

St Gerard's Newsletter

Term 2, Week 1

24 April 2026



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



Students share their ANZAC Day artwork, with poppies and "Lest We Forget," showing respect and remembrance.



ANZAC Day Prayer

God of peace and love,
We remember with gratitude all those who have served and sacrificed for our country on ANZAC Day.

We honour their courage, their mateship, and their willingness to place others before themselves.

May we never forget the cost of freedom, and may we strive to live with the same spirit of kindness, courage, and unity in our daily lives.

Bless all who serve our nation today, and bring comfort to families who carry the memory of loved ones.

Guide us to be people of peace, working together to build a world filled with justice, compassion, and hope.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear families,

Welcome to Term 2!

I hope that you all had a Happy and Holy Easter and a restful holiday.

It was great to be able to welcome everyone back for the start of what promises to be a **term full of positive learning opportunities for all our students.**

We have certainly got straight back into school life with all our programs and activities starting up again. Every week we offer two activities for **our families to be involved in prior to the start of the day.** On **Wednesday mornings** we have **Before School Reading in the library from 8:30am** and on **Thursday mornings** we have **Before School Skipping in the Courtyard from 8:30am.** We also offer several **Lunchtime Clubs** for children to attend. They are: **Tuesday – Art Club, Wednesday – Library Club and Thursday – Gardening Club.** These clubs have proved to be popular across the whole school and the number of students attending has been steady. Please mention these clubs to your child(ren) if you feel they may be interested.

Today (Friday) at our School Assembly we had a focus on **ANZAC Day to remember, acknowledge and thank** all those people who have experienced war and those that made the ultimate sacrifice. The actions of so many people allow us to enjoy the life we have here in Australia. **‘No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for another’** John 15:13. **Lest we forget.**

Our school will be represented by our Student Captains and Vice Captains who along with myself will attend the Dandenong ANZAC Day ceremony tomorrow (Saturday). I would like to thank these leaders in advance for giving up their time and laying a wreath on behalf of our school community. Families are more than welcome to come and join us at 10.45 am at the Pillars of Freedom (Clow Street, Dandenong, opposite the Dandenong Market).

Also today, our **Year 5/6** children participated in their first **Dandenong District Gala Day** for the year. These days see our children compete against neighbouring schools. St Gerard’s fielded teams in **Netball and Basketball** and as always performed well and represented our school with distinction. I would like to acknowledge the coordination of our P.E. Teacher Ms Lauren Boyle and our staff, Mrs Te, Mr J, Mrs Munro, Mrs Zelic and Ms Adeline for their support and encouragement of our children.

In the last week of Term 1 **an email was sent to all families about an nForma App** which we will use in place of Operoo. I am asking families to please install this App if you haven’t already, so that we can communicate and gain consent for excursions and events digitally. If you experience any difficulties please come to the Office and we will be able to assist you. **We are hoping to have every family connected in the next 2 weeks.** Thank you to those families that have done this already.

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, **a reminder that we have a School Closure Day next Friday 1 May** when our staff will undertake Professional Learning in the vital area of Literacy.

God bless.

Paul COWAN
PRINCIPAL

Key Dates

Sacraments 2026

First Communion: (Grade 4)

- Thursday, 14th May, 2026, First Communion Family Workshop 6:30pm
- 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

Confirmation: (Grade 6)

- Thursday, 30th April, 2026, Confirmation Family Workshop 6:30pm
- Monday 11th May Confirmation Reflection Day (Yr 6 wear casual)
- Saturday, 16th May Confirmation 5:30pm (Vigil) Fr Madry CR, Episcopal Vicar, Southern Region
- 22nd May Confirmation Assembly in the PAC

Whole School Masses:

- Monday 25th May Our Lady Help of Christians at 9:15
- Friday 12th June The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus at 9:15

Level Mass:

- 3/4 Level: 30th April, 9:15am
- Prep/5/6 Level: 7th May, 9:15am

Other Important Dates for Religion

ANZAC Day Ceremony:	24th April, 3pm
Mother's Day Activities:	8th May 2:00pm TBC
Sorry Day Assembly:	26th May, 2:50 pm
Refugee Week Assembly:	19th June, 2:50

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 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**.

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



What is resilience?

Resilience enables people to shift back along the [mental health continuum](#) towards good mental health. It's not static but is something that can change over time due to experiences and circumstance.

Resilience is particularly important for children and young people

A child or young person's ability to be resilient can depend upon many things, particularly their relative balance of risk and protective factors. Depending upon their situation, a child or young person's resilience may vary. Importantly, specific situations or events that one child or young person may find challenging, another may not.

The transition from being a child to an adolescent to a young adult occurs over a relatively short period of time. Rapid changes in physical, psychological and social development can present numerous challenges. Children and young people who are more resilient are better able to stay on track with the biological, psychological and social demands of growing up and moving through early childhood into adolescence and beyond.

Being resilient is associated with better academic performance and school behaviour and, over the longer term, fewer mental health issues and greater life opportunities (including employment and relationships). Individual resilience (as well as family and community resilience) is something that can be fostered and developed over time.

From the Be You website



Mother's Day Photos

Just a friendly reminder to please send through a photo of our beautiful mums or special mother figures to Nicole Fernandez via Seesaw. These photos will be shared as part of our Mother's Day Afternoon Tea celebration.

Thank you for helping us make this occasion extra special.

Wellbeing

PLEASE JOIN OUR

Mother's Day

AFTERNOON

TEA

MAY 08 AT 2:00PM



ST GERARD'S SCHOOL
IN THE PAC

Gardening

Gardening Club

This week in Gardening Club, students made great progress in preparing our garden for the upcoming winter season. They worked together to get the garden beds ready, carefully turning the soil and discussing which vegetables they would like to plant and grow over the coming months.

In addition to their gardening efforts, students also took time to care for our chickens by topping up their food and refreshing their water, showing responsibility and kindness towards our animals.

A big thank you to all the students who generously gave up their lunchtime to care for our land and contribute to the Gardening Club. Your hard work and enthusiasm are truly appreciated. We would also like to extend a special thank you to Mrs Tanya for sharing her knowledge and passion for gardening with the students.



Earth Day

Earth Day

On Wednesday the 22nd of April, the Year 1/2 students celebrated Earth Day. They learned about the history of Earth Day and the significance behind this important global event.

Students spent time reflecting on all the things they love about the world that God has given us, sharing their appreciation for nature and the environment. They also discussed and listed practical ways they can care for our Earth, including having shorter showers, putting rubbish in the bin, planting more flowers for the bees, and turning off the lights when they leave a room.

It was wonderful to see such thoughtful discussions and a growing sense of responsibility for caring for the world around us.



Literacy

SAVE THE DATE!



LITERACY WORKSHOP EXPO - 2026

WHERE: ST GERARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL,
DANDENONG NORTH

WHEN: 21ST MAY. 2026

TIME: FROM 6.00PM TO 7.15PM

WHO: STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Join us in supporting your
child's Literacy journey
through Primary School!

**The class with the highest
attendance wins a Free Dress
Day!!!**

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

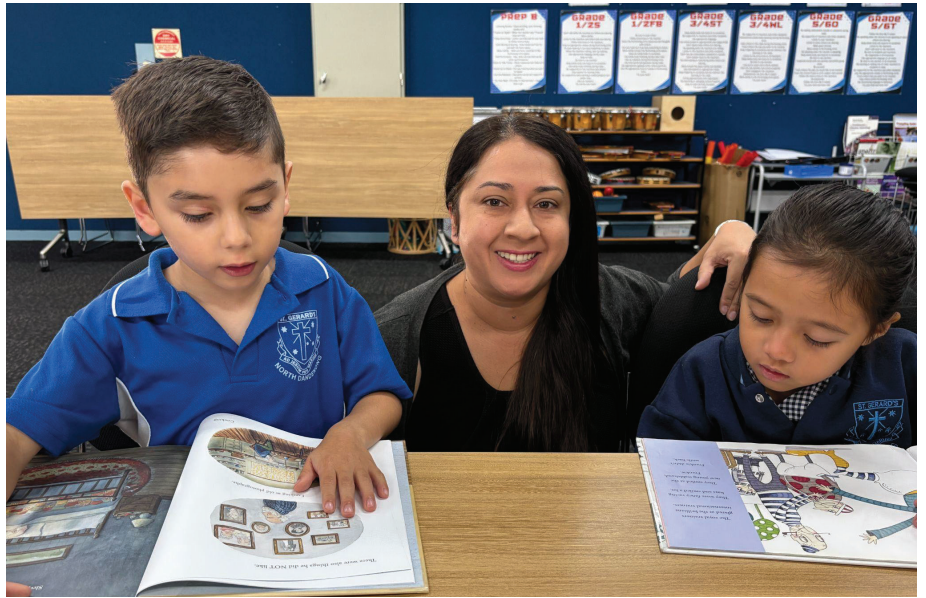


Remember

- 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



Library News



LIBRARY NEWSLETTER



Week 1, April 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 participated in a Library Scavenger Hunt. Everyone worked well to move around the library space, using clues to locate different books and areas. It was fantastic to see students collaborating, thinking carefully, and staying engaged throughout the activity.

Congratulations to our winners:

First place: Elaine

Second place: Izabella

Third place: Naomi, Jacob and Arjan

Borrowing has now begun for Term 2. Miss Adrien will be checking for any overdue books in Week 3. 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 News



LIBRARY CLUB



Week 1, April 2026



Miss Stephanie Adrien



2026

DATES TO REMEMBER

Term 2, 2026 Dates

April

- 27th Whole School Meditation in PAC at 8.50am
- 29th Foundation- 2 Excursion to Myuna Farm
- 30th Confirmation Family Workshop at 6.00pm in the Library

May

- **1st SCHOOL CLOSURE DAY – Literacy Professional Learning**
- 4th Hats Off
- 8th Mother’s Day Celebration at 2.00pm in the PAC
- 10th Mother’s Day
- 11th Confirmation Reflection Day
- 14th Rosary with The Legion of Mary
- 14th First Communion Family Workshop at 6.00pm
- 15th Walk/ Ride to School Day
- 15th District Cross Country
- 16th Confirmation at 5.30pm
- 19th School Photos
- 21st OPEN DAY
- 21st SUBWAY Lunch
- 21st Literacy Workshop Expo at 6.00pm
- 24th PENTECOST Sunday
- 25th Our Lady Help of Christians whole school mass at 9.15am
- 26th National Sorry Day
- 27th OPEN DAY
- 29th Italian Day

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 3.30p**

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) | sg@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 and January.

- ANJALI Yr 6
- MATEJ Yr 6



COMMUNITY NOTICE

- *Every Day Counts* - Primary School Attendance Information
- 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.

