Dear Parents,

Multicultural Cookbook
You are invited as a family to be a part of St Gerard’s history! Simply by sending in a recipe that is a family favourite to share in a book that will be published in June, 2016 to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the school’s opening. If you need another form, please come to the School Office and collect one.

Passion Play 2016
Don’t forget that Tuesday 22nd March at 2pm is the annual Passion Play. You, your family and friends are invited to come along at 2pm to be a part of this deeply moving and spiritual play. Our children are outstanding and this is a very reverent time in our spiritual lives. There will be Hot Cross buns served to all families after the play.

Public Holiday
Just a reminder that this coming Monday, the school will be closed for the Labour Day weekend.

School Closure Day
The school will be closed on Monday 11th April for a Staff Professional Development Day. Term 2 will commence on the Tuesday, 12th April, 2016.

Have a great long weekend, Chris

Easter Raffle
If families have any donations that they would like to donate to our Easter raffle, please drop any new items into the school office.

Raffle tickets have gone home with your child. Please return them with the money and YOUR NAME clearly on the ticket butt to your child’s teacher as soon as possible.

The Raffle will be drawn at 2.15pm on the last day of Term, being Thursday 24th March by Mr O’Connell! Good Luck!!
THE YEAR OF MERCY is an opportunity to resurrect an ancient practice in a new land: pilgrimage!

On Saturday, 27 February, The Zaher family for our school, with pilgrims from other Parishes in Melbourne, arrived at St Brigid’s Catholic Church in Nicholson Street, North Fitzroy, having walked 23km from St Philip’s Catholic Church in Junction Road, Blackburn North.

St Brigid’s has been designated a ‘Shrine of Mercy’ for the Holy Year, and its main door is one of the five Holy Doors in Melbourne. ‘It’s always open’, said Fr Savino Bernardi CS, when we contacted him to organise the pilgrimage.

The day began for five pilgrims after receiving communion at the 9am Extraordinary Form mass at St Philip’s. Fr Nicholas Dillon gave us the traditional pilgrims’ blessing, and we headed off down the street. Soon we were on the Koonung Creek trail, which follows the Eastern Freeway all the way to Burke Road – although we hardly knew we were so close to civilisation, as most of the trail is pleasant bush and parkland.

A leisurely pace meant that we had time to stop for lunch at the Freeway Golf Course café, and rest often in the shade of trees along the way. Two more pilgrims joined us at the start of the Main Yarra Trail at Burke Road, and three more at Yarra Boulevard before crossing the Yarra in to Clifton Hill at the ‘pipe bridge’. Before arriving at St Brigid’s we detoured via a café in Queen’s Parade for a cold beverage. We also stopped to pray at St John the Baptist Church – and were graced to hear the baroque quartet practicing for next Sunday afternoon’s concert.

The pilgrimage included prayers along the way, including Rosary and Divine Mercy, the Year of Mercy Prayer of Pope Francis and psalms. But mostly it was a chance to talk and share with one another many issues and concerns along the way.

On arrival at St Brigid’s, Fr Savino came out to welcome us and give us his blessing. He took photos for us also, before we entered through the Holy Door into the Church. There we knelt before the beautiful statue of Our Lady and professed our faith and prayed for the Holy Father’s intentions, in accordance with the norms for the Holy Door Plenary Indulgence.

The day was one full of graces and unexpected discoveries. There will be another opportunity to repeat the Pilgrimage once again on Sunday 12th May in this Holy Year with a walking pilgrimage to the Holy Door at the Divine Mercy Shrine in Keysborough. The time is yet to be finalized closer to the 12th May.

If you would like to join fellow St Gerard Parishioners for this Pilgrimage to Keysborough, we will be leaving St Gerard’s Church and walking the 10 km distance together as a Parish. At the Holy Door of the Divine Mercy we will meet fellow Pilgrims for surrounding Parishes.