



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



St. Damian's Newsletter

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Thursday December 5th 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

This time of year is very busy but full of good cheer and excitement as we look forward to celebrating Christmas with family and friends. There is so much happening in schools at this time of the year. As well as looking to finish up one year, we also look forward to a new one starting. Lots of planning and organization happens in schools at this time of year. I would like to thank everyone in our community for all your support and for working in partnership with us to ensure the best possible learning experiences for our students/your children. I hope that over the next couple of weeks as we begin to wind down, we can all look back on a very successful year. I especially want to commend and thank most sincerely our hardworking staff. This year has been a big year for all of us as we embraced new learning directions and wrapped our heads around different ways of teaching to align with the MACS Vision for Instruction, which is taking every Catholic school in new directions. Congratulations to our staff who have done an amazing job and still kept their sanity and good humour.



This Sunday is the second week of Advent. This week we light the second candle on the advent wreath. The second candle symbolises **peace** – reminding us that through Christ, we are called to be peacemakers in our families, communities, and the world.

Christmas Carols

Thank you to all our families, students and staff for a wonderful Carols evening last night. We congratulate our students on their work and for presenting to us a simple version of the Nativity. We thank Mrs O'Leary, Mr de la Rambelje for all their work in preparing the students and to the staff for their support of this annual school event. Thank you to all our families for attending and participating. Well done, everyone and thank you.



Congratulations to the winners of the raffle. I hope you all enjoy your lovely prizes. I would like to especially thank and acknowledge the wonderful mums from the P.A. committee for organizing the raffle. Each of these ladies sourced all the prizes from local businesses. We are most grateful to them for all their hard work and commitment to our school community and for everything they do throughout the year. Thank you Ladies, the prizes were fantastic!

Whole School Orientation for 2025

The students from Prep to Year 5 will meet their new classes and teacher for next year on Monday December 9th from 12.30pm – 1.30pm. The children will join together and enjoy getting to know one another in preparation for the following year. We hope that as many of the new teachers as possible will be able to join us on these days.

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.

Thank you Morning Tea

We are holding a special thank you Morning tea on Thursday 12th December from 10.30am – 11.30 am in the hall. We hope that as many parents as possible will join us. This morning tea is a small gesture from staff to thank all the parents who have helped our school community in any way this year. It is a small way that the staff say thank you to all the parents who came on camp, on excursions or incursions, who helped in the classrooms, during sports day, and in many other ways. Please check your child's bag for your invite.

Staff News

Staffing has been finalized for 2025. We welcome some new faces to our staff and school next year: Mrs Samantha Collins, Mrs Anne-Marie Sukkar, Ms Lisa Piccolo and Mrs Liana Tornese.

It is with much pleasure that I announce the following class teachers for 2025:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Prep | Miss Taylor Jade Mullane, Miss Tori Allen |
| Year 1 | Miss Stephanie Caligiuri, Mrs Saveria Ciurleo and Miss Sajantha Santhapillai |
| Year 2 | Mrs Annemarie Anthony and Miss Kira Young |
| Year 3 | Miss Amber Bourke, Miss Mary McArdle, Mrs Annemarie Sukkar |
| Year 4 | Mr Rodney Nethercote/Mrs Mary Karyannis (2 days), Ms Nicole Richardson and Mrs Anna Walpole |
| Year 5 | Mrs Barbara Milana, and Mrs Bernadette Rizzo/Mrs Lauren Bozinovski (1 day) |
| Year 6 | Mrs Julie Cannatelli/Mr Mario Gauci, Miss Amy Starr and Mr Riki Bossini |

Our Specialist Team for 2025

Mr Tim Holland – Learning Diversity, **Mr Alex de la Rambelje** – Performing Arts, **Mr Simon Insolia & Mr Rodney Nethercote** – Digitech/STEM, **Mr Simon Insolia** – P.E./Sport, **Miss Charissa Beeby** – Visual Art, **Mrs Samantha Collins** - Music, **Mrs Alison Smith** – Literacy Enhancement and **Mrs Lauren Bosinovski** - Intervention

School Leaders

Mrs Rosanna Piccolo – Principal, **Mrs Dianne Viola** – Deputy Principal & Learning and Teaching;
Mrs Angela Lombardi & Mrs Julie Cannatelli Literacy, **Miss Charissa Beeby** – Student Wellbeing;
Mrs Carmen Bruce – Mathematics.

Learning Support Officers

Mrs Marie Costanzo, Ms Valli Della Riva, Mrs Anita Filomeno, Mrs Lidia Hristova, Mrs Jenny Jirjys, Mrs Adrienne Lee, Mrs Dorothy Lee, Mrs Mimma Martini, Ms Lisa Piccolo, Mrs Joanne Sobey & Mrs Liana Tornese

Admin Staff

Miss Sophie Jarman – Library & ICT; **Mrs Lina Parisot** – Bursar; **Mrs Angela Parisi & Laura Gibellini** – Office Administration

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

The end of year reports will be sent via Compass to all families on **Friday 13th December**. The teachers have dedicated much time and effort to assessing the students and providing you with the details of their progress, standard reached and achievements. Parents wishing to discuss any aspect of their child's report are encouraged to make a mutually convenient time with their child's teacher.

Prayer

Lord God,

*may the light of the wreath be a sign of peace and tolerance to all people,
 who prepare for your coming.*

Let the truth of your Word lead us all toward your kingdom, for which we long.

We ask it in the name of the one born in Bethlehem,

Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

Have a great week everyone

Rosanna

Faith News

Sacraments 2025

Please find below the Sacramental Dates for 2025. These dates will be published again in 2025. However, you might like to add any relevant dates to your Diary as reference.

Sacrament of Confirmation 2025 – Year 6 Students – Saturday 31st May 2pm;
 Sacrament of Reconciliation 2025 – Year 2 Students – Thursday 5th June 7pm;
 and
 Sacrament of Eucharist 2025 – Year 4 Students – Saturday 13th September 2pm.

End of Year Mass

St Damian's School Community will celebrate our End of Year Mass next Wednesday 11th December at 9:15am. All are welcome to attend.

The Colours of Advent

For many centuries, purple was the colour used during Advent. Purple, in our Church, is a colour associated with an attitude of repentance and sorrow and corresponds to how people prepare themselves. In more recent times, however, and in alignment with the Advent Scripture Readings, the darker coloured purple has been replaced by a lighter, less sombre violet to better represent the feelings of hope, joy, expectation and anticipation as we wait and prepare to celebrate the memory of Jesus' coming at the first Christmas.

Advent in the Catholic Tradition

Advent is about joyful waiting. Our anticipation builds each Sunday as we wait through the darkness of injustice for the dawning of right relationship. We see a new vision for our world and for how we might live. Our focus is liberation, justice and peace, as embodied in the words of Mary's Magnificat (Lk 1:46-55).

Advent prepares us for Christmas when Christ's first coming to us is remembered. Throughout the season, our minds and hearts are directed to await Christ's second coming at the end of time.

The Scriptural images of Advent tell of a God who frees us from rigidity, gives sight to our blindness, feeds our hungering hearts and sets us in equality with all people. Advent is the season when we intentionally practise hope, when we consciously act for justice, and when we joyfully live in expectation of promises fulfilled.

The Season of Advent

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

St. Damian's Christmas Giving Tree

As is tradition at St. Damian's, we have been invited by St. Vincent De Paul to support those in need by providing gifts. We would be most appreciative if you could contribute to our collection. To enable enough time for the gifts to be distributed to those in need, the closing date for donations is this **Friday 6th December**.

Thank you in advance for your contributions to this worthy cause. It is a privilege to witness our community take action for others.

A Prayer for Advent

*May we take the time to be aware that
 amid our busy preparations for the celebration of
 Christ's birth in ancient Bethlehem, Christ is reborn in
 the Bethlehems of our homes and daily lives.
 May we take time, slow down and be still.
 May we be awake to the Divine Mystery that looks so common
 and so ordinary yet is wondrously present. Amen.*

Mary-Ann Wright
 Religious Education Leader

To all students and Staff, including Learning Support Officers, congratulations on the amazing work and presentation of songs for the Carols Night. Your attendance and efforts are so appreciated.

We also want to thank other people who really helped to make the event an incredible success: Ms Sajantha Santhapillai and Ms Annette Hora for your conscientious efforts with assisting Year 1 students in preparing and dressing in costume for the Nativity Play; Matthew Bendall and Gary Bendall for help with the staging setup, and Robert Dillon and Co for expertise with the audio sound support.

In addition, thank you so much to the Leadership Team for your phenomenal organisation and support.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS 2024





Winners of the 2024 Parent Association Raffle

Alexander D—6S
Adan B—5N
Alessio G—3SR
David C—2C
Ethan C—Prep C
Tristan B—4C
Brittany W—2Y
Inuli R—2AB
Helena H—1S
Nicholas J—4C
Chloe H—3SR
Asher M—Prep W

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Psarako Market Bundoora
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Bunnings Thomastown
Nandos Bundoora Square
Bakers Delight Bundoora Square
Paddy's Meats Bundoora
Finest Fruits and Vegetables Bundoora
Chemist Warehouse
Cafr Lucio Bundoora
Flowers by Elizabeth Victoria
CleanCo
Cowboys Cash and Carry Thomastown
Little Mia's Pizzeria Thomastown

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

**SECOND HAND
UNIFORM SHOP**

The SECONDHAND UNIFORM SHOP will be open this Friday 6th December (last day open for this year) 9am-10am. (Located up the hill from the office. Cash only).

Thank you to all who kindly donated unworn and outgrown uniforms this year of 2024.

Many items all go to great new homes and happy students with the money raised going back into the school for resources.



**Carols
by Candlelight**

Free event ★

**Friday
13 Dec
2024**

**6PM
UNTIL
9PM**

Civic Centre lawns, 25 Ferres Blvd, South Morang



whittlesea.vic.gov.au/carols

