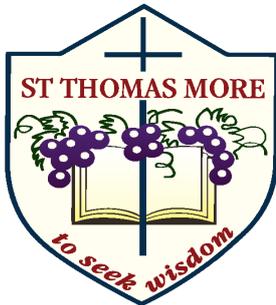


2nd April 2020

Issue 9

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School



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The Vine



Principal's Report

Prayer for Palm Sunday

*Jesus, Lord of Life, show us how to live.
During this time, when many people are feeling
fearful, angry, sad or worried,
teach us to live deeply into this difficult experience,
that we might find meaning and purpose.
Open our eyes to see the immensity of your love for us
and the wonder of what you have done for us.
Give us the courage to be your hands and heart for those in pain.
May this period of dying and new life,
be another step on our journey to discover you.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

During these continuing uncertain times, we pray that all families are remaining safe and well. Over the course of the past week, the teaching staff have been working hard on ensuring ongoing education is occurring for each student enrolled at our school. I am amazed at the resilience our students display, as I hear stories from teachers of class meetings taking place, work being loaded up onto See Saw or Teams and a variety of activities being completed to a high standard. In such a short period of time, our teaching staff have learned to use new platforms for remote learning to take place on, tailor their programs to ensure they can be delivered differently and revisit the curriculum to see how it can be presented in a way that is achievable and easily understood by families at home. We are all still figuring out how remote learning can be best delivered, and I thank the wonderful staff here for meeting the challenge that has been presented in innovative and thoughtful ways. Of course, nothing always works the way we want and there are bumps along the road, but I applaud the staff for ensuring a remote education is still being provided each day.

We understand that in these challenging times, some families find this situation difficult and sometimes stressful. I thank all parents and caregivers for the way they have embraced this new way of education and have communicated with our teachers and school. We appreciate all that families are doing to continue helping your children learn. I urge all parents to keep in contact with the teachers so we can work to provide continued high levels of pastoral care for all. During this Lent, which is a time for reflection, it is important to remember that there is always someone there for you. It is during times like these that our faith and belonging to a community of faith will help us through to the other side. We will make it through to the other side, however, once we do, it is likely to be very different. The world we are living in will be changed forever. Personally, I believe that a lot of good things will come from this challenging and unprecedented time.

Continued over

Principal's Reportcontinued from Page 1

Remote Learning

A copy of our Remote Learning Plan will be coming out today, which will assist in guiding parents in implementing remote learning and setting some guidelines for students as they undertake this new model of education. As school will officially conclude for the term tomorrow, teaching staff will be in contact with families before the commencement of Term 2 with further instructions of what next term will look like. For now, the teachers are preparing work for next term that will be a blend of online learning and rich open-ended tasks like those you have in the working from home kits sent home last week. Once we know more, it will be communicated to you. I suspect, at this stage, students will continue to remain at home and education will be delivered remotely for the first few weeks of Term 2. Only time will tell!

As the term concludes, officially next week, teachers will not be sending any learning activities home over the next week. Schools have been asked to continue to provide supervision for children of essential workers and of course also for those parents who require to maintain their employment, or due to a personal situation. Parents wishing to access this supervision need to put this in writing addressed to the Principal.

School Fees

As addressed in the letter sent out from Dr Debra Sayce, Executive Director of CEWA and myself, the ongoing enrolment of every child is guaranteed irrespective of a family's financial situation. If you are experiencing financial difficulties because of the Coronavirus, please make sure you contact myself and/or Karien Rollinger to discuss ways in which we can assist you regarding school fees. One of the most important things you can do is contact Centre Link and get a Health Care Card which will allow you to get a significant discount. It is very important to us that we look after our families in these difficult times.

Travel Ban

A reminder to all families of the newly imposed travel restrictions for the South West that have been added to the already extensive state-wide response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These restrictions, while confronting for some of us, are vital to our State's efforts to prevent community transmission of COVID-19 and protect regional and remote communities, including those that are most vulnerable. I ask that families observe these over the Easter period.

Easter

I would like to wish all of you a safe, healthy and holy Easter. It will be very weird not being able to go to Church over the coming weeks, however, all Cathedral Masses are available on YouTube and Bishop Gerard Holohan's homilies are available on the Diocese of Bunbury website. We certainly are entering a new reality! This Sunday begins Holy Week, with Palm Sunday and leads to the Easter Triduum - a celebration which extends over three days. It begins with the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper when we remember that Jesus gave himself in the Eucharist and today continues to give himself to us. We recall that at this meal, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. The Triduum continues through to Good Friday when we remember the Lord's passion and reaches its high point when we wait for Christ to come from the darkness of the tomb and rise once again in glory. These three days are the most important of the Church year.

I encourage all families to spend some time thinking about the true meaning of Easter and praying for those in our community who are most vulnerable.

Peace and best wishes,

RUSSELL WYLIE
PRINCIPAL

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://stmcps.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

Palm Sunday 2020 (Sunday 5 April 2020)

Palm Sunday is the last Sunday of Lent, before we begin Holy Week next week. Palm Sunday celebrates Jesus' arrival into Jerusalem on a donkey with hundreds of people cheering. At that time, people waved palm branches as a sign of celebration. Many people were thrilled that Jesus had finally come to Jerusalem. On Palm Sunday, we carry palm fronds as a symbol of entering the Gospel story with Jesus. This year, Palm Branches will be blessed and available for parishioners to collect from the entrance of the Church after 10am on Sunday. Please collect a palm frond to take home.

Project Compassion – Dominic from Papua New Guinea

Dominic, 47 is a father of six from Papua New Guinea. In 2016, he became involved with Caritas Australia's partner, Centre of Hope, who runs safe house and family anonymous programs and turned a difficult life and an unhappy relationship around.



Now a community trainer, he works with other men to help them to change their behaviour and build more harmonious family lives.

Domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse and limited employment opportunities mean that many in PNG struggle to meet their basic family needs. Forty percent of its population lives below the poverty line.

In 2016, Caritas Australia and its PNG partner, Centre of Hope, invited Dominic to join its Safe House program. It provides Gender-Based-Violence prevention training, counselling services and safe accommodation for women and children survivors of violence. It also provides support for income-generating projects and life skills for young people.

"After entering the Caritas program, I have actually changed some of my bad attitudes. It has really opened my mind and heart to see where my weaknesses are and I'm trying to improve," Dominic says.

Please help support the Safe House project and help bring greater harmony to families in Papua New Guinea. A brighter future for men, women and their families can start today. Let's Go Further, Together.

Have a wonderful week ahead. Keep well and safe.

God bless,

**NICOLLE ACHMAD
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**



Thought of the Week

