



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



St. Damian's Newsletter

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Thursday December 12th 2024

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

A Note From the Principal

Dear Parents/Guardians & Carers

On Monday the students were all excited to meet their new teachers and classmates for 2025. There was a buzz in the school as the children enjoyed some fun activities whilst also getting to know the children in their class. It was lovely to see everyone interact so positively and looking forward to learning together next year.

We have definitely come to the end of another school year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and loyalty to our school. I also thank all our Committees, both school and parish, that contribute greatly to the education and life of the children at St Damian's. I especially thank our School Advisory Committee members and our Parent's Association parents. Most especially, we thank all who volunteered in our school over the year. The work and support of our parents, grandparents and friends is highly valued and we thank you for your contribution to the life of our school. I wish everyone in our community a blessed and happy Christmas. May it be filled with laughter, love and lots of good times. May God's love and peace fill your homes during this holy time. May the New Year bring you all much joy, good health and success. To those families leaving us at the end of the year, thank you for all you have contributed to this school community. Wishing you all a future filled with happiness and love as you journey forward into the next chapter of your lives.



This coming Sunday is the third week of Advent. This week we light the third candle on the advent wreath. The third candle, which is pink, represents **joy** – a deep, abiding joy that comes from knowing God is with us. Finally, on the following week, we light the fourth candle which stands for **love** – the greatest commandment given to us by Jesus himself, who showed us that love is the foundation of our relationship with God and one another. 'Our fulfillment as human beings is found in love' (Francis 2024, n. 23).

Final School Assembly

The final school assembly will be held Monday 16th December at 9.30am in the hall. At this assembly we usually announce our new Student Leaders for 2025 as well as farewell staff officially. Families are warmly welcome to attend.

In the evening we will hold the Year 6 Graduation. It will be very sad to say goodbye to these young people who have, in the main, been part of our school community for the past seven years. They have been an amazing group of young people and we have been blessed to have them as part of our school. Now it is time for them to move onto the next chapter of their life story and begin their Secondary schooling. We thank them for all they have contributed to our school and wish them every success into the future.

Goodbye and Good Luck. We have been privileged to have shared part of your story with you and we feel proud to have known you.

Thank you Morning Tea

Today we held our morning tea to say thank you to all the wonderful parents who have given up their time over the year to support our school in many ways. Whether it be as classroom helpers, supervise on excursions, supervise on school camp, visit the classrooms to share their knowledge and expertise or simply being there when asked for help. Thank you, we can't do without you and appreciate everything you do to support us. I hope you enjoyed the morning tea.

Staff News

My apologies to the following staff who were inadvertently omitted from last week's newsletter. Mrs Mary-Ann Wright is continuing as REL in the Leadership Team and Mrs Maliesha Leach and Mrs Maddie Gutierrez are also part of the LSO team in 2025. We apologise to these staff for leaving them out of our staff list and want them to know they are a valued part of our school community.

The 2024 School Year ends on **Monday 16th December** after Graduation **for the Year 6 students** and on **Tuesday 17th for all students from Prep – Year 5 at 1.30pm**

First Two Days of 2025

As we did last year, staff will use the first two days of the school year to assess all students. All families will receive a letter detailing the day and the time that the children will need to come to school on one of the two days, either Wednesday 29th or Thursday 30th of January. We request that families come on the day assigned as we have a limited timeframe to test students and if they come on the wrong day there may not be time to assess them properly. This information will be sent home soon. Students from Year 1-6 will then begin the new school year on Friday 31st January. The new Foundation Year students will begin on Monday 3rd February.

School Reports

Please note that the end of year reports will be via Compass to all families on **Friday 13th December**. Parents wishing to discuss any aspect of their child's report are encouraged to make a mutually convenient time with their child's teacher.

New Timetable for 2025

We are revising the school structure for 2025 so that we have two breaks of equal time next year. This will help with students not being on yard for too long and becoming anxious as well as help with eating.

The timetable for 2025 is:

8.30am - Staff onsite
 8.40am - Music
 8.45am— Whole School Meditation/Prayer

8.50am - Lessons begin
10.50am - 11.30am - First Break
 11.30am - Music
11.30am - 11.45am - Eat (Lunch)

11.45am - Lessons begin
1.45pm - 1.50pm - Eat (Snack)
1.50pm - 2.30pm - Second Break
 2.30pm - Music
 2.35pm - Lesson begins
 3.15 - Students dismissed

Prayer

*We give you thanks,
 God, that this child named Jesus became a sign of joy and peace,
 justice, mercy and love.
 Help us to understand this great mystery.
 May we come to know how great your love is for us,
 that you would allow your divine nature to be truly human also.*

Prayer for our Graduates

*Heavenly Father,
 surround those who are graduating with Your Grace.
 Bless them with hope so that they move into the future with eager and open hearts.
 Help them to put the knowledge, skills and insights gained through their education to use for the good of all humankind.
 Inspire them to believe in the goodness of life even when faced with challenges and difficulties.
 As they commence a new chapter in their lives,
 may they grow ever more grateful and wise.
 All of this we ask in the name of Jesus,
 Your beloved Son.
 Amen*

Have a safe holiday everyone. See you all again next year.

Rosanna



Faith News

The Season of Advent

We continue our celebration of the Season of Advent, this Sunday we light the third of the Advent candles symbolising joy. We are reminded of the way John the Baptist called people to prepare the way for Jesus, and we light this candle as a sign that we, too, are praying and preparing our hearts to welcome Jesus anew this Christmas.

Solemnity of The Immaculate Conception of The Blessed Virgin Mary – Monday 8th December

Immaculate Conception is the belief that “the most Blessed Virgin Mary was from the first moment of her conception by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and in view of the merits of Christ Jesus the Saviour of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin...” (Pope Pius IX, Ineffabilis Deus). The angel Gabriel salutes Mary as “full of grace.” To become the mother of our Saviour, Mary was enriched, by God, with many gifts in order to assume her important role. Her prompt “yes” to the divine message is a model of faith for us all. Mary believed God’s promises even when they seemed impossible. She was full of grace because she trusted that what God said was true and would be fulfilled. She was willing and eager to do God’s will, even when it seemed difficult. Like Mary, may we believe that with God, nothing is impossible. May we continue to have faith that God also gifts us with a transforming grace within our lives and waits for us to also respond with willingness and heart-felt trust.

Prayer for the End of the School Year

*At the end of this School Year, we give thanks to God:
For all the teaching and learning that has taken place in our School –
both in and out of the classroom.
For the talents and gifts that have been shared and the
challenges that have been faced.
For the burdens that have been lifted and
the hurts that have been healed.
For the respect and care that has been given.
We give thanks for the friendships that have just begun
and for those that have grown. Amen*

Thank you

Thank you to our Families for your ongoing support of our Teachers and Students here at St Damian’s. May we continue to grow in Faith and Love.

I wish all families a joyful and peaceful Christmas Season.

Mary-Ann Wright
Religious Education Leader

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ACCELERATE
PROGRAM**

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Jan. 7th-10th
Splash's Plenty Valley
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South Morang
\$76.00

*It is a well researched fact
that short burst of intensive
learning accelerates
motor skill development*

Maths Take Home Bag of Fun

For our final Take Home Bag highlight of the year we have Gianna from 2Y.

Gianna absolutely LOVED the Geoboard activity.

She was able to create her name, her favourite teddy and a robot on the board with the elastic bands.

It took lots of patience, critical thinking and problem solving to create this masterpiece. Thank you for sending in your creation!

We will reintroduce the take home bags in 2025 with new and exciting activities. If you or your child have any interesting ideas please let me know, I'm always interested to work with parents and students to find creative ways to make maths fun and engaging.



Maths @ St Damian's

What a fabulous year of maths we've had in 2024. From maths comps, to maths hoops tournaments, the Art/Maths show, new classroom resources and explicit teaching strategies—it's been a blast! A huge **thank you to my parent helpers** and my two **Maths Captains** Charbel and Orion (and Charlie for stepping up when the captains went on holidays). The Maths Captains have given up a lot of their own free time to set up competitions, lunch time clubs, put up competition leaderboards, hand out certificates and speak at assembly. They have taken all of their responsibilities very seriously and efficiently, and always with a smile on their face.

I look forward to continuing my role again next year, working alongside the teachers and students to help promote a love for maths in our school.

Yours Sincerely

Carmen Bruce

Maths Leader



St Damian's 2024 Christmas Raffle Prize Hampers



Many families purchased tickets for last week's St Damians Christmas Raffle. It is an easy way to help raise funds for important projects within the school. We are very grateful to these local businesses for their kind contributions. We had many happy prize winners of 12 Hampers!

Thanking these wonderful local Businesses!!!

- Verve Portraits - Richmond
- Chemist Warehouse
- Nando's - Bundoora Square
- Officeworks - Bundoora
- Psarakos Market - Bundoora
- Mr Souv - Bundoora Square
- AK. Quality Meats - Bundoora
- Flowers by Elizabeth Victoria - Epping / Bundoora
- Paddy's Meats - Bundoora Square
- Coles - Bundoora Square
- Bernies Pizza & Pasta - Bundoora Square
- Uneek Beauty - Bundoora
- Genki Sushi - Bundoora Square
- Baker's Delight - Bundoora Square
- Bunnings - Thomastown
- Benvenutti Pizzeria - Thomastown
- Pure Clean Co.- Bundoora
- Cafe Lucio - Bundoora Square
- Espresso Prego - Bundoora Square
- Smokin' Joe's Pizza & Pasta - Bundoora Square
- New Age Beauty/Nail Salon - Bundoora Square
- Finest Fruits & Vegetables - Bundoora Square
- Cowboys Cash & Carry Thomastown



verve

PORTRAITS

FLOWERS BY ELIZABETH VICTORIA



PADDY'S MEATS



PURE CLEAN CO.

Bakers Delight

BERNIES PIZZA & PASTA



INVITATION TO CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY MASS

Dear Parents,

I hope this message finds you well.

On **Christmas Eve**, we warmly invite you and your children to join us for our **Family Mass at 7:30 pm**, with **Carols starting at 7:00 pm**. This special celebration is a wonderful opportunity for our St. Damian's Community to come together in the spirit of Christmas.

To make it even more joyful, I encourage the children to dress as their favourite Nativity character: **Mary, an Angel, a Shepherd, a Star, a Donkey, a Sheep, a Wise Man**, or any other role from the Nativity story.

Let's celebrate this holy night with hearts full of love and joy. I look forward to welcoming you all and sharing this special time together.

Warm regards,

Fr. Joe Dong Tran P. P
St. Damian's Parish



Prep C	Samar Sindhu	For doing his best when writing his information report on snakes.
Prep M	Louna Liu	For having a good mindset with new learning tasks.
Prep W	Regan Wu	For his great improvement in his hand writing and remembering to space each word in a sentence.
1M	Matthew Tohme	For always trying hard with his work and showing respect to others.
1S	Candice Deng	For consistently demonstrating a Growth Mindset
2AB	Aaron Walter	For always showing kindness and helping others.
2C	Mia Wang	For having a positive attitude towards her learning.
2Y	Gianna Pieterman	For taking risks with your learning and always giving everything a go.
3B	Jimmy Stechemesser	For his outstanding reading and for finishing the year so positively.
3M	Vincent Lapadula	For making positive choices that have helped him to do his best.
3SR	Ava Burns	For making good choices in helping others succeed by following classroom expectations.
4B	Serena Yu	For always engaging in learning with a positive mindset.
4C	Nicholas Karnezis	For his enthusiasm towards learning in all areas of the curriculum.
5AT	Amira Hussein	For seeking teacher assistance and persevering to solve problems in Maths.
5M	Giselle Carter	For your great teamwork and collaboration while working on a group task.
5R	Ava Yapa	For showing tremendous growth in writing and creating imaginative pieces.
6GC	James Pantelidis	For showing initiative in your leadership role and helping others succeed.
6S	Chloe You	For being a wonderful and hardworking student who consistently did her best in all areas of learning.