Dear Parents and Carers,

Tomorrow is Ash Wednesday which marks the beginning of the season of Lent. The Church sets aside the weeks before Easter as a time of penance, reflection, fasting and prayer so that we can be ready to experience the blessings of Easter.

Lent is traditionally the time when individuals elect to ‘give something up’. This self-denial is one way of bringing to mind the sacrifices that Jesus made out of love and mercy for us. Lent can also be a time when we take on something. We might choose to go to Mass, spend some time each day praying, and decide not to participate in gossip or donate time or money to a charity.

Lent is also a time when we are encouraged to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation. Reconciliation or Confession as it was known is I believe the most misunderstood and underused sacrament. If I said to someone that you can spend a short period of time with another person and at the end be free of guilt and have a sense of the boundless love and forgiveness of God I am sure that people would see this as a very positive experience. However people often have a negative view, feeling that the weight of sin is the most important element of this sacrament. This is so far from the truth it is not what we have done wrong it is about how much God loves. In this year of Mercy how wonderful would it be if we could all avail ourselves of the sacrament of forgiveness.

If you would like to know more about the Sacrament of Reconciliation please do not hesitate to contact me I would love to have a chat to anyone who would like to understand this Sacrament a little better.

Tomorrow all children will have a cross of ash placed on their foreheads. The ashes used are the palms from Palm Sunday last year that are burnt for use on Ash Wednesday. The ashes are to remind us that we belong to God.

May you always be aware of the great Mercy of God,

Claire Frazer
Principal
From the Principal…….

PRAYERS: We hold in our thoughts and prayers the members of our community who are ill particularly Anne Jochimsen who is very sick at this time.

CONGRATULATIONS: Stephanie Ellis and Josh Goodall who were married in a beautiful ceremony in Sydney on the weekend. Welcome our second Mrs Goodall!

GOING HOME: Last Friday a couple of our junior students organised an afternoon get together with one student catching the bus home with another. This was not something that either mum had planned and fortunately the ‘plan’ was uncovered before any stress to parents had been caused. Bag tags that indicate the afternoon routine are a great idea. If a normal routine needs to change please notify the office staff. It might be timely to have a chat to your child about how important it is to stick to the plan that you have for their safe travel home.

YEAR 6 ASSEMBLY: I could not help but feel very proud at the Leadership Induction Assembly held last Friday. The behaviour and engagement by the Year 6 students was exemplary and I feel very confident that we have an excellent group of student leaders. Special congratulations to our 4 School Captains for 2016 – Ehtan Barac, Lachlan Fitzpatrick, Anessa Nappo and Lilly Vanderpol.

SWIMMING CARNIVAL: What a glorious day for a Swimming Carnival! There were regular reminders to apply sunscreen and to keep shirts on! So hopefully there are no reports of sunburn. My thanks to the teachers who go without their entitled breaks during carnivals to ensure the smooth and safe running of the event. Thanks to the parents who were able to come along and offer assistance. Finally thanks to Matt Maloney who is responsible for coordinating the day.

PARENT INFORMATION NIGHT: It was terrific to see so many parents come along to the information sessions held last week. If you were not able to attend please make sure that you have all paperwork that was distributed. Remember that you can always email teachers, links to email addresses are located on the school website. Sadly a child sustained an injury whilst playing during the Information Sessions – next year any children who come along will need to stay with parents in the classroom or be in the hall for supervision.

FIRST RECONCILAIOTN PREPARATION: This Thursday all of the Year 3 teachers will participate in a teacher retreat day. Fr. Troy and the teachers will be praying and planning for the preparation of the children who will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. Relief teachers have been employed to teach Year 3 this Thursday.

SOCIAL MEDIA: It has come to my attention that some negative comments about our school are posted on social media sites. If parents come and speak to me directly regarding any issues we may be far more productive in solving issues.

PARKING IN PARISH CARPARK: Lowe Street parents are reminded that parking is not permitted in the small parish car park when dropping off or picking up children from the Lowe Street campus. This car park is reserved for parish staff or visitors to the parish. The showground carpark is available to parents and is a much safer option. Thank you for your consideration.

HATS: All students need a school hat – students are not permitted to wear other hats. Hats are available for purchase for $10. Please ensure that all clothing is labelled clearly.

TEACHING LEARNING COMMUNITIES: The first of 9 Teaching Learning Communities (TLC) meetings for teachers will be held next Monday 15th February. This means that classroom teachers will be released for a 75 minute session and relief teachers have been employed to cover classes. Teachers meet in colour groups and the timetable for the day is as follows: RED 9.15-10.30, GOLD 10.45-12.00, RED 12.15 – 1.30 and BLUE 1.45-3.00.

HOMEWORK CLUB: A free homework club for students of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island background is run by Barnardos at Queanbeyan Public School on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 3-5pm. Please contact Denise Green on phone 6124 3800 if you are interested.
St Gregory’s School communicates with parents by various means. The Newsletter is uploaded to the school website [http://stgregsps.nsw.edu.au/newsletter/] & Skoolbag on Tuesday of each school week. We will NOT be sending home paper copies after Week 5. It is our intent to email the newsletter to as many families as possible. A limited number of paper copies will be available for collection from the school offices. We encourage the use of either email or the school website/Skoolbag as the most viable option of receiving the Newsletter as this fits with our initiative to make the school more sustainable. If you are not receiving the newsletter by email and would like to, please contact Jane King on 6297 2221 or email jane.king@cg.catholic.edu.au

**St Gregory’s Skoolbag App**, is a smart phone mobile app through which the school can communicate directly with iPhone and Android devices. The newsletter, notes, alerts, information, instant messages and reminders are updated regularly on Skoolbag. We encourage all families to download the App. To install, search for our school name “St Gregory’s School Queanbeyan” in either the Apple App Store or Google Play Store. Skoolbag is also available for Windows Phones running version 8.1 of Windows, and Windows devices running Windows 8.1 or 10 (eg Surface tablet, Laptop, PC etc). This makes the app even more accessible than before to our parent community, with the ability to receive messages directly to a PC, Laptop, or Surface Tablet running Windows 8.1 or 10.

To install Skoolbag on your Windows device, look up “Skoolbag” in the Windows Store, and install it. Once installed you can find your school, and pin it to your Windows Home Screen.

NB: You must be running at least Windows 8.1 on your device for the app to function.

Twitter @stgregsqbn enables the school to broadcast short messages about events happening during the day, updates on school excursions, camps and sporting events.

In addition, an online calendar listing school activities and special events is available on the school website [http://stgregsps.nsw.edu.au/aboutus/schoolcalendar.html]. Calendar dates are also listed in the Important Events section on the front page of the newsletter each week.

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**REMINDER TO PARENTS TO REGISTER THEIR CHILDREN FOR SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

Please register your child before 9th February, 2016. Your child must be baptised to receive the Sacrament of First Reconciliation, and be in at least Year 3. Paperwork can be downloaded from the parish website [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.

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**KINDER - YEAR 4 CLASSES WILL PARTICIPATE IN GYMNASTICS LESSONS ONCE PER WEEK DURING TERM ONE.**

MacQuoid Street lessons will be held in the school hall and Lowe Street lessons in the Lowe Street multipurpose room.

Please wear sport uniform on these days.

**Mondays -** 2 White, 2 Blue, 2 Gold, 2 Red, 4 White, 4 Red and 4 Gold.

**Tuesdays -** 3 Gold, 3 Red, 3 Blue, 3 White and K Gold.

**Wednesdays -** K Red, K Blue, K White, 1 Red, 1 Blue, 1 White and 1 Gold.

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**OUR SCHOOL RULES**

*Stay Safe,*

*Be Fair,*

*Show Respect.*

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**CANTEEN NEWS**

Helpers at Lowe Street this week are:

**Thursday 11 February**

Denise Oldfield

**Friday 12 February**

Bethany Butterfield

Canteen volunteers are always welcome. Please contact either canteen to volunteer your time, even if you are only available for an hour. Thank you.

A reminder that in this hot weather to please ensure children’s packed lunches are kept in cooler bags with ice bricks. Please do not leave cooked food in lunch bags to consume at second break unless it is well insulated.
Goodbye and Good Luck Mrs White!  

Mrs Janine White is retiring from Harris Park Preschool after 31 years.

We would like you to join us for a family picnic in Mrs White’s honour, as a way of thanking her for everything she has done for the Queanbeyan community and all of the Pre-schoolers who she has taught over the years, past and present.

When: Friday, 12 February 2016
Where: Harris Park Preschool Corner Isabell Street and Lowe Street, Queanbeyan
Time: 6:00pm to 7:00pm
(Formal Presentation to be held at 7:00pm)
RSVP: Monday, 9 February 2016
(Please let us know if you are attending so we can cater appropriately)

It will be an evening full of fun and laughter with a sausage sizzle, face painting and jumping castles just to name a few.

So bring your picnic blanket, well wishes and favourite memories of Mrs White and we hope to see you there!

Queanbeyan Social Basketball

Enrolment/Payment Night
Date: Thursday 4th February 2016
Time: 5-7:30pm
Venue: Basketball Stadium
Contact Rosie E: pete35@tpg.com.au
Grades - Kindergarten to Year 6

Register now at
www.aussiehoops.com.au

Queanbeyan Basketball Stadium

Italian for Kids @ St. Gregory’s Lowe and MacQuoid students

4th February 2016, Thursday to 7th April 2015, Thursday
Venue: St. Gregory’s Parish, 47 Lowe St
Time: 3:25 to 4:30 p.m.
Fees Term One: $155 per child
Sibling discount 10%

Note: The LCF Italian Teacher will accompany your child from Lowe St Campus to St. Gregory’s Parish Room at 3p.m. Please prepare some snacks for them.

For enquiry and enrolment, please contact LCF Fun Languages
www.lcfclubs.com.au
Sarah Mak 0431232768
Email sarah.mak@lcfclubs.com.au

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Queanbeyan Basketball Stadium

PERFORMANCE ACTING CLASSES
St Gregory’s School Lowe St Campus
Multi-Purpose Room
Wednesdays 3:30-4:30pm starting 10th Feb

Join Acting Antics PERFORMANCE ACTING class and perform in this year’s gala performance of … “ROCKETMAN”

* Learn acting & theatre skills
* Learn to speak in clear expressive English
* Learn to express yourself with confidence
* Learn how to perform in front of an audience
* Extend creative & dramatic potential
* Wear gorgeous costumes
* Every student gets a role with dialogue
* Have fun with like-minded children

AGES: Children from all schools aged 7 – 11 years
FEES: Season 1 (Term 1 & 2) $324.00 - 18 sessions
Free trial – start any time - pro-rata fees – sibling discounts

REGISTER: http://ctcau.actingantics.com
INFORMATION: admin@actingantics.com - 0409 507773
(Deborah Percy)