, CADECOM (Catholic Development Commission in Malawi). They learned irrigation farming and were given fertiliser and high-yield seeds. With these new techniques, their production of crops almost tripled.

With your help, this transformational program can continue to empower vulnerable women, men and children, and strengthen the communities around them. Let's Go Further, Together.



Sacrament of Penance (Reconciliation)

The Sacrament of Penance was postponed on Tuesday 24 March due to Covid-19 Corona Virus. A new date will be set later in the year.

Have a wonderful week ahead. Keep well and safe.

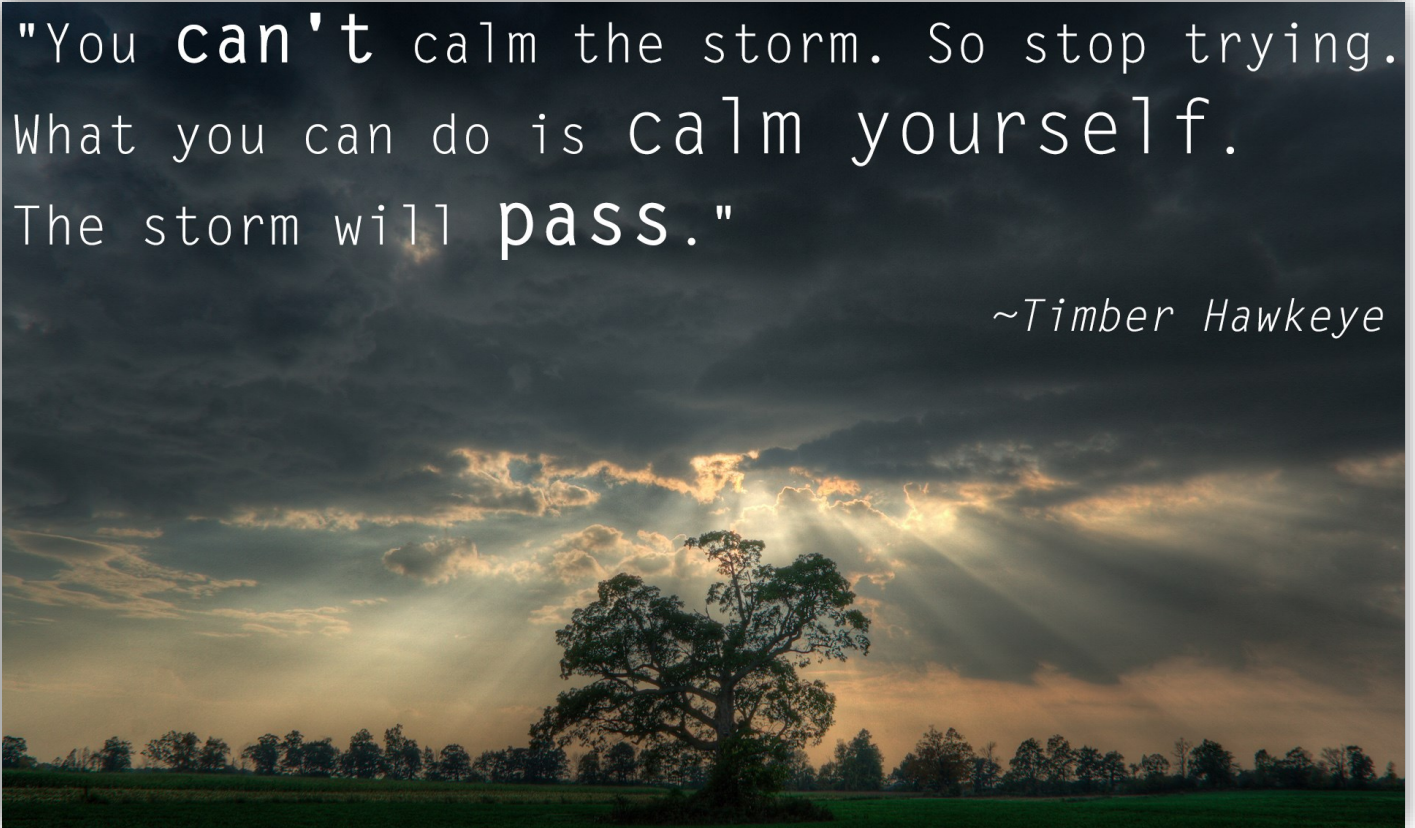
God bless,

**NICOLLE ACHMAD
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**

Thought of the Week

"You can't calm the storm. So stop trying.
What you can do is calm yourself.
The storm will pass."

~Timber Hawkeye



Congratulations!

School Merit Award Winners Week 7

Pre-Primary	Isaac Shepherd
Year 2	Paige Hayward
Year 5	Paris Lowe
Year 6	Kobi Walton

The **Uniform Shop** is open on
Tuesday afternoons only
between 1.30pm and 3.00pm.

