Dear Parents and Carers,

We are now officially in the season of Advent. According to church teaching this should be a time of reflection and preparing our hearts to welcome Jesus. Personally I am finding that a real challenge at this really busy time. Last Friday afternoon, in my role as a member of the Catholic Education Commission, I attended the end of year Mass and dinner. Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Christopher Prowse and Monsignor John Woods in the side chapel of St Christopher’s Cathedral. As I slumped into my seat about 10 minutes early after a busy day I felt myself relax. Then I heard angels – well not ones with wings – these were Year 10 students from St Mary MacKillop College. The singing was beautiful and Mass was simple but I was reminded, again, that taking time to be with my God does not have to be hard. A walk, a sit in a quiet spot, Mass during the week. It restored my spirit.

This Sunday we will celebrate the Second Sunday of Advent. In the Gospel from Luke we hear that ‘a voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.’ Perhaps the wilderness today is not the harsh desert at the time of Jesus, the wilderness might be our obsession with all things technological, so much so that we do not have a moment of silence in our lives. How can we hear the whisper of the Spirit?

The second reading is from St Paul’s letter to the Philippians. St Paul is thanking the people of Philippi for the support and love they showed him. It is a beautiful reading and I have some sense of how Paul was feeling as he wrote to his friends. I feel the same about the wonderful community of St Gregory’s Primary School – ‘Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped me to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present.’

I pray that you may experience some moments of grace during Advent so that, as well as practical preparations, your spirit will be ready too.

Claire Frazer
Principal
From the Principal......

PRAYERS: As we enter the season of Advent we keep in our thoughts and prayers all those who dread Christmas – because they mourn the loss of a loved one or because of the financial burden that this time of year can bring.

CONGRATULATIONS: Kristi Lloyd and her husband Josh were pleased to announce the safe, but early, arrival of another beautiful boy, Isaac Joshua Lloyd. Born at 6:06pm on Thursday 26th November, weighing 3.33kg and 49cm long! Mum and baby are both well and Gerry and Lola are smitten with their little brother.

YEAR 5 CAMP: A very happy and exciting time was had by all, including the teachers. When I visited on Thursday night the staff of the camp spoke very highly of the students – their manners, enthusiasm, listening skills and care for each other! The teachers were equally positive in their praise of the students indicating that they could enjoy the camp too. What wonderful feedback about our Year 5 students as they prepare to be our student leaders. Congratulations to all! I am very proud of you.

YEAR 6 THANKSGIVING MASS: Will be held tomorrow, Wednesday, in our beautiful St Gregory’s Church at 10am. This is a very special Mass that provides our students and their families the opportunity to reflect on the many blessings they have experienced whilst a part of this school community. It is also a time when we can pray for the future health, safety and happiness of our students. I am very sad that I will be apology for this Mass. Regrettably I have a meeting with the Director for Catholic Education – Moira Najdecki and the Vicar for Catholic Education – Monsignor John Woods that I simply cannot miss.

SEMESTER 2 REPORTS: Reports will be sent home with students this Friday. Please contact the school on Monday morning if you do not receive reports. Please keep in mind that the reports indicate the assessment of the content covered during Semester 2. It does not necessarily mean a decline in effort if a student grade goes from a B to a C. it may reflect more challenging content. Remember teachers will be available for interviews next week – except 5 Gold. Bookings can be made online until 11pm Friday 4 December. Click the PTO link on the home page or under the Notes tab on the school website or https://bookings.parentteacheronline.com.au?school=s8gbe. Your PIN is the same as used earlier this year. Please contact Jane King (6297 2221) if you are unsure of your PIN or have misplaced it.

CLASSES 2016: The long and complex process of allocating students to class groupings is complete. This process begins with the teachers using their professional judgement to allocate students. The Leadership Team and Maryann Tarrant from Learning Support then also view the lists considering any information I give from my meetings with individual parents. We also take into consideration the recommendations of treating specialists such as Paediatricians, Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists, Psychologists and Psychiatrists. My thanks to the teachers for their expertise and suggestions.

SWEARING: Not sure if it is coincidence but since mentioning this issue in the newsletter last week there has been a noticeable decline in incidents of swearing. My thanks to everyone for your support.

HOME LEARNING POLICY: The Curriculum Team led by Kate McManus-Green in consultation with the wider staff community, the parents (Survey) and the School Community Council have prepared the St Gregory’s Home Learning Policy. The Rationale state that Home Learning experiences provide opportunities for students to become more responsible for their own learning and growth. The term ‘Home Learning’ refers to a wide range of learning experiences undertaken by children and their families outside school hours. The full policy is available on the school website.
REGISTRATION FOR THE SACRAMENT OF FIRST RECONCILIATION FOR YEAR 3 (2016) STUDENTS

Registration for the Sacrament of First Reconciliation for children who will be in Year 3 in 2016 has commenced. Please register your child before 11 February, 2016.

Your child must be baptised to receive the Sacrament of First Reconciliation. Paperwork can be downloaded from the parish website at:
http://www.stgregorysparishqueanbeyan.com/sacred-room/sacraments/first-reconciliation/

Payment can be made via our on-line payment option on the website:
http://www.stgregorysparishqueanbeyan.com/engine-room/online-payments/

Please call the parish office if you have any questions regarding this sacrament on 6299 4611.

Thank you. St Gregory’s Parish Queanbeyan

FIRST RECONCILIATION

LIBRARY NEWS

ACCELERATED READER
Congratulations to Eden D’Souza (4Red) and Grace Horrocks (5Red) who are our newest Accelerated Reader Millionaires!! Well done also to Beau Cox (4Gold) and Nicholas Coleman (4Gold) for becoming members of the AR 50s Club by achieving 85% on more than 50 reading quizzes!! All of these students will be invited to the end of term Accelerated Reader VIP party on Monday week 10.

LIBRARY LOANS
We are in the process of receiving student and teacher loans and processing them. Please keep looking for your books at home especially if you are in Year 6 or leaving us next year. We ask for a lost book fee of $10 to help us replace your lost books. Overdue notices have been given to students last week. If you receive such a notice please look at home because we will then be sure they are not in our Library – Mrs Greentree, Mrs Carroll and Mrs Wythes.

CHRISTMAS BASKETS

The Queanbeyan Vinnies group prepares several food hampers for local residents each week. Help us to support others especially at Christmas by sending in Christmas hamper items. When you are grocery shopping in the next couple of weeks please add an extra item to your trolley. The following are suggestions; however, you may wish to also include pasta and sauces, drinks, tinned fish or special Christmas items such as tinned hams, mince pies, cakes, puddings, custard, jams etc:

- Kindergarten – Candy canes or bon bons
- Year 1 – Shortbread biscuits or packet jelly
- Year 2 – Tinned corn, beetroot or pineapple
- Year 3 – Savoury biscuits/crackers
- Year 4 – Chips, Cheezels, Pringles, corn chips
- Year 5 – Tinned fruit
- Year 6 – Sweet biscuits or long life custard

Please send in donations during December to the baskets in the classrooms.
https://www.vinnies.org.au/donate

CHRISTMAS TREE

Riverside Plaza are holding their Christmas Tree decorating competition again this year. St Gregory’s students have made many beautiful decorations and the tree looks amazing.

Please visit Riverside Plaza and vote for St Gregory’s Tree. Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd. Voting slips are also available at the school offices.

HOME READERS

The Home Reading Program is finished for 2015 to allow our wonderful Learning Support Assistants to complete a stock take and prepare for 2016. Please return all borrowed books this week. All families are encouraged to maintain a reading regime during the holidays – it is amazing how much progress can be lost if reading is abandoned during the long Christmas break. Don’t forget to read in front of your children – this is a very powerful message. Thank you.

CANTEEN NEWS

Mini Vinnies will be running a fun activity during lunch time to help raise money for the Christmas Appeal. They need donations of empty milo tins and 2L plastic bottles sent to school please – Lauren Macdonald, REC.

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JUNIOR CAROLS

Deck the Halls

With boughs of holly. Fa la la la la, la la la la!

what: Junior Christmas Carols
when: Monday, 7th December 10am - 11am
where: St Gregory's Hall
rsvp: Children to wear Christmas themed clothes
details: K, Yr1 & Yr2 will sing favourite Christmas carols. Parents welcome!

NOTICEBOARD

Queanbeyan Festival of Ability
Community Celebration
4th December - 4pm - 8pm
Queanbeyan Park

"Eden Breeze Wedsday" hosting
High Tea
and

BINGO

Saturday 5th December
2pm to 4pm
Grace Church Hall—Rollidge St, Queanbeyan

$25 per person for the first 2 games with
high tea provided
Cash Prizes, Christmas Themed, Raffles, Lucky Door Prize
& Much More

For booking info, Please contact:
Ellison on 0416 294 135, Megan on 0407 685 170 or Sheryl on
0416 165 947

All funds raised will go towards CMP's upcoming trip to

Thank you to all the sponsors and volunteers