Dear Parents, Caregivers and Students,

In our previous newsletter I referred to the Year of Grace and encouraged our community to reflect upon how God has touched our lives. As I approach the end of my first semester as principal of St Joseph’s, I have encouraged staff, students and families to reflect on this time and express their feelings via feedback.

I am pleased to share with you that the staff morale is positive. I am truly privileged to be working with and leading a staff that is genuinely passionate and enthusiastic. They are hard working, dedicated and exceptionally professional people who give generously of their time and expertise to ensure all students experience success.

I believe that all children have the right to be heard and respected, and to feel an earnest sense of belonging to their family, school and community. Students were given the opportunity to share what they like about St Joseph’s School. In reading this feedback from our students, I was struck by how candid and honest their responses were. Below is a selection of these responses:

- We receive excellent support
- We have great facilities
- We are given heaps of opportunities
- We have a great inviting Principal
- All ESO’s are great
- I enjoy the learning environment
- All the teachers are really nice
- Most of the time the lessons are fun
- There are lots of friendly teachers and students
- Lots of sporting opportunities
- Mr Abela joining in with us at play times
- This is the best SCHOOL EVER!
- I like Maths
- All the teachers are friendly and polite
- Structured play
- It is a supportive community
- Love the new computers
- Teachers are very supportive
- Friendly learning atmosphere
- Lots of play equipment
- We have awesome uniforms
- I enjoy the nice and calm environment
- I like it when we learn
- I like activity time
- Gala night
- Playing with my friends and learning in the class
- WRAP
- We do fun activities
- I like PE, maths and reading with Ms Kingham – it is fun!

Students were also given the opportunity to identify anything they could change about the school. Students in the junior school were keen to have a swimming pool, trampoline or bike track at the school. A popular theme across all year levels was a request for increased playtime, as well as a larger variety of activities to engage in. In general the common consensus amongst the student cohort was that they were happy with the school as is, and that there wasn’t anything in particular that required changing. There were a couple of comments which I need to follow up on and will do so in due time. It was particularly pleasing to hear that students are happy with their school and community.
From the Principal...

I am looking forward to receiving more feedback from families. I thank the families who have already participated. If you have yet to complete and submit the feedback sheet, it’s not too late to do so. I encourage you to make the most of this opportunity to provide your opinions and ideas through this process. I want to be clear in defining what the true values of today’s St Joseph’s School community are and am keen to promote what is it we stand for. I want to work together with you as one in achieving this.

I plan to be the Principal of St Joseph’s School for many years to come and want to lead this school into a success filled and prosperous future. A future that can be only achieved by us all working together for the common goal.

Take care

Lee

Faith Formation & Religious Identity

God As Trinity

It is beautiful that most prayer times for Catholics begin with the Sign of the Cross made with the right hand. Each time we do, we are reminded that we have been baptised in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and by their grace we can come to know them to some extent. Last Sunday, the Catholic Church celebrated Trinity Sunday, and it could be even more special than Christmas and Easter! The mystery of our God as Trinity is a mystery that we shall never fully comprehend, but it is one we can appreciate to some degree. The Trinity offers us hope in terms of community and relationships. The Trinity is a community, in constant relationship. It is awesome to think that we are created in the image of this Trinity... so we are created to be in relationship and community. That is our focus at St Joseph’s School Barmera. Since the Trinity is a community of love, the hope we have then is that the love of God reaches out to us time after time. All of us share in this love. We are given the task of making the love of God real to everyone we meet. Each day, for our children and families, we are called to be signs of God’s love.

Vocations Guest Speaker

Fr Paul Crotty, from Port Augusta, visited the school last Tuesday. Fr Paul is responsible for promoting vocations across the Port Pirie Diocese. He invited the Year 5 to Year 7 Students to listen to God’s call for the direction that they would take in their lives. Fr Paul asked the young people to keep in mind that “their hearts are made for God and will not rest until they are with God”. He gave some insight into the life of a priest and shared how he heard the call from God to choose that vocation. Religious life, married life and being single were also identified as vocations in life.
Parent Information Meeting re the Celebration of Sacraments

On behalf of Mr Abela, Ms de Winter, Ms Mackley, Miss Hickey and Mrs Stavrou, I would like to thank all the parents of children coming up for celebrating Communion and Confirmation for coming out on a cold evening to look at how we can support our children in taking the next step in their faith journey. There are four candidates for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion from Year 3 and eight candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation from Years 6 and 7. There is a great sense of joy and anticipation about the children and the families embracing this wonderful opportunity to celebrate with other members of the St Francis Xavier’s Parish Community and to reach out and ‘touch’ Jesus and see and respond to God’s presence in our lives. You are invited to keep in your prayers: Thomas Clarke, Kaiden Harris, Kaleb Ivanovic and Blake Kassulke for Holy Communion and Liana Baldwin, Mitchell Evans, Tayla Kingham, Louise Monaco, Kate Morena, Michael Powell, Brenton Tamblyn, Dillon Vandergiessen and Mitch Wellington for Confirmation.

Commitment Activities for the Families of Candidates for the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Holy Communion

The focal activity this week is the presentation of A4 posters introducing your child as a candidate for Communion or Confirmation. There are lots of helpful sentence starters and finishers suggested on the notes previously sent home. It is hoped that there will be some exchange of posters with the parishioners.

Therese Meyers
Assistant Principal in Religious Identity and Mission

Student Learning & Wellbeing

We would like to acknowledge the wonderful work that the parents of our school do. We always have great support from families at working bees, fundraising functions and school sporting activities which we are very grateful for. There are always people behind the scenes that sometimes we do not know about, and to them, we say a huge thank you because without their support and effort some things would not be possible.

We would like to especially thank:

- Molly Huckle
- Virginia Mahoney
- Maralyn Albrecht
- Irene Stavrou
- Corrie Spronk
- Leah Evans
- Tracey Bond
- Dean Hembling and Brodie Wegener
- Brigitte Holmes
- P&F and School Board members

They all contribute to our school in various ways and we are very grateful to them all. Please feel free to come into school and help with any activities that you may be interested in or have the expertise in. We are always happy to have parents or caregivers come into the school to listen to children read, cover library books, help with sporting activities, cut up fruit, laminate resources, gardening or helping with electives. The students love to see their parents or grandparents come and be involved in what is happening in their school.
NEWS FROM THE PASTORAL SUPPORT WORKER

BIGGEST BREAKFAST
A huge “thank you” to everyone who participated in the Biggest Breakfast. The muffins were delicious. Praise must go to the Mini Vinnies for cooking the muffins and helping to organizing the breakfast. We raised $107.30. The money is going to cancer research.

MINI VINNIES’ PROFILES

NAME: EMILY VEGH
AGE: 11
WHY HAVE YOU JOINED MINI VINNIES? Because I would like to help people that are less fortunate.
MY ROLE WITH MINI VINNIES: Member
FAVOURITE SUBJECT: P.E.
FAVOURITE FOOD: Tacos
FAVOURITE TV SHOW: Home and Away
LIKES: Rabbits and Ipod
DISLIKES: Maths
IF YOU COULD HAVE 2 PEOPLE IN THE WORLD FOR TEA WHO WOULD YOU INVITE AND WHY? Kurt Tippett because I love the way he plays football.

NAME: MICHAEL POWELL
AGE: 12
WHY HAVE YOU JOINED MINI VINNIES? To help those in need.
MY ROLE WITH MINI VINNIES: Member
FAVOURITE SUBJECT: Maths
FAVOURITE FOOD: Sushi
FAVOURITE TV SHOW: Supernatural
LIKES: Halo, junk food, milk and Kinect games
DISLIKES: Gherkins and wasabi
IF YOU COULD HAVE 2 PEOPLE IN THE WORLD FOR TEA WHO WOULD YOU INVITE AND WHY? The Pope and the Prime Minister of Australia. The Pope because he can encourage countries to do good things, and the Prime Minister to start it off.

REFLECTION
One of our greatest challenges as parents is to accept with unconditional love whatever our children do or become. Whether we hope for them to be athletes, scholars, poets or politicians, we must encourage them to make their own choices. They must become who and what they value, even if the path they choose would not be one we would select for them. Our greatest gift to them is our acceptance and acknowledgement of them as independent, capable human beings.

GAIL PAGE

Locked box
At our Gala Night we had a locked box as part of our fundraising activities. On the night the box was not unlocked. If you bought a key to unlock the locked box, please come to the front office and ask for a raffle ticket. The lucky ticket holder will win the locked box. If you know of anyone else who purchased a key outside of the school please let them know to contact school so that we can make sure they are in the draw. The draw will be held at the next P&F Meeting which will be held on Wednesday 20th June.