



Melbourne Archdiocese  
Catholic Schools



ST GERARD'S SCHOOL

# NEWSLETTER

Term 1, Week 1

31 January 2025



*Starting school with love and support from her family on her first day!*

## Loving God,

Bless our St. Gerard's community as we begin this new school year.  
Guide us to grow in wisdom, kindness, and faith,  
and help us to create a place where everyone belongs.  
May we support one another,  
use our gifts for good, and walk in Your light each day.

We ask this through Christ, our teacher and friend.

**Amen.**

## Sacraments 2025

### First Reconciliation:

- Tuesday, 25th February First Reconciliation Family Workshop, 2025 7pm
- Thursday, 13th March First Reconciliation Reflection Day, students may wear casual, 2025
- Thursday, 20th March First Reconciliation at 6.30pm, 2025
- Friday, 21st March 2:50 pm First Reconciliation Assembly,

### First Communion:

- Sunday, 22nd June First Communion, 10:30am 2025

### Confirmation:

- Saturday, 28th June Confirmation 5:30pm (Vigil) Confirmed 2025



@st.gerards3175

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71 Gladstone Road, Dandenong North 3175



<https://www.facebook.com/stgerardsps>

# PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Families,

Welcome to the 2025 school year!

I hope that you all had a wonderful Christmas holiday and are ready for an exciting year full of rich learning opportunities. It was great to see so many smiling faces on Wednesday morning (both students and adults).

A special welcome to our new families who are now part of our school community. In addition to our Foundation (Prep) students, we have a number of children who have joined us at other year levels.

As well as welcoming new families, we also have some new staff members. **Mr Fabio Giaccaria (Signor Fabio)** will deliver our Italian Program in 2025 as Signora Harris is on leave for the year. Signor Fabio is an experienced Italian teacher and we look forward to him working in our school. **Miss Rosie Leonardi** is also joining us and will work in Year 3/4 W on Fridays. Rosie has worked at our school as a CRT over the last few years and we are excited to have her join our staff. We also **welcome back Mrs Louise Brown** who is returning to St Gerard's after taking maternity leave. Louise will be working in Year 1/2 F on Thursdays. We are fortunate to have these people join/ re-join our school community and have them enhance the learning of our children.

Our Class Structure for 2025 is as follows:

Class	Teacher(s)
Foundation (Prep) B	Mrs Leanne Bruno
1/2FB	Ms Nicole Fernadez and Mrs Louise Brown
1/2S	Mrs Malki Subasinghe
3/4S	Ms Melinda Sono and Mrs Sharyn Govic
3/4W	Mrs Tessa Wilson and Miss Rosie Leonardi
5/6T	Mrs Nadia Te
5/6O	Mrs Gwen O'Brien and Mrs Shantelle Theodore

These first 3 days have made up our **Give Me 5 Week** which has given our children and staff the chance to establish routines, get to know each other better and experience our **Give Me 5 principles of Be Spirit Filled, Be Respectful, Be Cooperative, Be Positive and Be Your Best**. The children have participated in **AFL clinics**, **Techxhibition sessions** conducted by **Dandenong Library**, and a **School Disco**.

# PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

It has been wonderful to see the engagement of our children and staff throughout these experiences. I would like to thank **Ms Nicole Fernandez for her leadership, organisation and coordination** of this very special week which has ensured a positive start to the year.

We also have our **Give Me 5 Family Night next Thursday 6 February from 6.00pm - 8.00pm.** This promises to be a wonderful night when our school community will come together for the first time in 2025. I look forward to seeing you all there.

Now that we are all getting back into familiar routines, a reminder **that our school gates are opened at 8.40am each morning. If children arrive or are dropped at school before this time there is a genuine safety concern as they are unsupervised and outside the school grounds.** Also when it is raining there is no shelter. Therefore I am asking families to drop their children off after 8.40am or wait with them until the gates are opened.

At the end of the day I am requesting families in cars to reduce the traffic congestion in McNab Court. **Families that arrive before 3.25pm are asked to park in the carpark. Joining the drop off/ pick up line, particularly just before the pedestrian crossing, creates a backlog of cars down the laneway and prevents families from parking in the car park, which causes issues and frustration.** The current building works in McNab Court also adds to this challenge. **This situation will be monitored closely to see if there is a need for a change in procedures and processes. Please note that the pedestrian gate from McNab Court will be opened every afternoon to assist with our end of day dismissal.** I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

A reminder to those families who have children with a **Medical Management Plan** that if there are changes to any aspect of the plan you need to **contact the School Office.** **It is vital that the information we have here at school is current and accurate and that the plan is not out of date.**

Lastly, an invitation is extended to all our families to join us at our **Beginning of School Year Mass which will be celebrated next Friday 7 February at 12.00 noon in the church.** As part of this whole school gathering, our Year 6 Student Leaders will be blessed and receive their leadership badges and hats. I hope you are all able to join us.

This first week has set us up for what promises to be a wonderful year at St Gerard's.

God bless.

Paul Cowan  
PRINCIPAL



# Religious News

## Key Dates

### Whole School Mass

Beginning of the Year Mass:	7th February, 12:00 (in the Church)
Ash Wednesday:	5th March, 9:15 (Parish Mass)

### Class/Level Mass

5/6O:	Thursday 13th February, Parish Mass at 9:15am
5/6T:	Thursday 20th February Parish Mass at 9:15am
3/4S:	Thursday 27th February, Class Mass at 10:00am
3/4W:	Thursday 20th March, Class Mass at 10:00am
1/2FB:	Thursday, 20th February Parish Mass
1/2S:	Thursday, 20th February Parish Mass

### Reconciliation

Year 4S & 4WL:	Thursday, 13th March at 10:15
Years 5/6O & 5/6T:	Thursday, 27th March at 10:15am

### Other Important Dates for Religion

4th March:	Shrove Tuesday and Subway (optional)
17th March:	Wear a <b>Touch of Green</b> with school uniform for St Patrick's Day
TBA:	Delegation of Yr 6 leaders attend St. Patrick's Day Mass at Cathedral
31st March onwards:	<i>The Passion Gallery Walk</i> for student and family participation
4th April:	Parishioners and Family invited to attend <i>The Passion Gallery Walk</i> after Mass
17th April:	Holy Thursday
18th April:	Good Friday Day of Fast and Abstinence
19th April:	Holy Saturday
20th April:	Easter Sunday



# Religious News



## Project Compassion

Caritas Australia's yearly Lenten campaign unites countless Australians in the global fight against poverty, championing justice, and upholding dignity. On Ash Wednesday, Project Compassion Boxes will be handed out to every class, each assigned a specific fundraising target for the Lenten season.

The class that achieves the highest fundraising amount will enjoy a well-deserved free dress day as a reward! Stay informed about each class's progress in fundraising efforts through regular updates provided by the Social Justice Leadership Team during school assemblies.

## Altar Servers

Altar service practice will resume on Thursday, February 13th, and will take place every Thursday evening at 5:30 pm in St. Gerard's Church. To be eligible for service, individuals must have completed their First Communion. This provides a wonderful opportunity for young members of the Church to participate in the liturgy and take on the responsibilities associated with altar service. For any inquiries regarding altar service practice or eligibility, please feel free to contact the parish office at 97924422.



# Religious News

## An Invitation to Bring Mary Home

### An Invitation to Bring Mary Home: A Week of Family Spiritual Connection

We extend an invitation to families to bring the Our Lady statue into their homes for a week, enhancing their family prayer experience. A brochure containing instructions for engaging in rosary prayer, along with sets of rosary beads, will be provided. If you are interested in taking the Our Lady statue home, please let Mrs. O'Brien know.



# Religious News

## Lunchtime Rosary

The Legion of Mary Group is teaming up with the school to lead Rosary prayer sessions during lunch breaks. These will take place during the first lunch on Tuesdays in Weeks 4 and 8 of each term.



## The Passion Gallery Walk

We're excited to invite families to experience *The Passion Gallery Walk* starting March 31st. Each class will contribute two artworks inspired by their assigned Stations of the Cross, reflecting on The Passion.

Details:

When: From March 31st  
Where: PAC - The Passion Gallery Walk

Join us for this reflective journey as we share this meaningful time together. Stay tuned for more details!

## Easter Gallery Walk

Families are invited to follow up on *The Passion Gallery Walk* by viewing the Resurrection artwork, which will be displayed after Easter.



# Wellbeing

## St. Gerard's "Give Me 5" Week: A Great Start to the Year!

Every year, we kick off the school year by focusing on our "Give Me 5" values, and this year was no exception! During the first week of school, each grade took the time to explore and reflect on what it means to:

- Be Respectful
- Be Cooperative
- Be Your Best
- Be Positive
- Be Spirit-Filled

We believe that relationships are key to creating a positive learning environment, and we know that we all learn best when we are in a classroom where everyone is showing respect, working together, staying positive, striving to do their best, and following God's guidance.

Our "Give Me 5" week celebrations kicked off with a bang! The students were thrilled to participate in two exciting incursions. First, they joined a Techxhibition hosted by the Dandenong Library, where they had the chance to explore new technology and engage in hands-on learning activities. A huge thank you to Dandenong Library for providing this fantastic opportunity!

Next, our students participated in an incursion with the AFL South East, where they learned football skills from experts in the field. The students had a blast improving their skills and learning about teamwork on and off the field. A big thank you to AFL South East for making this possible!

To round out the week, our students celebrated with a fun-filled disco by Little and Trivial Events. There were smiles, dancing, and lots of laughter as we came together to celebrate our values and the start of a fantastic year.

Take a look at some of the highlights from this amazing week—we can't wait to see what's next!

Thank you to all the staff, volunteers, and partners who helped make this week unforgettable!

Stay tuned for more updates, and here's to a positive, cooperative, and inspiring year ahead at St. Gerard's!

## "Give Me 5" Evening - Thursday, 6th February

Families, don't forget to join us for our Give Me 5 evening on Thursday, 6th February from 6-8pm! We'll kick things off with a picnic on the oval, followed by an exciting competition between all classes. The class with the highest attendance will earn a special reward to help them in the competition.

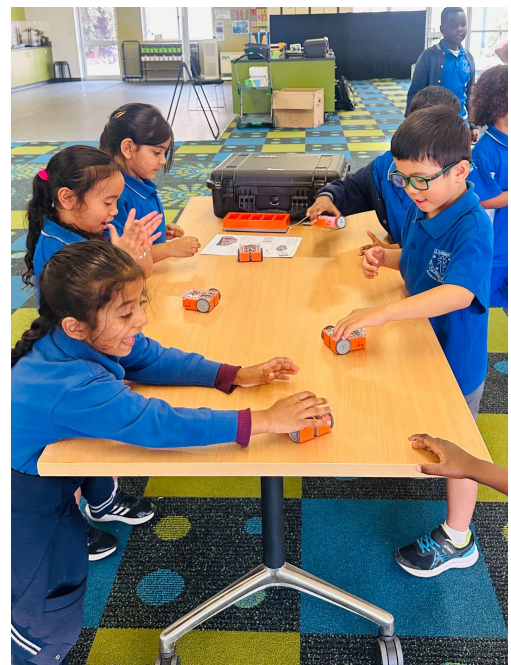
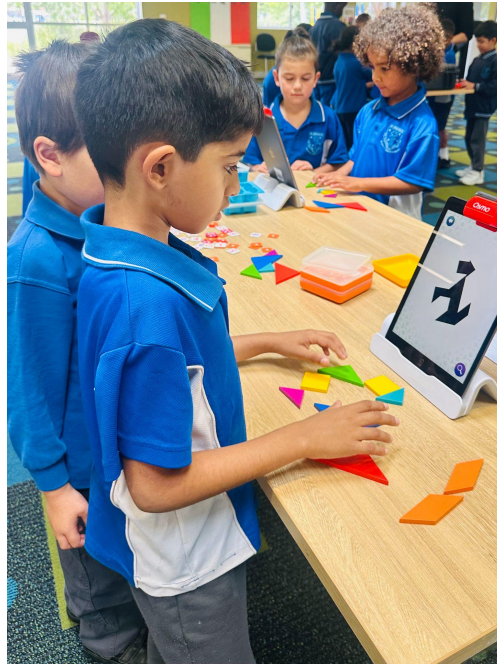
May the best team win!

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Fernandez.

We look forward to seeing you there!



# Give me 5 Week





# Give me 5 Week





# Wellbeing



## Play helps children develop social skills

Play is important for learning the social skills (including language and communication) that develop over time and will be the foundation for future relationships.

Through play, children learn about:

- the give and take of relationships with friends (negotiating)
- how their behaviour can affect others and to develop empathy
- how to lead and follow
- repairing relationships.

## Play helps children develop emotional skills

Through play, children can express their feelings, even before they have the words to say how they feel. Play also fosters imagination and becomes the basis for creativity in art or music or other ways of self-expression. These ways of personal expression can help people cope with feelings all their lives.

Play can also help children learn impulse control. They learn to think about what they want to do, to plan and to be patient. If they're building a castle and get frustrated and knock it down, they have lost their castle. In these ways, children gradually learn they need to control their impulses to achieve what they want.

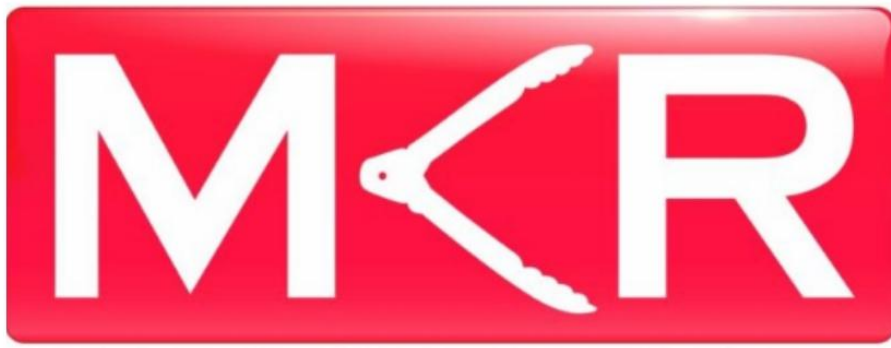
## Play is a way that children can work through and resolve problems

For example, a child whose family has separated may feel very anxious about what's going to happen to them. These feelings and possibilities can be explored through play. The child can practise having two homes set up with two houses and different dolls. There's no need for you to take part, but being near while the child plays shows support and acceptance.

## Play helps children develop physical skills

Children like games that test their physical abilities (motor skills) – running, climbing, jumping and exploring. These games bring children happiness and build their confidence.

# Invitation



## MY CLASSROOM RULES

We invite you to join in the **'My Classroom Rules... Cook off!'**

**WHEN:** Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025

**WHERE:** Performing Arts Centre

**TIME:** 6pm- 8pm

Family picnic followed by a class cook off...please bring your own picnic dinner and rug.

We hope to see you there!!



# Important Dates

## February

- 5th Foundation Rest Day 1 of 4
- 5th Reading before school in the library commences at 8:30am
- 6th Give Me 5 Family Night 6.00pm - 8.00pm
- 7th Beginning of the School Year Mass, in the Church at 12:00 noon
- 12th Foundation Rest Day 2 of 4
- 12th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 13th Year 5/6 O Class Mass at 9:15am in the Church (Parish Mass)
- 19th Foundation Rest Day 3 of 4
- 19th Reading before school in the library commences at 8:30am
- 19th Rosary in the Church at 11.05am
- 20th Year 5/6 T Class Mass at 9:15am in the Church (Parish Mass)
- 20th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 1, 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 25th Year 3 Reconciliation Family Night 7.00pm
- 26th Foundation Rest Day - 4 of 4 Final
- 26th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 27th Year 3/4 S Class Mass
- 27th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 2, 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 28th St Gerard's Whole School Athletics Day at Mentone Athletics Track

## March

- 4th SUBWAY Lunch
- 4th Shrove Tuesday
- 5th Ash Wednesday
- 5th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 6th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 3, 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- **10th Labour Day Public Holiday**
- 13th Year 3 Reconciliation Reflection Day
- 12th - 24th NAPLAN Testing (Years 3 and 5)
- 12th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 13th Year 4 Reconciliation
- 13th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 4, 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 19th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 19th Rosary in the Church at 11.05am
- 20th Year 3/4 W Class Mass
- 20th Year 3 Reconciliation Celebration 6.30pm
- 21st Reconciliation Assembly 2.50pm
- 20th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 5 (FINAL), 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 21st National Ride to School Day
- 26th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 27th Year 5/6 Reconciliation
- 31st *The Passion Gallery* Walk starts

## April

- 1st Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 2nd - 4th Year 5/6 Camp - CYC The Island
- 4th *The Passion Gallery* Walk finishes
- **4th End of Term 1, school finishes at 3.30pm**



Please note the following changes in relation to uniform purchases for St Gerard's Primary School:

Uniforms can now be purchased in the following ways:

**Option 1 - Online Order**

**Access to our Online Ordering System**

1. [www.aplusschoolwear.com.au](http://www.aplusschoolwear.com.au)
2. Go to **SHOP ONLINE NOW** (red box)
3. Select your school
4. Uniform listing with images will appear.

Select items you are wishing to purchase:

- Style
  - Size
  - Colour
  - Quantity
  - Add items to bag
5. Once all items are added to bag, proceed to checkout.
  6. Select delivery options
    - a. Pick up from school (free) in comments section please enter your child's name and class
    - b. Pick up from A Plus Schoolwear (free)
    - c. Postal address (delivery charges will apply)
  7. Either checkout as guest, returning customer or create a new account.

**Orders placed by Sunday will be delivered to the school the following Thursday**

**Option 2 - Fill out the order form and leave it at the school office.**

**Orders received by Friday will be delivered to the school the following Thursday**

**RETURNS**

Can be given to the school office **AFTER** contacting AGS and will be either exchanged or refunded by A Plus School wear.

Should you have any queries regarding the above, please contact A Plus Schoolwear

9354 8345 or email [angie@agsprints.com.au](mailto:angie@agsprints.com.au)



A reminder to families that arrive before 3.25pm to park in the carpark.

Joining the drop off/ pick up line, particularly near the pedestrian crossing, creates a backlog of cars and prevents families from parking in the car park, which causes issues. Another aspect of this is to be mindful of our procedures at the end of the school day. There are designated pick up areas for our students and pedestrian pathways. It can be busy at the end of the day, especially when it is cold and raining, however we need families walking home or to their cars to use the pedestrian pathways. I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

# Important Notes

## Medical Plans And Asthma Plans

This is a friendly reminder to provide the school with updated medical and asthma plans for 2024. If your child has asthma or requires other medications, please ensure that Ventolin, a spacer, and any necessary medications are supplied on the first day back to the school office.

All medications will be stored in individually labeled bags in the school office for safekeeping.


## Pick-up From After-School

Parents are asked to please be prompt when picking up your child/ren after-school. If a ride is not here when school concludes, the student may be sent to aftercare instead of the office. Please remember school aftercare does have a cost involved and time will begin accruing at the end of the school day. If a student's ride has run into an unexpected delay, please call the main office to let them know.

## St Gerard's YLVOSHC

### Program Information

Service Phone Number: 0402 192 685



### Prices

Before School Care
(Permanent) \$15.00
(Casual) \$20.00
After Max CCS: \$2.89

After School Care
(Permanent) \$20.00
(Casual) \$25.00
After Max CCS: \$3.16

Pupil Free Day and Vacation Care
(Permanent) \$65.00
(Casual): \$72.50
After Max CCS: \$6.50

\* MAX CCS REBATE FIGURES ARE PROVIDED AS APPROXIMATES AND MAY VARY

YLV.COM.AU

### OPERATING TIMES

**Before School Care**  
**Hours:**  
**6:45am - 8:45am**

**After School Care**  
**Hours:**  
**3:30pm - 6:30pm**

**Pupil Free Days:**  
**7:00am - 6:00pm**

**Vacation Care:**  
**7:00am - 6:00pm**

# Important Information



Happy Birthday to all who have celebrated and will celebrate their birthdays, this week including this weekend and January.

- EPHRATA Yr 2
- MAA Yr 1
- ANTONIA Yr 6
- SERAH Foundation
- EZEKIEL Yr 5
- EVELYN Yr 4
- VICTORIA Yr 5
- NEIL Yr 4
- YOHANNES Yr 3
- EZEKIEL Yr 3
- WILLOW Yr 1
- MICHAEL Yr 2
- ABHIR Yr 1
- LENNY Foundation
- LAYLA Yr 3
- JACOB Yr 2
- DEKOTA Yr 5



- *Every Day Counts* - Primary School Attendance Information
- Ukraine Support Fund
- Springvale Indoor Sports - Indoor Soccer
- AFL Auskick - St Gerard's 5 Week Program



## Chicken Eggs For Sale

- St Gerard's would like to offer families the opportunity to purchase delicious organic eggs laid by our resident flock of chickens.
- You can purchase these eggs from the school office at a cost of **\$8** per dozen.
- All proceeds from the sale of the eggs will go towards purchasing food for our feathered friends.
- Please message [Nicole Fernandez](#) via Seesaw if you would like to purchase some eggs.