

St Gerard's Newsletter

Term 1, Week 6

6 March 2026



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



Students from St Gerard's Dandenong North and St Gerard's Westminster, WA, came together online to connect, learn, and share the spirit of St Gerard's across the miles.



ST GERARD'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Truth † Love † Mercy

Prayer for the Spirit of St Gerard's

Dear God,

Thank you for bringing us together today,
from St Gerard's Dandenong North and St Gerard's
Westminster, WA.

Bless our teachers, classmates, and everyone in our
school communities.

Help us to live the spirit of St Gerard's:
to care for one another, be kind, show respect, and
share joy.

May we learn, grow, and celebrate friendship and
faith together.

Amen.



@st.gerards3175

Principal - Mr Paul Cowan
principal@sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au
71 Gladstone Road, Dandenong North 3175



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

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Families,

We have had another week with numerous learning opportunities for our children.

On Tuesday afternoon all our classes had an **online meeting with classes from St Gerard's, Westminster in Western Australia**. This was an opportunity to share information about our schools and look at the similarities and differences. We are hoping to grow this connection with this school that shares our Patron's name and we are the only 2 St Gerard's Schools in Australia.

The second of our 4 **AUSKICK and SUPERKICK sessions** occurred on Wednesday afternoon. It is great to see our children so engaged and eager. These sessions provide the opportunity to develop some AFL and social skills and try a team sport. Hopefully we may see some children join one of the local AFL clubs.

Our **Prep and Year 5/6 classes attended the Parish 9.15am Mass on Thursday morning**. It is always heartwarming to see our youngest children being supported and encouraged by our oldest children and I would like to thank our Year 5/6 children for the positive role modelling they provide.

Today (Friday) also saw our Year 3 - 6 classes involved in another Cricket Clinic, which is part of a series of sessions that will occur this term.

In maintenance news, we are currently having some of the outside metal and guttering around the PAC painted and we had new Basketball Backboards installed today (Friday).

A few reminders about some of the weekly activities that families are more than welcome to come and be a part of:

- Monday morning Meditation in the PAC at 8.50am
- Before School Reading on Wednesday morning in the Library from 8.30am
- Before School Skipping in the Courtyard from 8.30am
- Assembly on Friday in the PAC at 2.50pm.

Looking to next week, our Year 3 and 5 children will participate in NAPLAN assessments. We view these assessment tasks as an opportunity to gather further information about the continual development of our children in conjunction with our other ongoing assessments.

We have the second of our official **Open Days next Wednesday 11 March**. This is an opportunity for prospective families to see all that we offer here at St Gerard's. We have **1 other Open Day planned for Tuesday 17 March**. If you know families who will be looking for a school in 2027, we would appreciate you letting them know of these dates. They may also arrange another time to visit our school by calling the School Office on 9791 7553 or emailing myself principal@sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au

Lastly, a reminder that the **school will be closed next Monday 9 March** for the Labour Day Public Holiday **and Tuesday 10 March** to acquit Time in Lieu accrued by the staff.

God bless.

Paul Cowan
PRINCIPAL

Religious

Key Dates

Sacraments 2026

First Reconciliation:

- Thursday, 12th March, 2026 First Reconciliation Reflection Day, students may wear casual
- Thursday, 19th March, 2026 First Reconciliation at 6.30pm
- Friday, 20th March, 2026, 2:50 pm First Reconciliation Assembly

First Communion:

- Sunday, 14th June, 2026, First Communion, 10:30am

Confirmation:

- Saturday, 16th May, 2026 Confirmation, 5:30pm

Level Mass

Yrs 3/4ST & 3/4WL	Thursday 12th March, 9:15am
Yrs 1/2FB & 1/2S	Thursday 19th March, 9:15am

Reconciliation

Years 5/6O & 5/6T:	Thursday 12th March, 10:15am
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Other Important Dates for Religion

17th March:	Wear a Touch of Green with school uniform for St Patrick's Day
TBA:	Delegation of Yr 6 leaders attend St. Patrick's Day Mass at Cathedral
31st March	<i>The Passion</i>

Religious News

Second Week of Lent

(Week beginning Monday 2 March)

This Lent, we are proud to support Caritas Australia's Project Compassion and to stand in solidarity with school communities across the world who have their education disrupted by the daily struggle for clean, safe water.

This week, we're introduced to **Sisilia**, a 13-year-old girl from Tanzania. Sisilia supported her mother by walking long distances three times a day to fetch water. The water was unsafe, causing frequent illness, and the long walks left Sisilia exhausted and struggling to focus on her studies.

Thanks to Project Compassion and the support of schools like ours, Sisilia's school and village now have safe clean water taps. This means it takes Sisilia just two minutes to collect water, giving her more time to learn so she can fulfil her dreams of one day becoming a pilot.

"I'd like to fly to different countries and pass through the sky." – said Sisilia. "Also, I want to help my family live a better life. If I can study without spending so much time fetching water, I know I can achieve my dream."

Watch Sisilia's story [HERE](#) to learn more about how our school's support of Project Compassion helps to create ripples of change that are felt by our fellow students, teachers and parents across the world.

Will you stand with students like Sisilia this Lent?



Please donate today.

You can support Project Compassion 2026 through the donation boxes or by scanning the QR code to donate online.

You can also donate:

Online at: projectcompassion.org.au

By phone at: 1800 024 413

Thank you for standing with us, as we *Unite Against Poverty* this Lent.

Altar Servers

Altar Server practice resumed on Wednesday 29 January and will continue every Thursday evening at 5:30 pm at St Gerard's Church. To be eligible to serve, children must have received their First Communion. This is a wonderful opportunity for young members of our parish to take part in the liturgy and learn the responsibilities of altar service. For further information about practice times or eligibility, please contact the parish office on **9792 4422**.



Religious News

An Invitation to Bring Mary Home

We invite families to take the Our Lady statue into their home for a week as a special way to deepen family prayer time. Each family will receive a brochure with simple instructions for praying the Rosary, as well as a set of rosary beads. If you would like to take the Our Lady statue home, please let Mrs Stack know.



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

We warmly invite you to join us for one of the most significant events in our school year, The Passion. This special Holy Week presentation is a much-loved tradition at our school, where every child participates in retelling the story of Jesus' final days.

Through *The Passion*, we journey with Jesus to the cross and reflect on the emotions of Holy Week, from joy to sorrow, as we prepare our hearts for Easter.

Please join us on Tuesday 31st March at 2:00pm in the school hall. We understand this may require time away from work, and we truly appreciate your support in being part of this important community event.

We look forward to sharing this meaningful experience with you.

Wellbeing

How does confidence develop?

Babies are born curious



- They want to touch, see, hear and taste everything within their reach. Toddlers and preschoolers demonstrate their need to understand their world by asking many 'why' questions. From their repeated experiences of seeing their actions affect their world and the people in it, young children begin to see themselves as capable and having control. This helps them to feel good about themselves and builds their self-confidence.

When they begin school, children typically start out with high expectations

- But when they see how they do things compared to others, their view of their own abilities often changes. They learn that they're good at some things and not so good at others. They also see how other children and educators respond to what they do. These things influence children's confidence in their abilities. They also influence how willing they are to have a go in situations where they feel unsure.

Your response

- The way adults respond to children as they explore their place in the world is their template for solving many challenging and difficult problems later on. For young children, it helps strengthen their sense of self when significant adults nurture their natural curiosity and demonstrate patience and interest. In primary school years, children who are suddenly less sure of themselves may need extra support and encouragement to build a functional sense of confidence they can take with them into adolescence.

Harmony Day at St Gerards

Harmony Day is a special occasion where we celebrate all the cultures that make up our wonderful school community. It is a day that reminds us of the importance of inclusion, respect, and belonging for everyone. By recognising and valuing our diverse backgrounds, traditions, and stories, we strengthen our understanding of one another and build a community where everyone feels seen and appreciated.

This year St Gerards will be celebrating Harmony Day on **Friday the 20th of March**. It is a day where we celebrate all our cultures and reflect on the importance of learning from one another.

We warmly invite all families to attend our Cultural Parade in the morning and join us as we proudly share and celebrate our diversity. If any parents or carers would love to buddy up with a teacher to teach the students about their culture, please contact Nicole Fernandez via Seesaw. We would greatly value your involvement in helping us make this day meaningful and memorable for our students.



Wellbeing

Student Representative Council

The Student Representative Council (SRC) is made up of a group of students who work together to support their peers by presenting ideas that benefit the entire student body. The SRC also keeps students informed about important information and matters that may affect them.

On Thursday 5 March, the Semester One SRC representatives of St Gerard's attended their first meeting. During the meeting, they discussed the role of an SRC member, learned about being a Child Safe Officer, and spoke about upcoming events, including Harmony Day. The next SRC meeting will be held on Thursday 12 March.

A big congratulations to the following students who were voted in by their classmates as the SRC representatives for Semester One 2026.

Foundation B- Diora and Jett

1/2S- Jacob A and Amanda

1/2FB- Harper and Drishika

3/4ST- Rex and Jesston

3/4WL- Matthew and Ameya

5/6O- Naomi and Elaine

5/6T- Dhanvin and Izabella



Garden Club



Garden Club Update

This Week in Garden Club

This week the students spent time in Wurundjeri Way caring for our special outdoor space. We began our lesson in the chicken coop where students collected the eggs, changed the chickens' water, and topped up their food. It also looks like our trick with our broody chicken seems to be working.

After visiting the chickens, the students continued their work in Wurundjeri Way by weeding the garden beds, watering the plants, and filling the bird baths so that visiting wildlife have access to fresh water.

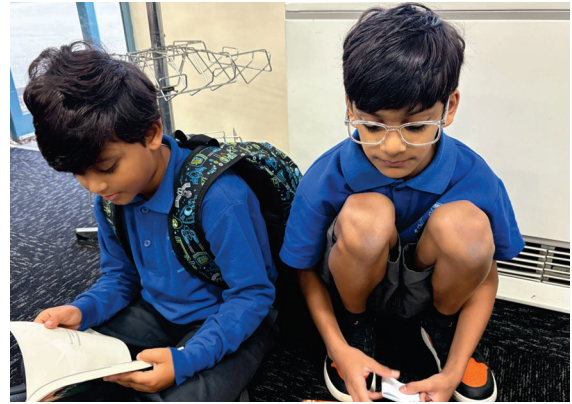
During our session, students discussed the importance of creating a safe and welcoming wildlife area. We talked about how providing shelter, water, and native plants helps local animals, birds, and insects feel safe and at home at St Gerards.

Anthony also shared a thoughtful comment during Garden Club, saying that the world would be a better place if more people liked gardening. It was a lovely reflection on how spending time in nature and caring for the environment can bring people together.



Reading before School

Reading Before School has started full steam ahead. We had a very good turn out with parents and students reading to each other this week. Children receive a raffle ticket and go into a draw to win a prize. Students are encouraged to attend and read a book by themselves, to each other or with their families.



Library



LIBRARY NEWSLETTER



Week 6, March 2026

Exploring New Worlds at the Library, Together!

Come join us at the library, where there's more than just reading books! Engage in our library club and explore a world of knowledge, creativity, and community. Whether it's through interactive sessions, engaging discussions, or collaborative projects, there's something for everyone to enjoy and learn.

LIBRARY CLUB UPDATES

This week at Library Club, students learned and played a new game called *Get Ready...Sketch!* Students worked in teams, with both teams beginning the game with a point or two thanks to having players who earned a game point during last week's session. Students took turns sketching while their teammates guessed the correct answer. Throughout the game, students collaborated respectfully with both teammates and opposing players, interacting positively with a variety of peers. The Blue Team, consisting of Azalea, Dekota, Sophia, Ameya and Grace, won a very close game 4-3. Well done to everyone for their teamwork and enthusiasm.

Miss Adrien will be checking for any overdue books every two weeks until the end of term. From now on, students are asked to bring a separate library bag (book bag) on their allocated library day when borrowing books. This helps keep food and drinks away from library books, supports students in building responsibility for returning books on time, and helps prevent damage so everyone can continue to enjoy them. Thank you for your ongoing support in caring for our school library resources.

Miss Stephanie Adrien



Library



LIBRARY CLUB



Week 6, March 2026

Congratulations to Ameya, Ephrata, Andrea, Sanaya, Grace, Hudson, Matej, Elaine, Izabela and Anthony who have each received their Gold Pass after successfully completing three training sessions.

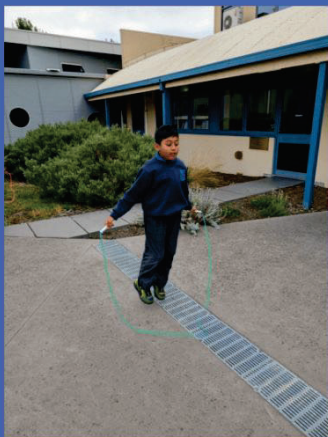


Miss Stephanie Adrien



Skipping

THURSDAY SKIPPING



STARTS AT 8:30AM
EVERY THURSDAY



Skipping

THURSDAY SKIPPING



2026

DATES TO REMEMBER

Term 1, 2026 Dates

- **9th Labour Day – Public Holiday**
- **10th School Closure Day – Time in Lieu**
- 10th Art Club at Lunchtime
- 11th Before School Reading in the library from 8:30am
- 11th Library Club at Lunchtime
- 11th AUSKICK & SUPERKICK Session 3 at 3.30pm
- 12th First Reconciliation Reflection Day
- 12th Before School Skipping in the Courtyard from 8:30am
- 12th Garden Club at Lunchtime
- 13th Whole School Assembly in PAC at 2.40pm
- 16th Whole School Meditation in PAC at 8.45am
- 17th Art Club at Lunchtime
- 18th Before School Reading in the library from 8:30am
- 18th Library Club at Lunchtime
- 18th AUSKICK & SUPERKICK Session 4 at 3.30pm
- 19th Before School Skipping in the Courtyard from 8:30am
- 19th Rosary with the Parish Legion of Mary
- 19th Garden Club at Lunchtime
- 19th First Reconciliation at 6.30pm
- 20th Harmony Day
- 20th Whole School Assembly in PAC at 2.40pm
- 23rd Whole School Meditation in PAC at 8.45am
- 25th Before School Reading in the library from 8:30am
- 26th Before School Skipping in the Courtyard from 8:30am
- 27th Whole School Assembly in PAC at 2.40pm
- 30th Whole School Meditation in PAC at 8.45am

April

- 1st End of Term 1 at 3.30pm

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.

Any families who hold a current Health Care Card are asked to please provide a copy to the school office.

This will ensure you receive the MACS Concession on your school fees.

Please note, this must be a valid Centrelink Health Care Card. Private health insurance cards or Medicare cards are not eligible.



**ST GERARD'S
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

SERVICE CONTACT:
0402 192 685 (Marina) | area1@ylv.com.au

SERVICE HOURS	COST
Before School Care 6:45AM – 8:45AM	\$30/\$35 PERMANENT/CASUAL
After School Care 3:30PM – 6:30PM	\$35/\$40 PERMANENT/CASUAL
Pupil-Free Day 7:00AM – 6:00PM	\$83

fees effective 02 Mar 2026

ylv.com.au

Important Information



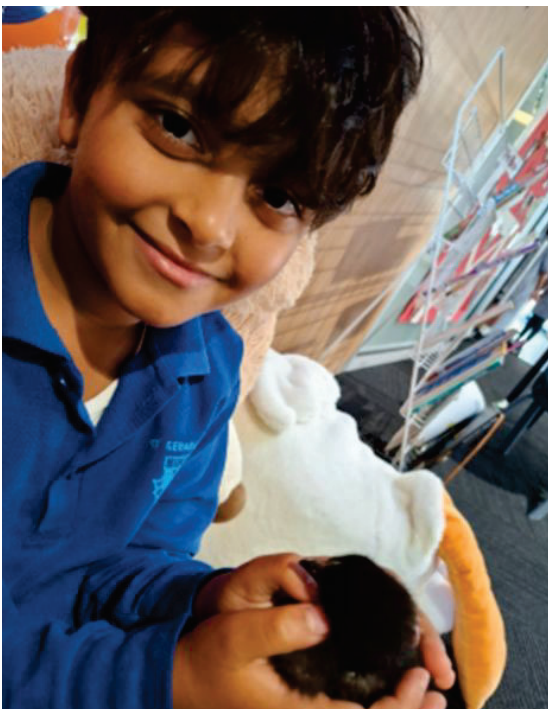
Happy Birthday to all who have celebrated and will celebrate their birthdays, this week including this weekend.

- IVAN Yr 2
- SANAYA Yr 3
- HAILEY Yr 6



COMMUNITY NOTICE

- *Every Day Counts* - Primary School Attendance Information
- AFL Auskick - st Gerard's 5 Week Program
- Springvale Indoor Sports - Indoor Soccer
- Mazenod College - Open Day Information



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.