



St. Damian's Newsletter

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents and Families

Thank you to all the families who emailed us with their appreciation of the staff video recording sent to all the members of our school community. Our staff felt that it was timely to let everyone know that we are indeed missing the children and our families. Like everyone, we are locked in our homes and feeling the pressure of isolation at the same time trying to continue with everyday life. As a staff we had great fun putting the video together for our families, so we are pleased to know that many of you enjoyed receiving and watching it. A huge thank you to Mrs Micomonaco and her wellbeing team for initiating and organizing the video. To the very talented Miss Tran for putting it together and of course to all the staff who participated and sent their little video clips for inclusion. The slide where all staff were together was taken at one of our "staff meetings".

Mothers' Day

This Sunday is Mothers' Day. It will be a very different way of celebrating, but still a special day as we remember our Mothers, Grandmothers, Special Mother Figures, in our lives. Mothers are very special people. *They are special because they are always there when needed. Mothers care enough about their children to say "no" when needed even if this is difficult. They always welcome with an open heart and open arms and most importantly a mother's love is unconditional.*

Mary, considered our heavenly mother, was a model of motherhood. Mary seems to have taken all of humankind as her own children. Through her many apparitions over the centuries, she has delivered countless messages —messages of love, prayer, peace, and hope. Among her better-known apparitions are those of Fatima (Portugal), Lourdes (France), and Mexico City. We remember Mary during the Month of May as a mother who loved, who experienced times of sorrow as well as times of great joy and fulfillment. We pray to Mary for guidance and support. We thank and praise God for giving us our mums here on earth. We especially remember those mums who have gone to their eternal rest. We pray that they are now at peace in the presence of God.

To all in our school and parish community I wish you a very *HAPPY MOTHERS' DAY.*

Online Learning at St Damian's

This is a photo of Aljur, who attends school on some days when his parents are working. Aljur brought some of his lego from home and successfully completed the first lego challenge organized by Mrs Rubira.



It is very challenging for our students to be at school as we continue to observe social distancing and also continue their online learning. Students are not able to interact as they normally would, however they still manage to entertain themselves during breaks. Children are usually very social so maintaining these new regulations is extremely difficult for them as they try to understand the reasons behind them. The students at school are being very co-operative and completing the same work as students at home with little assistance. I congratulate our students on their resilience and stamina. Like everyone else, they are wanting to return to normality. We will wait to hear from the Government on Friday, what will happen with schools. The most important consideration is that everyone is kept safe, staff, students and families.

Throw it to You Thursday

Next week we are into Week 5 of the term. We have spent half of the term learning online/remotely, a challenge which has been met by students, parents and staff. As we are mid-way through the term we feel, as a staff, that it is a good point in time to pause. Next Thursday, 14th May, we are having a "throw it to you Thursday." This means that the students will be given time to 'catch up' on unfinished work, rest a little and enjoy some wellbeing activities. Students will meet with their teacher at the morning hangout only, at this time they will be given directions as to what they can/could be doing during the day. This will also allow parents a 'breather' and an opportunity to stop and regroup. It is important for everyone's wellbeing to press pause and to enjoy some fun activities. It is also important for those students who have 'unfinished' work to be allowed some time to complete activities so they feel on top of things and catch up with their classmates. Teachers will certainly be giving guidance during the morning hangout so that everyone feels supported.

Once the hangout is finished staff will not be available for the rest of the day Staff will also not be available to answer emails as they will be busy meeting in teams with their colleagues and school leaders to evaluate and plan for the next five weeks of learning. However, Mr Watson will continue with his usual emails and collection and marking of work due to the fact that he is onsite 2 days to support the supervision of students here at school. The rest of the staff will be using the day for planning which will also take into account planning in the event schools resume onsite learning. We will not know what is expected until the Premier and the Chief Medical Officer make their announcements later this week based on the recommendations of the Federal Government. In the meantime, we are *throwing it to you next Thursday*. Hopefully you will take the time to refresh and enjoy some fun, quality time together.

Year 6 Bomber Jackets

The Year 6 jackets have arrived and are in the school office waiting to be collected. Parents please call the office to arrange a time to pick it up. I know that the Year 6's will be eager to receive their jacket.

Father Vincent's Gospel Reflection – 5th Sunday of Easter

Dear Friends,

We all belong to a certain family and we live in our own house called 'home sweet home'. During these days of restriction to avoid infection from the Coronavirus outbreak, we have been confined most of the time in our house and we appreciate how important and necessary it is to have a home and to enjoy family time. By our Baptism we belong to God's family and by partaking in the Eucharist we claim our 'place' in God's house. In the Gospel Reading today Jesus tells his disciples, "There are many rooms in my Father's house... I am going now to prepare a place for you... so that where I am you may be too." (Jn 14:2-3) By saying this Jesus promises us that there is a place for each of us in God's Home in Heaven.

If our physical life is a journey, then our spiritual life is also a journey. We need good and clear direction for every journey we make. That's why Jesus says, 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.' (Jn 14:6) He is the Way that takes us to God as source of peace and joy. He is the Truth because He makes God known to us as loving and merciful Father. He is the Life because through him we receive God's Life. Jesus gives us his life-giving Holy Spirit, and allows us to share His own life and love. We can't get there, to the place where we want to be, unless we let Christ lead us away from the earthly distractions. We can't get there to the place we want to be unless we focus on Christ as we go about the daily duties and chores of our lives. We can't point others to where they also need to go unless our lives are pointing to the Lord by our own example of strong faith, firm hope and sincere love.

On this Mother's Day we join with people everywhere to celebrate the precious gift of Motherhood and the unselfish love of a mother for her children. Motherhood reflects one of the most powerful images of God's love for his people, from the moment of creation to the end of the world and beyond. Mother's love tells us very much about the wonderful heart of a mother in her quiet day-to-day sacrifice and labour for the welfare of her children. To bring up and care for children their task as mothers must go with a serious commitment, huge responsibility and plenty of heartbreak.

We pray for all mothers and especially for our own. We also pray for those mothers whose children have died in tragic circumstances, become estranged or been suffering the disabilities or incurable diseases. We entrust to God and to the Blessed Virgin Mary, our spiritual mother, all our cares and concerns for all mothers. Happy Mother's Day to you all!

Fr Vincent Le PP

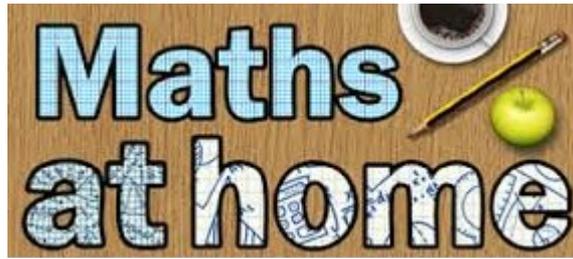
Enrolment for Foundation Year (Prep) 2021 & Tours

Enrolments for Prep 2021 are now open. We are getting a trickle of interested parents coming through the school on tours. Hopefully this will pick up as we approach the cut-off date for enrolments. Offers are usually made in early June. Parents who have children starting school next year, please ensure that your enrolment forms have been lodged. These can be found online on our website, or alternatively picked up from the school office.

Keep safe and have a good week everyone.

Rosanna





It's hard to think we have nearly completed 4 weeks of distance learning, you all deserve a huge round of applause. I thought I'd add a couple of fun maths games to the newsletter this week that were passed onto me. The link takes you to some videos that explain the rules. The games might be something you can play as a whole family when you've run out of things to watch on Netflix. It's a great way to bond with your family. I'd love to hear any feedback too, if you get around to playing them. Email me at carmen.bruce@sdbundoora.catholic.edu.au

Link: <https://www.lovemaths.me/games>

Kind regards,

Carmen Bruce—Maths Leader.

Faith News

Online Mass

Each weekend, Father Vincent is celebrating Mass online via the St Damian's Parish Bundoora Facebook page. All are welcome to join in the celebration.

Prayer for Mother's Day

Loving God, you have given us life and cared for us through our mothers.

We thank you for the care and wisdom they have taught us.

Fill them today and all days with your Holy Spirit of wisdom and love.

Help them hear your voice, follow you and teach their children to do the same.

May we honour them with profound respect and by living your Gospel.

Grant this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Mary-Ann Wright
Religious Education Leader

THE APPROPRIATE USE OF SCHOOL ONLINE SPACES

I would like to thank all of our families for their effort in engaging the children in the online learning spaces we have provided during this time of remote learning. I understand it can be challenging at times and your patience and persistence has been wonderful.

I would like to remind you that in the User Agreement that was sent home via FlexiBuzz at the beginning of the term, families agreed to:

'All applications within St Damian's G-Suite, including Google Classroom, G-Mail, Google Hangouts and Google Documents are to be used explicitly for educational purposes.'

It has come to my attention that some children are not following this expectation. I ask that all children refrain from playing recreational games and catching up with one another using google meets (which is only to be used to meet their teachers). The purpose of Google Meets is to meet with class and specialist teachers and our LSO's for learning. At this point, we are investigating how they are accessing meets out of class time as this access has been disabled.

Again, thankyou for your continued support - you are all doing an amazing job ith the children in your care.

Racahel Lorkin - IT Administrator

WELLBEING NEWS

Here is a summary of a video delivered by Australia's most high profile Child Psychologist, Michael Carr-Gregg on his schooltv.me website

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg advises us to be aware of the **signs of distress** in children, as they experience continued uncertainty and disruption to their usual life routines. He provides a Wellbeing Checklist for identifying signs of concern. Parents are navigating a new reality with Covid - 19 lockdown and Remote Learning.

Most children are resilient and seem to be demonstrating the capacity to face, overcome and manage the challenges that we currently find ourselves in, others are not faring as well. As parents, it is really important to look out for signs of distress.

WHAT SIGNS SHOULD PARENTS LOOKING FOR?

- Frequent or unexplained temper tantrums
- Unusual fears
- Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep
- Feelings of sadness and hopelessness that do not go away
- Avoidance of communication and interaction with family and friends both off and online
- Inability to get along with siblings
- Hyperactive or irregular behaviour
- Frequent and unreasonable aggressive reactions
- Difficulty with concentration, attention and organisation

WHAT SHOULD PARENTS DO

ABOVE ALL AS A PARENTS WE NEED TO SET THE EMOTIONAL TONE AT HOME (examples include: tones of respect, of patience, of empathy, of humility and of humour)

- We need to be alert but not alarmed
- Take our children's wellbeing seriously but not panic
- Help our children focus on what they can control which is:
 1. Their learning
 2. Their diet
 3. Exercise/Recreation
 4. And their sleep

The silver lining to this lockdown is that our children will have developed more resilience, appreciate their family more, really enjoy face to face interaction with their peers and get more out of school once we all return to normality.

THROW IT TO YOU THURSDAY

Next week will be our fifth week of Remote Learning, what we thought was unimaginable has become our new reality. Working in partnership as teachers, learning support officers, students and parents we have all faced new challenges, frustrations, as well as successes and surprising insight into what we are capable of in this phase of learning.

The purpose of **Throw It To You Thursday** is that it is a time to reset. It is a time to catch up on work or revisit fun lessons or activities given by both teachers and specialists.

Our wellbeing is so critical at this time so this day provides you with a chance to PAUSE, to take stock, reflect, review and of course celebrate all that has been in the last 4 weeks.

I have attached a Wellbeing Grid, compiled by our wonderful Year 5 Teachers, Angela Lombardi and Amy Starr. It may give you some ideas of things to do that promote wellbeing.

Go for a short walk, Enjoy the fresh air.	Get creative in the kitchen! Bake a cake, or cookies, or brownies, etc!	Clean your bedroom: make your bed, tidy your toys and clothes.	Yoga: Spend some time doing Yoga. There are many yoga videos online to guide you.	Self care: Wash your hair, moisturise your skin, etc.	Spend some time meditating. Put on some relaxation music or guided meditation and relax.	Create a gratitude journal. Each day, list one thing you are grateful for and why.
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Draw a picture, you can use pictures as a guide or create something yourself!	Write a letter to a family member or a friend and send it in the mail.	Garden: Spend some time outdoors. Pick some weeds, clean the garden. Grow/care for a plant.	Help your family with some chores without being asked: Wash the dishes, vacuum, etc.	Move your body: Do some skipping, squats, high knees and pushups. Try and do 10 of each, 3 times.	Become an architect: Make a cubby with cushions, blankets, etc. (Make sure you clean it up when finished)	Learn the lyrics to a song you like and sing along at home.
Play Masterchef/ MKR: If you can, cook some food and your parents can be the judges!	Make a business: Hairdressers: wash mum's hair. Baker: bake some treats. Builder: Build something out of household items.	Create an art expedition for your family to attend: Display your best art pieces (drawings, paintings, creations, etc).	Create a time capsule: Write a letter to yourself about your life in isolation. This will be something you appreciate when you're an adult!	Learn a new game from your parents that you haven't played before: For example: A card game, a board game, marbles, etc.	Sort through messy cupboards and organise them: Pantry, clothes shelves, linen cupboard, etc.	Interview a parent/grandparent/ aunt/uncle: Learn new information about them. E.g: What were their interests at your age? What did they want to be when they grow up? Etc.
Write a poem or story about anything you like.	Explore a talent: singing, dancing, an instrument, art, jokes/comedy, etc.	Write a letter to each family member and explain why you love them.	Play Masterchef/ MKR: If you can, cook some food and your parents can be the judges!	Make a picture story book about a topic of your choice.	Create your own game. A board game, a card game, etc.	Put on a song you like and dance like no one is watching!

PRACTICING GRATITUDE

Gratitude is the ability to pay attention to what you have as opposed to worrying about the things you don't or can't have. Research tells us that practicing gratitude can rewire our brain to start scanning the world for the positive. This simple activity retrains us to experience greater levels of positive emotions. After 3-4 weeks of this practice we can begin to feel more optimistic, more attentive, levels of anxiety decrease and we can enjoy better quality of sleep. A simple gratitude practice could be naming 3 things you are grateful for each day. This could be shared as a family during meal time or in a reflective journal that your child can write in at the end of each day.

Tania Micomonaco - Student Wellbeing Leader

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK! IT BRIGHTENED OUR DAY

Feedback from parents regarding the St Damian's YouTube video

Thank you to all you beautiful people for making something so special. We will see you all soon.

That is super sweet! So exciting to see all of the familiar faces. Thanks!

The kids loved it

That's awesome, great job team! And congratulations to Mrs Bruce!

This was WONDERFUL! We are so thankful to be a part of this amazing community at St Damians. We miss you all so much and thank you all for the fabulous effort and support.

Great video enjoyed watching it .

Hi all, What a great little you tube video you all put together! It was a really lovely gesture from the school to send this to all families.

Watching the video brought on a mix of emotions ranging from smiles and joy to happy and sad tears.

It again put into perspective that these teachers have lives outside of St. Damians and they too are experiencing all the challenges that we are facing, but I still feel that they are 100% dedicated to my children. Truly amazing.

What a lovely and wonderful video. Our family loved watching it together...

Thank you for putting this together, and sharing it and for all the wonderful work the teachers and school in general are doing.

**Parents and Friends Association hope all Mums have a great weekend.
We can do this!**



Online lessons are still available **via live video link** directly to one of our PMI tutors, so students can learn their instrument from their own home, just like this:



Here's some feedback from one of our parents:

"My daughter is not missing out on keyboard lessons now because they are online. Well done PMI!"

Please enrol via our website:
www.primarymusicinstitute.com.au

Or for any enquiries, email
admin@primarymusicinstitute.com.au or Phone 1300 362 824

Have you considered online music lessons?

Places are still available for Term 2!