



St. Damian's Newsletter

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Thursday November 25th 2021

No. 32 - 2021

The St Damian's School Community acknowledges that we come together on the ancestral lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS IS BETWEEN 8.30am TO 3.30pm ON SCHOOL DAYS.

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents and Families

Advent Begins



This Sunday marks the beginning of Advent which is one of the major seasons celebrated by most Christian churches. In the Catholic Church, Advent is a period of preparation extending over the four Sundays before Christmas. The word *Advent* comes from the Latin *advenio*, "to come to," and refers to the coming of Christ. The term *the coming* includes three references: first of all, to our celebration of Christ's birth at Christmas; second, to the coming of Christ in our lives through grace and the Sacrament of Holy Communion; and finally, to his second coming at the end of time. Advent also marks the beginning of a new liturgical year.

During Mass the first advent candle is lit. The first purple, or violet candle, is the Prophecy Candle symbolising **Hope** and God's forgiveness toward man. It can also symbolize the expectation of the coming of the Messiah. I hope that during this Advent/Christmas period all our families find peace and hope for a better year ahead. May Christ's blessings be upon all throughout this festive season.

First Eucharist

We congratulate our Year 4 students who are receiving the Sacrament of Eucharist for the first time this Saturday afternoon. We pray that as they meet Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time, they may continue to experience the joy of the Sacrament throughout their lives. Please pray for these young people as they continue their faith journey.

Last Day of Term

It has come to my attention that there is confusion as to which day is the last day of the year for 2021. I offer my sincerest apologies for this miscommunication to the community. It is definitely our mistake as different dates were advertised. The final day of the term is actually **Wednesday 15th December**, however I am well aware that some families understood that Tuesday 14th was the last day as this was written in the newsletter under Diary Dates. I am very sorry for this mix-up and cannot apologise enough for causing everyone such confusion. School will be open on Wednesday 15th as normal. Parents are welcome to send the children to school on this day. If appointments or other arrangements have been made, I totally understand if you wish your child not to come to school and therefore finish on the Tuesday. Please know that this mistake was unintentional and again I offer my sincerest apologies to the community. It has been a very challenging and stressful term for all of us. School will conclude for the year on Wednesday 15th at 3.15pm.

Graduation Year 6

As is tradition here at St Damian's, the Year 6 students always conclude their Primary Schooling with a Big Day Out and Graduation. This year the Big Day Out will be on Friday 10th December where the students spend the day enjoying themselves at a fun venue and participate in different activities for the final time as Year 6's. As the Year 6's usually finish the day before the rest of the school and in light of the miscommunication with dates, parents may choose for their Year 6 child to **finish on either Monday 13th or Tuesday 14th**. It is purely a parent decision which we will support. The Graduation for Year 6's will be on Tuesday 14th at 7.00pm beginning with Mass and followed by presentations and a slide show in the hall. There will not be any sharing of food, however tea and coffee will be available in the hall. As this is an event, all attendees – parents, family and siblings 16 years and over- must be double vaxxed to enter the Church and the hall. Proof of vaccination must be shown.

Whole School Orientation Day

On Monday 13th between 11.30am and 1.00pm the students from Prep to Year 5 will move into their new class and meet their new teacher for 2022. The students spend this time getting to know one another and also familiarizing themselves with their new classroom.

First Two Days of 2022

Staff will use the first two days of the school year assess students. Therefore, students from Year 1-6 will be given a time on either Monday 31st January or Tuesday 1st February to come to school for half a day for either a morning block or an afternoon block.

Teachers will focus their testing on Literacy and Mathematics so that they can begin their teaching targeted at individual needs once the student begin. All students from Year 1 – Year 6 will begin the new school year on Wednesday 2nd February. The new Foundation Year students will begin on Thursday 3rd February. The Prep students will be tested on one of the Wednesday 'rest days' next year.

School Reports

The end of year reports will be sent home with the students on Friday 10th December. Included in the report is the appointment time for your child to attend their testing session in 2022. Parents wishing to discuss any aspect of their child's report are encouraged to make a mutually convenient time with their child's teacher.

Education Board Meeting

The final meeting of the Education Board was held on Tuesday evening. The Education Board has now been dissolved. In 2022 we will begin the year with the new School Advisory Council (SAC) as required under MACS. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the current members of the Board for all they have contributed to the school community during their tenure. I am very grateful for their support and advice over the past two very difficult years. I personally thank each one for their generosity in giving up their time to serve on the Board and make a difference in our community. I encourage them and all in our community to consider nominating for the SAC in 2022.

School Grounds

I am well aware that our school grounds are looking a little sad at present. Unfortunately as we have been at school for such a short space of time and given all the building works I admit our school grounds have been somewhat neglected. Our school maintenance person has been heavily involved in all the moving and preparations for the building works and has not been able to pay the grounds the attention they deserve. The grass is cut by a company which works from a roster so this has not been affected by the overall mayhem a building program presents. Rest assured we will be returning our attention to our school grounds again. Could I also respectfully ask that parents address their concerns or issues directly to me and not speak to the school maintenance person please.

Staff Farewells

This time of year brings much movement in schools as teachers look for new challenges and opportunities. So it is with sadness that I announce that the following staff are leaving St Damian's at the end of the year. We farewell **Mrs Pat Goodrope**, currently teaching Prep, who has decided it is time to hang up her chalk and enjoy life in retirement. Pat has been at St Damian's for 17 years and in this time has taught a number of students at different class levels. We wish Pat all the best next year. I am sure she will find lots of ways to fill her days travelling and exploring. We also say goodbye to **Miss Celeste Cocchiara** another of our Prep teachers, who is not only leaving St Damian's but actually leaving the State. Celeste is moving to NSW, to enable her to take the next step in her life journey. Celeste has been a wonderful addition to our staff and school community over these past 2 years. We wish Celeste all the best.

Mrs Holly Denholm is also saying goodbye at the end of the year. Holly has decided to devote herself to her family, as well as keep her hand in teaching by filling in as CRT from time to time, while she waits for her family to grow. We wish her and her family lots of happiness and thank her for her contribution to our school. **Ms Lidia Tanski**, our Music teacher, is moving to a school in Thornbury teaching Music two days a week. This reduction in teaching hours will allow Lidia to devote time to her studies. We wish Lidia every success with her studies and her new position. **Mrs Angela De Francesco** our Italian teacher is also taking up another teaching position in Brunswick. Angela will be teaching Italian three days a week in this school, rather than the two days we are able to offer her. We hope that Angela is able to convince her new school to change their methodology and convert their Italian program to an immersion approach as she so ably did here. We wish Angela every best wish in her new school and thank her sincerely for all her hard work and commitment to our school. Finally and sadly, we say goodbye to **Mrs Bernadette Douglas**, one of our wonderful Learning Support Officers. Bernadette has been at St Damian's for seven years and in that time has worked with and supported many students across the school. Bernadette is moving to a school in Montmorency in a full time capacity as Learning Support Officer. We will miss Bernadette's smile and her caring manner with the students. We wish her all the best as she moves away from St Damian's.

Welcome

We welcome some new staff to St Damian's in 2022. We welcome **Ms Nicole Richardson** who is currently teaching at St Bede's in Balwyn; Miss **Rita Chalhoub** who is new to the teaching profession and **Mrs Sonia Tay** who is sharing a class with Mrs Kerss. We hope that each of these teachers find much fulfillment and joy in being part of our dynamic school community. **We are in the process of looking for a new Italian teacher and Music teacher for 2022.**

2021 School Fees

All fees for 2021 are now overdue and must be paid immediately unless a payment plan is already in place.

Prayer

God of our waiting, we light this candle to remind us of the great promise that Your Son, Jesus, will be born anew among us. We pray that you may deepen our awareness of the mystery of God in our lives, as revealed in your Son, Jesus. Amen

Keep safe everyone

Rosanna

Matilda Jr The Musical



We are all very excited and busily preparing for our performance of Matilda Jr which will be held in place of the Carols.

WHEN: Wednesday, December 1st

WHERE: On the school oval (BYO CHAIR TO SIT ON)

TIME: 6.30 pm arrival for a 7 pm - 8.30 show
(Main Cast to arrive by 6.00 pm)

WHAT TO WEAR: Matilda Costumes

COST: We are asking for a small donation to cover the cost of the production.

The children need to arrive in their Matilda costume that was planned for the August Performance. They can bring a drink bottle with them and must remain seated for the duration of the show with their class. We will also ask that families remain seated as if you were in a theatre to reduce disruption to the actors.

PLEASE NOTE THAT DUE TO BUILDING WORKS, WE MUST RESTRICT WALKING AROUND THE SCHOOL GROUNDS DURING THE EVENING

COVID SAFETY MEASURES

All attendees over 16 must be double vaccinated and sign in using the QR Code and show your vaccination certificate at the gate. If you are unwell or awaiting covid test results, please stay at home.

There are no density limits for outdoor events so you may invite others to attend (such as grandparents).

Faith News

Sacrament of Eucharist 2021 Masses

Congratulations to 5B who celebrated their First Eucharist last weekend. We thank Father Dong for allowing us to hold these Masses separate to the Parish Masses. Our Year 4 and 5M First Communicants will celebrate the Sacrament of Eucharist at the following Masses:

**Year 4 Students – Saturday 27th November at 2:00pm; and
5M – Saturday 4th December at 2:00pm**

Following the recent, Government announcement, the great news is there are no longer density limits in places of worship. This means, families are able to attend the Sacramental Masses. There are no limits to the number of people who can support each First Communicant.

However, the regulation around vaccinations still stands. This means that only those who are double vaccinated are permitted to enter the Church for the Mass. Masks are no longer compulsory.

Given that density limits have been lifted, there will no longer be livestreaming of the Masses.

The Season of Advent

As we begin our celebration of the Season of Advent, this Sunday we light the first candle. To this waiting time we bring the experiences of the year past, and we are reminded again of the love God has for us, endless and ever new, symbolised in the circle of the Advent Wreath. As we light the first of the candles, we look forward with hope to the celebration of Jesus' birth.

St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal

If wish to make a donation, please feel free to send retail or gift vouchers to the School with your child and we will forward them to the Society on your behalf. The closing date for donations is Friday 3rd December.

Mary-Ann Wright

Religious Education Leader

16 DAYS

OF

ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
FRIDAY 26TH NOVEMBER

All students are asked to wear the colour orange to school. Students will walk laps around the oval to promote a safe, equal and respectful future for all.

Students will engage in a range of activities over the 16 days that highlight the importance of respect and safety for self and others.

Please continue these conversations at home.

**TAKE ACTION TO
END GENDER-BASED
VIOLENCE**

#ORANGETHEWORLD #GENERATIONEQUALITY #16DAYS



St Damian's Parents and Friends Association

Casual Clothes Day – Gold Coin Donation

We are excited to announce that we will be hosting a Sugar Free-zies Icy Stix Day on Tuesday 30th November to raise money for the St Damian's School Community and to celebrate the end of 2021.

Get involved, wear your Christmas colours or casual clothes.

Support the kids fundraising efforts by donating a gold coin on the 30th November so the kids can enjoy tasty ZERO sugar, Sugar Free-zie Icy Stix.

St Damian's Parents Association



Due to the strict COVID-19 restrictions, parents/guardians are required to make an appointment via the link below to attend Academy Uniform's Thomastown store to purchase their child's uniform for 2022.

The dates available are as follows:

Nov 29th – Dec 23rd. Appointments are for 20 minutes and bookings can be made between 9am & 2pm.

Our experienced staff will allow for plenty of growth.

Bookings can be made at www.academyuniforms.com.au/stdamians

LOYOLA COLLEGE PRESENTS

COMMUNITY
CAROLS & FOOD TRUCK
NIGHT

FRI 26 NOV

5.30PM - 9PM | LOYOLA COLLEGE GROUNDS
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT, CHILDRENS ACTIVITIES
& MARKET STALLS | GOLD COIN ENTRY

COVID SAFE EVENT

Happy Birthday to the
following students who will
celebrate their birthday



November		
26th	Marley	3/4M
	Josephine	1S
27th	Ginevra	6C
	Amanda	3/4T
	Charleigh	3/4M
28th	Vincent	1M
29th	Peiwen	Prep C
30th	Ruby	5M
	Nathaniel	6C
	Kevin	5B
December		
2nd	Aiden	Prep G
	Max	3/4M
	Mikayla	Prep G



Term 4	
November	
Saturday 27th	Sacrament of Eucharist—Year 4's 2pm
December	
Saturday 4th	Sacrament of Eucharist—5M 2pm
Wednesday 1st	St Damian's Matilda/Carols Evening 6.30 pm arrival for a 7 pm - 8.30 show
Friday 10th	Year 6 Big Day Out
Monday 13th	Last Day of School Year 6's—Option 1
Tuesday 14th	Last Day of School Year 6's—Option 2
	Last Day of School Years P-5—Option 1
Wednesday 15th	Last Day of School Years P-5—Option 2



JAZZ·HIP HOP·BALLET·LYRICAL·TAP·TROUPE·ACRO·MUSICAL THEATRE·SINGING
ALL AGES - *Toddlers – Adults*

****2022 ENROLMENTS ARE OPEN****

Visit <https://dancestreet.com.au> for timetable

RACHEL DUNNE FUGA (D.F.T.A) – Principal

Former Australian Champion

30+ years of teaching expertise

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