



# St Gerard's Primary School

# NEWSLETTER

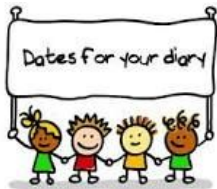


**Term 1, Week 1**

[www.sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au](http://www.sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au)

03 97917553

**31 January 2020**



**Monday, 3 February**

PLANKS incursion

**Tuesday, 4 February**

St Kilda AFL incursion

**Wednesday, 5 February**

NO PREPS

Dandenong Library IT incursion

**Thursday, 6 February**

Twilight Evening for Give Me Five

6 - 8 pm

Cricket Incursion

Excel Music Classroom Visits

**Friday, 7 February**

Whole School Mass 12:00 (TBC)

Give Me Five Assembly 2:45 pm

**Sunday, 9 February**

Soup Van Pizza night, St Gerard's  
Parish Hall



## *School Prayer*

**God, our Father, as  
members of the Parish  
Community of**

**St Gerard's we praise you  
for your love.**

**May we grow stronger in  
faith and hope, and may our  
love for each other, become  
deeper in our daily lives.**

**Grant this through your  
Son, and our brother, Jesus  
Christ,**

**AMEN**

***Our heartfelt prayers are with all of the victims of bushfire tragedy at this time,  
including families of the people who have died as well as those whose homes  
have been destroyed.***



## **Prayer for Those Affected By Bushfire and Drought**

Eternal God, In wisdom and love  
you created our earth to sustain us and give us life.

We turn to you now in faith, hope and love,  
asking you to look with favour  
on our fire-ravaged and drought-stricken land,  
on our starving and displaced animals,  
on our failing crops and burning farms, towns and forests.

Strengthen, sustain and give new heart to our farmers  
and to all who are affected by drought;  
be with those who support them.

Strengthen and comfort the victims of the fires,  
those who have lost family, friends, property and stock.  
Protect our volunteer firefighters and all members of essential services.

In your loving providence, send abundant rain  
to quench the fires and to restore our parched earth.

Father of all compassion, hear our prayer  
through Jesus Christ your Son,  
in whom the promise of new life has dawned,  
and through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life:  
Renew your faithful people; Renew the face of the earth.

Our Lady of the Southern Cross,  
Mary, help of Christians – Pray for us.  
St Mary of the Cross MacKillop – Pray for us.

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Families,

Welcome back to school and what promises to be a wonderful and exciting year filled with learning opportunities for our children. I hope that everyone had a happy and holy Christmas and that the holidays gave you the chance to be with family and friends.

It is hard to fully appreciate the impact the **recent bushfires** have had on so many people. **Please keep those impacted in your prayers.** As a school we will investigate ways we can support the communities affected.

It was great to see the smiling faces of our **Year 1-6 students on Wednesday** morning as they came through the gates. **Thursday saw us welcome our Preps for 2020.** This is a significant milestone not only for the child but for their entire family. I hope and pray that these youngest members of our community develop a love of learning.

We also welcome to our community **Fr. Dean Mathieson** who is our new Parish Priest. Father met the staff on Tuesday. I am sure you will make him feel very welcome here at St. Gerard's.

This week and next week we have a whole school focus on our **Give Me 5** principles. They are the foundations of all we do and help us all to live and learn in a positive manner. Next week sees a range of activities occurring to help our students build relationships with their new classmates and teachers. We also have our **Give Me 5 night next Thursday from 6.00pm - 8.00pm** where we will be having a **My Classroom Rules cooking competition.** This promises to be a wonderful opportunity to come together with other families. I look forward to seeing you there.

This year we will be having a **whole school assembly each Friday afternoon at 2.45pm in the PAC.** This assembly will allow us to reflect on the week, recognise achievements, celebrate birthdays and set the scene for the coming week. Our Year 6 Leaders will play key roles in this assembly. **Families are more than welcome to come to these assemblies.** I hope to see as many families as possible. Next Friday this assembly will have a Give Me 5 focus. We will continue to have a Meditation session based on the previous Sunday's Gospel on Monday mornings.

Finally, yesterday (Thursday) a letter and Information Sheet regarding the **Novel coronavirus** was sent home to all families. It is included again in this newsletter. I will keep you informed about any developments or changes that we may need to make as a school. As stated in the letter, **'The safety and care of your children is paramount to myself and our school community'.**

God Bless

Paul Cowan - Principal

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

## **Whole School Mass**

Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> February:

Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> February:

Beginning of School Year Mass, 12:00

Ash Wednesday, 9:00am (Day of Fast and Abstinence)

## **Level Masses:**

Years 1/2:

Years 3/4:

Prep and Years 5/6:

Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> Feb at 9:15

Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> Feb at 9:15

Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> March at 9:15 (with Preps)

## **Calling for Soup Van Volunteers**

Our St Vincent de Paul Soup Van volunteers will be celebrating the success of their first six weeks of operation in the St Gerard's Parish Hall on Sunday 9th Feb at 6pm. All prospective volunteers are welcome.

If you are interested in finding out more about volunteering, please send an expression of interest to James Tudehope (St Gerard's Parish SVDP President Dandenong North Conference) at [tadeu@bigpond.net.au](mailto:tadeu@bigpond.net.au).

## **Other Important Dates for Term 1**

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February:

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February:

Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> March:

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March:

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March:

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March:

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April:

Give Me Five Assembly at 2:45

Shrove Tuesday: Tuesday

St Patrick's Feast Day

Students wear full school uniform with a touch of green for St Patrick's Day

St Patrick's Day Mass at the Cathedral for a delegate of School Leaders representing our school

The Passion at 2pm followed by Hot Cross Buns for parents afterwards

Easter Assembly at 2:45pm

## **Sacrament Dates, 2020**

### **Confirmation: (Grade 6)**

Confirmation Information Night:

Confirmation:

TBA

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> July, 6pm

## **The Passion**

Please mark this significant event into your diaries and it's well worth taking time off work if needs be to witness The Passion.

Our faith journey with Jesus in Holy Week sees us remembering his last days and moments. It is a journey of jubilation, of anxiety and suffering, of humiliation and abandonment, of dying on a cross.

During the Passion we journey with Jesus towards the cross and prepare to welcome him into our presence.

The Passion will take place on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm, followed by Hot Cross Buns being served to parents.

## **Palm leaves needed:**

If you have some palm leaves that can be used for props for The Passion, please bring them to Mrs Stack on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

## **Seasons - A Program for Grief and Loss**

Seasons is a peer support program for children and young people who are experiencing grief and loss in their lives. This loss may be the result of a death, separation or divorce.

This valuable program will become available in term 2. If you have any questions about the program, please don't hesitate to speak to your classroom teacher or to Mrs. Stack.

## **St Patrick's Day Mass**

On Tuesday 17th March a delegation of 10 school leaders from Year 6 will represent our school by attending Mass to celebrate St Patrick's Day at St Patrick's Cathedral in East Melbourne. After Mass, we will walk to the Treasury Gardens to have lunch followed by a concert in the park.

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

## Project Compassion

Caritas Australia's annual Lenten fundraising and awareness-raising appeal. Millions of Australians come together in solidarity with the world's poor to help end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity.

Project Compassion Boxes will be distributed to each class during Ash Wednesday Mass. Each class will have a target amount that they would like to raise during lent. Regular updates, by the Social Justice Leadership Team, with the amount raised so far will be announced at the school assembly.

## Rosary

Each Tuesday we have a group that comes together to pray the rosary in the Church at first lunch, led by the Legion of Mary from the Parish. Children are welcome to attend and encouraged to bring their own Rosary beads if they have them, otherwise, Rosary beads will be provided.

## Meditation

Thank you to everyone that has remembered that we begin each day with meditation. If you arrive late to school and the meditation bell has already gone, you need to wait in the office area until meditation time has finished.

## Altar boy training

Altar boy training sessions will resume on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February. After that the boys will be trained at **St Gerard's Church** each Thursday from **5.00-6.30pm** by Frederick Maroun, a senior Altar Server. If your son is in Year 4 or above and is interested in becoming an altar server or would like more information, please contact Mrs. Stack at the school office.

# WELLBEING NEWS

## Give Me 5 Family Night- The Big Cook Off!!

On Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020 (next week) your family is invited to come and join in a Give Me 5 evening. We will begin the evening at 6pm in the Performing Arts Centre with families and teachers entering a school cook off. The intention is to create a magnificent dish with the ingredients supplied (free of charge) by St Gerard's Primary School.

A flyer has been sent home regarding this evening. Please fill in the reply slip and return it back to school by Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

## Give Me Five Week

Every year each grade spend the first two weeks of school exploring our Give Me 5 values:

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

We do this because we think relationships are very important and we know we learn best if we are in a classroom where everyone is being respectful, co-operative, and positive, trying their best and trying to do the things God wants them to do. We know if we make good choices in the classroom and on the playground, we can learn and be happy at school.

## Incursions during Give Me 5 Week

All students from Prep to 6 will be participating in the following fun incursions next week...

Monday- Planks Incursion

Tuesday- AFL Incursion

Wednesday- Dandenong Library Textibition Incursion (*No Preps due to day off*)

Thursday- Cricket Australia Incursion

Friday- Give Me 5 assembly at 2:45pm- all families welcome!



## Kitchen Garden 3/4S



This week 3/4S enjoyed their Garden to Kitchen lesson. The students enjoyed preparing and eating delicious zucchini fritters and herb yoghurt! Ask them to make it for you at home. Once again a huge thank you to our amazing, dedicated mums who volunteer their precious time every Friday. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of February 3/4L will participate in their Garden to Kitchen lesson.

If you would like to assist during the Garden to Kitchen block please contact Anna Munro or Nicole Fernandez. We would love for you to join in!

Week	Class
Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> Jan @ 11:45- 1:40	3/4S
Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> Feb @ 11:45- 1:40	No Lesson
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> Feb @ 11:45- 1:40	3/4L
Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> Feb @ 11:45- 1:40	5/6VT
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> Feb @ 11:45- 1:40	5/6O
Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> Mar @ 11:45- 1:40	No Lesson
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> Mar @ 11:45- 1:40	1/2FP
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> Mar @ 11:45- 1:40	1/2B



**Parents we would love for you to be involved in the Garden to Kitchen Program. Please see your child's class teacher or Mrs Fernandez if you would like to participate.**



### DID YOU KNOW?

**Facts from the Be You website.**

### How do decision-making skills develop?

**Children and young people's decision-making is strongly influenced by the expectations and values they learn from those around them.**

This occurs when they:

- observe others (particularly those close to them)
- hear about and discuss values
- have opportunities to make choices and experience their consequences.

Young children regularly choose how they'll behave, which toys or games they'd like to play with, which books they would like to read, or which television shows they want to watch. As they get older, children make bigger decisions that often involve their family, friends and schoolwork. The kinds of choices children and young people make affect their wellbeing, relationships and success.

Young children have some skills for making decisions, but they don't yet have the experience to understand complex adult situations. As their brain grows, a child is more able to hold things in their mind and remember what they've learned. They also improve the way they manage their thinking and feelings, control impulsive behaviour, think about time and plan ahead, and evaluate long-term versus short-term goals. All these skills help children become better at taking action and keeping things on track.

## ST GERARD'S SCHOOL

71 Gladstone Road,  
Dandenong North Vic 3175  
Phone: 9791 7553  
Fax: 9793 7633



### Novel coronavirus Information

Dear Families,

The safety and care of your children is paramount to myself and our school community.

I am writing to you following new advice from the Australian and Victorian governments regarding the novel coronavirus.

**All children who have travelled to Hubei Province of China, are advised to stay at home and avoid public settings, including attendance at schools and early learning centres, until 14 days after last being in Hubei province, China. This applies to any and all students even if they do not show any symptoms of the virus.**

Children who are well and have travelled to other provinces in China, or any other areas where there have been reported cases, are **NOT** recommended to be excluded from schools unless the following applies:

- The person is a confirmed case of novel coronavirus
- The person is a close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus in the past 14 days

If you think your child is showing any relevant symptoms of the novel corona virus, please call the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to discuss further actions on 1300 651 160.

This advice is also being provided to teachers and other school staff to ensure we mitigate any risks associated with the spread of the virus.

Attached is a factsheet provided by the Victorian Government providing advice and information about the novel coronavirus, including what actions to take if your child is feeling unwell following travel to the Hubei province, and practical steps to avoid the spread of the virus.

You can also access further information and updates from the following websites:

- For Victorian updates to the current incident, go to: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/novelcoronavirus>
- For national updates: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/latest-information-about-novel-coronavirus>
- For international updates: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/novel-coronavirus>
- WHO resources <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

In circumstances like these, there can understandably be a lot of concern and uncertainty about the safety of your child.

Please know that I am available to discuss your concerns with you, and will provide any revised advice to you as soon as it becomes available.

I ask you to keep in your prayers those people and communities impacted by this virus.

God Bless

  
Paul Cowan - Principal



## Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

### Last updated 29 January 2020

An outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was detected in Wuhan, China in late December 2019. Cases have been reported predominantly in the city of Wuhan, in the Hubei province of China, as well as some other Chinese cities and countries, including two confirmed cases in Victoria, Australia.

### What is this virus?

Coronaviruses can make humans and animals sick. Some coronaviruses can cause illness similar to the common cold and others can cause more serious diseases, including Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS).

The virus seen in Hubei Province, China is called 'novel' because it is new. It has not been detected before this outbreak. Most people infected live in, or travelled to, Hubei Province, China. There have been cases of 2019-nCoV reported in other Chinese provinces and other countries. It is likely that the virus originally came from an animal, and there is now evidence that it can spread from person-to-person.

### What are the symptoms?

Symptoms can include fever, cough, sore throat, or shortness of breath. Symptoms can take up to 14 days to develop.

### What if my child is well, and returning to school after being in Hubei province, China or other countries with cases in the last 14 days?

**All students and staff members who have travelled to Hubei Province, China, are advised to stay at home and avoid public settings, including attendance at schools and early learning centres, until 14 days after last being in Hubei province, China.**

Children and staff who are well and have travelled to other provinces in China, or any other areas where there have been reported cases, are NOT recommended to be excluded from schools and child care services unless the following applies:

- The person is a confirmed case of novel coronavirus
- The person is a close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus in the past 14 days

### What if my child feels sick now or within 14 days of being in Hubei Province, China or another part of China?

- If your child has a cough, sore throat or shortness of breath, they must be excluded from school and be reviewed by a doctor.
- Seek medical attention but first place a mask on the student if you have one and call the doctor or hospital before you attend. Tell them your child has been in Hubei province, China, or the location of travel within China.
- When you get to the hospital or doctor's clinic, tell them where your child has travelled in China and whether this included Hubei Province. Ensure a mask is placed on your child before or as soon as you arrive at the medical facility.

If your child has severe symptoms, such as shortness of breath:

- Call 000 and request an ambulance, and
- Inform the paramedics where your child has been in China.



# OTHER SCHOOL NEWS CONT'D

## How can I help prevent the spread of 2019-nCoV?

Practising good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene is the best defence. The most important actions are:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow

## Where can I get more information?

For Victorian updates to the current incident, go to: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/novelcoronavirus>

For national updates: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/latest-information-about-novel-coronavirus>

For international updates: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/novel-coronavirus>

WHO resources <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

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## MY CLASSROOM RULES

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

**WHEN:** Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020

**WHERE:** Performing Arts Centre

**TIME:** 6pm- 8pm

Class cook off followed by a family picnic...please bring your own picnic dinner and rug.

We hope to see you there!!



A poster for 'Sewing Classes' at St Gerard's Catholic Primary School. The poster has a yellow background with a decorative border of brown leaves and berries. At the top left is the 'Wellsprings for women' logo, and at the top right is the 'ST GERARD'S' school crest. The text reads: 'New program coming to St Gerard Catholic Primary School for 2020', 'Sewing Classes', 'Thursdays', '9am-11am'. A circular badge on the left says 'inquire at Front Office'. At the bottom, it says 'PLEASE ENROL AS PLACES ARE LIMITED' and includes a photograph of hands sewing on a machine.