

St Gerard's Newsletter

Term 2, Week 6 – 29 May 2026



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



Our students absolutely loved celebrating Italian Day today and enjoyed every moment of being part of such a fun and memorable cultural experience!

Loving God,

We thank You for the joy of Italian Day and for the many cultures and traditions that make Australia such a beautiful and welcoming country. Bless our school community as we learn from one another, celebrate our differences and grow together in faith, friendship and respect.

May we always follow Jesus by showing kindness, inclusion and gratitude for the gifts each culture brings to our lives.

Amen



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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear families,

This week saw us celebrate one of our Specialist Programs as well as the 'usual' learning opportunities we provide every week.

We had our annual **Italian Day** today (Friday) and as promised it was a '*molto bene*' day when we dressed as Italian characters and celebrated the work being done in our Italian Program. Activities involving **cooking, dancing, singing** and **art** along with a performance from '**La Favola Dell'Ingrediente Segreto**' helped us to engage in Italian culture and draw links with the learning our children are involved in each week. **Thank you to Signor Fabio** for his coordination of this day and all staff for their enthusiasm and support.

On Wednesday we had the second of our **OPEN Days** with the third planned for next Tuesday 2 June. If you know families who will be looking for a school in 2027, we would appreciate you letting them know. 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 A reminder to **current families** that if you have a child who will be starting school next year to please come to the Office for an Enrolment Pack.

As I mentioned last week, we are starting to experience some cooler weather, particularly in the morning, and with this weather comes coughs, colds and other illnesses. **While it can be challenging for families, for the health of students and staff, please do not send your child to school if they are unwell.** I thank you in advance for your support.

A reminder to all families that the Entrance to the School/Parish Car Park is via McNab Court. There have been several concerns raised regarding **families and parishioners using the Double Exit on Gladstone Road as an entrance.** This poses a genuine safety concern to drivers and pedestrians. **Regardless of the time of day, families are asked not to enter the Carpark from Gladstone Road.**

Our **2025 Annual Report to the School Community** has been ratified by MACS. This report has been published on our website and there are copies in the foyer for any families who would like a printed copy. If you would like a digital copy please email myself or contact me via Seesaw.

Looking to next week, we have our **Pyjama Day next Friday to highlight our 'Sleep for Wellbeing' focus.** Please see further information in this Newsletter.

God bless.

Paul COWAN
PRINCIPAL



Key Dates

Sacraments 2026

First Communion: (Grade 4)

- Thursday, 11th June, 2026, First Communion Reflection Day
- Sunday, 14th June, 2026, First Communion, 10:30am
- Friday, 19th June, 2026, First Communion Assembly in the PAC

Whole School Masses:

- Friday 12th June The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus at 9:15

Other Important Dates for Religion

Refugee Week Assembly: 19th June, 2:50

Term 2, 2026 Dates

June

- 2nd OPEN DAY
- **8th King's Birthday Public Holiday**
- 11th Rosary with The Legion of Mary
- 11th First Communion Reflection Day
- 14th First Communion 10.30am
- 22nd - 24th Year 5/6 Camp
- 25th SUBWAY Lunch
- **26th End of Term 2 at 3.30pm**

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.

Altar Servers

Altar Server practice resumed on Thursday 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**.

St Vincent De Paul Winter Appeal:

We're once again setting our sights on a full food cart for the St. Vincent de Paul Society Winter Appeal! Our Social Justice and Spirituality Leaders will begin gathering donated food items, with collections continuing through to the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. As always, there is a little friendly competition involved. The class that contributes the most items will enjoy a well earned casual dress day.

Vinnie's **WINTER APPEAL**



'I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. Whatever you did for one of the least of mine, you did for me.' Mathew 25

Wellbeing News



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.



Be Spirit-Filled in the Playground

Next week, our school community will come together to focus on one of our Give Me 5 values: *Be Spirit-Filled in the Playground*. This initiative encourages students to embody kindness, respect, and empathy in their interactions with peers.

What Does It Mean to Be Spirit-Filled?

Being Spirit-Filled means treating others as you would like to be treated, saying sorry and forgiving others, and showing kindness in all your actions. These principles are at the heart of our school culture and are essential for creating a positive and supportive environment for everyone.

Recognising Positive Behaviour

To celebrate and encourage these values, students who demonstrate kindness and respect in the playground will be awarded a silver band.

Garden Club

Garden Club

This week in Garden Club, students worked on the upkeep of the Wurundjeri Way garden. They spent time weeding the area and cutting back some of the ornamental tree suckers to help maintain healthy growth and improve the appearance of the space. The students then re-evaluated the garden and identified that additional plants will need to be purchased to fill some of the vacant areas.

Thank you to all the students who generously gave their time to be stewards of God's creation.



When: **5th June**

Kids Pyjama Day



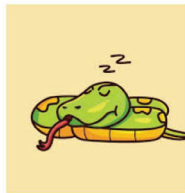
Students wear their pyjamas to school over their sports uniform OR get dressed up as a character or animal that sleeps a lot.

What: Students will do rotational activities about sleep

Where: St Gerard's PAC and in Classrooms

Why: Sleep is an important factor for student wellbeing

Pyjama Day



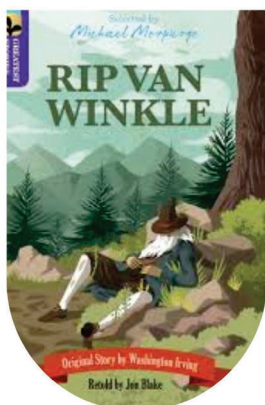
Your child might like to get dressed up in their **pyjamas** for Pyjama Day or get dressed up as an **animal** or a **character** that sleeps a lot.

Animals that sleep a lot: koala, sloth, brown bat, giant armadillo, python, possum, owl monkey, tiger, echidna, wombat.



Famous Characters that sleep a lot:

Snorlax from pokemon, Princess Aurora / Sleeping Beauty, Sleepy from Snow White, Rip Van Winkle from the book Rip Van Winkle, Mr Lazy from the Mr Men Books and Lazy Smurf.



Reading before School



READ WITH ME!



Just 10~15 Minutes a Day Makes a Lifelong Difference



Why Reading Together Matters



Builds Strong Brains

- Improves concentration and memory
- Develops imagination and creativity
- Strengthens thinking skills



Grows Literacy Skills

- Expands vocabulary
- Improves spelling and writing
- Builds fluency and comprehension
- Increases confidence



Strengthens Relationships

- Creates special one-on-one time
- Encourages meaningful conversations
- Helps children feel supported and valued



Broadens Understanding

- Develops empathy
- Introduces new ideas and cultures
- Helps children understand the world



How You Can Help at Home

- ✓ Set a regular reading time each day
- ✓ Take turns reading aloud
- ✓ Ask questions about the story
- ✓ Praise effort, not just accuracy
- ✓ Make reading enjoyable
- ✓ Let your child see you reading too



Remember

- You don't need to be a teacher to make a difference.
- Your time, encouragement and interest matter most.

"Children are made readers on the laps of their parents."

Reading before School

Term 2 - Reading Before School Winners



Library News
